

# Symposium Peregrinum Messina 2022 ABSTRACTS

## Difficult Journeys



### 1. Antonio Arcudi, “The Return of Philoctetes’

by zoom

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The myth of Philoctetes, the best archer of the heroic age of ancient Greece, is placed by right in the epic thread of *nostoi*. Son of Poias, king of Malis, he participated in the Trojan War, honoring the oath made for the hand of Helen. Leader of a contingent of seven ships, Philoctetes had only a marginal role in the war. In fact, the hero did not reach Ilium with the other Achaean chiefs, because during a stop in Tenedos (an Aegean island in front of Troy), a poisonous snake bit his foot during a sacrifice to Apollo. The wound became infected to the point of emanating an unbearable odor, and Odysseus easily convinced the other Achaeans to abandon the hero on the nearby island of Lemnos. But his role became vital to the final Achaean victory and once convinced by the same Odysseus to rejoin the Greek army, he helped conquer Troy. Philoctetes's early story is well known to us from Sophocles, Lesches' *Little Iliad*, and Tzetzes, but his post-Troy career is not as well known in Greece as it was in Southern Italian tradition, for obvious reasons. After Troy fell, Philoctetes was one of the few heroes to return home safe and sound, but his story did not have a happy ending. The story has survived in fragments from Aristotle, Apollodorus, Strabo, Pausanias, and Tzetzes. Driven from his kingdom, the hero wandered along the coasts of southern Italy and Sicily, where he founded cities and sanctuaries and spread the cult of Apollo in the West. His legacy in South Italy is at least as great if not greater than that of Diomedes (another veteran of Troy who had a second career in Italy) and

would rival that of Aeneas, if he had his own Vergil. He perfectly embodies the archetype of the anti-hero and finds a remarkable longevity in the Greco-Roman world, surviving to the present day through the numerous testimonies of historical, literary and archaeological sources.

## **2. Alain G. F. Blomart, "Divinities who Go and Return in Athens and Rome: the Duplication of Temples and the Processions between Centre and Periphery"**

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Divinities, like humans move, conquer territories, and then return. Gods and goddesses constantly move, sometimes under different epithets depending on the location of their temple. They “multiply” themselves like Greek colonists, who used to carry the *aphidruma* (statue or sacred object) from the previous city to the new one. Roman conquerors also rebuilt temples in different strategic places to indicate their power over the conquered place. For example, after the Roman conquest, several foreign gods received a new temple in Rome, such as Juno Regina of Veii (396), Jupiter of Praeneste (380), Juno Curitis and Minerva Capta of Falerii (241), Venus Erycina from Sicily (217), Cybele from Pessinus in Phrygia (204), and Juno Caelestis from Carthage (146). Moving enemy divinities to Rome was one way the Romans showed their power and successful imperialism.

But moving the back and forth between the center and periphery also occurred with the religious processions of Bendis in Athens and of Cybele in Rome. Additionally, some gods have duplicate temples, Zeus, Apollo, Dionysos, Artemis in Athens; Venus Erycina, Cybele, Veiovis, Bellona in Rome. The movement between the center and the periphery and the duplication of temples can have several meanings: 1. It can recall the god’s foreign origin and double identity (Bendis, Cybele-Magna Mater); 2. It can also indicate the will of integration of some categories of people in a city (adolescents, foreigners, ...); 3. It can justify the inversion of the social order or the marginality of some practices (Dionysos at the Oschophoria, Veiovis, Cybele, ...); 4. It can represent the relationship of a city with external and rural spaces (Zeus, Dionysos, Apollo, Veiovis, Bellona, Dea Dia of Arval Brethren). All of these movements illustrate the complexity of societies with social and geographical tensions and the integration of all of its different elements.

### **3. Annarita Martini Carbone “The journey of the Initiate towards Salvation and the Trials of Mithras Seen through the Experience of Hercules and the Protection of Mithras, Hercules and Caelestis: Labors and Salvation.”**

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Close relationships link Mithras to Hercules, proven by the presence of the image of Hercules in some Mithraic caves, on ritual vessels and in other contexts related to Zoroastrian Mithraism, such as the funerary monument of Antiochus I of Commagene at Nemrut Dağı.

Hercules, with his efforts and his ability to accept humiliation is extremely human and was a familiar character in traditional theology. The worshipper of Mithras identifies with Hercules in his strenuous process of initiation *en route* to salvation. Hercules is his precursor and his model on this journey into the Mithraic mysteries. The hero, who returns twice to Hades and receives an *apotheosis*, inspires hope in an afterlife for the faithful worshipper of Mithras.

In a certain sense, Hercules can also be identified with Mithras himself. The twelve labors, and the scenes sometimes carved on the *predella* of reliefs show Mithras killing the bull, represent stages of a salvific journey that ends with the apotheosis of the hero, and with the banquet with the Sun for the god. Both struggle with polymorphous, snake-legged or multi-headed monsters, and the final aim of these confrontations is not only their personal salvations, but also that of human kind.

Likewise, even the veneration of the goddess Caelestis by some followers of Mithras can be seen in this salvific perspective, with the goddess protecting the initiate on his mystical journey. This dedication is testified to by the representation of the symbol *pro itu et reditu* in contexts referable to the cult of Mithras.

### **4. Emanuele Castelli, “Returning home? The Visionary Journey of the Sibyl and the Christian Testimonies from East to West, and Back Again.**

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For abstract, see Monaca.

## **5. Francesca Ceci and Aleksandra Karuze Kolodziej “The Journeys of Orpheus: Itinerary between the World and the Underworld, Between the Life and the Death of The Thracian singer”**

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The figure of Orpheus has been and continues to be the subject of in-depth studies focusing mainly on the historical, religious (relative especially to Orphism) and then iconographic aspects (the representation of Orpheus and typical moments of mythical imagination that concern him). It may be interesting here to draw a precise map of places visited by Orpheus, alive but also once killed, through his prophetic head and lyre.

This paper aims to present the iconographic itinerary of places visited by the Thracian ‘traveler’ between Ancient and Modern times.

## **6. Federica Colaiacomo “Aeneas and the new homeland between myth, literature and archeology”**

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Everyone is familiar with the myth of the Trojan hero Aeneas, who flees Troy in search of a new homeland. This new homeland will be the city of *Lavinium*, current Pratica di Mare (Pomezia). Archaeological research, started already in the 50s of the last century on the site of this ancient city, increasingly testifies to the link of these places with the narration of the myth, of which we know different versions, including the most complete ones handed down by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Virgil in the *Aeneid*. The city of Lavinium was located on the 18th mile of the ancient Via Laurentina, about 28 km from Rome and 4 km from the sea. The importance of this road is demonstrated by the presence along its path of important religious monuments such as the sanctuary of the XIII Altars, the tumulus tomb later *Heroon* of Aeneas and right on the coast, the sanctuary of *Sol Indiges*, the place where Dionysius of Halicarnassus narrates that the landing of Aeneas took place. The end of the city can be established around the fifth century perhaps in relation to one of the earthquakes that occurred at the mouth of the Tiber but Symmachus still in the fourth century he called it *civitas religiosa*. Through the presentation of the monuments still visible and open to visitors in Pratica di Mare, enriched by the precious collections present in the exhibition path of the Civic Archaeological

Museum and with the verses of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Virgil, the new homeland of Aeneas will be presented: *Lavinium*.

*E' noto a tutti il mito dell'eroe troiano Enea, che fugge da Troia alla ricerca di nuova Patria. Questa nuova patria sarà la città di Lavinium, attuale Pratica di Mare (Pomezia). Le ricerche archeologiche, avviate già negli anni 50 dello scorso secolo nel sito di quest'antica città, testimoniano sempre di più il legame di questi luoghi con la narrazione del mito, di cui ne conosciamo diverse versioni, tra cui quelle più complete tramandate da Dionigi d'Alicarnasso e Virgilio nell'Eneide. La città di Lavinium era situata al XVIII miglio dell'antica via Laurentina, a circa 28 km da Roma e a 4 km dal mare. L'importanza di questa strada è dimostrata dalla presenza lungo il suo percorso di importanti monumenti a carattere religioso quali il santuario dei XIII Altari, la tomba a tumulo poi Heroon di Enea e proprio sulla costa, il santuario di Sol Indiges, luogo in cui Dionigi d'Alicarnasso narra sia avvenuto lo sbarco di Enea. La fine della città si può stabilire intorno al V secolo forse in relazione ad uno dei terremoti avvenuti presso la foce del Tevere ma Simmaco ancora nel IV secolo d.C. la definiva "civitas religiosa". Attraverso la presentazione dei monumenti ancora visibili e visitabili di Partica di Mare, arricchiti dalle preziose collezioni presenti nel percorso espositivo del Museo Civico Archeologico e con i versi di Dionigi d'Alicarnasso e Virgilio, si presenterà la nuova patria di Enea: Lavinium.*

**7. Antonella Conte, *The Loneliness of Exile and the Shadow of ἀθυμία: Literary Influences in John Chrysostom's Letters***

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John Chrysostom, the great preacher of Antioch who became patriarch of Constantinople during the reign of Arcadius (395-408 CE), spent the last years of his life in exile, confined to an inhospitable Armenian village on the eastern slopes of the Taurus Mountains. The exile has been a real and true martyrdom of which the Chrysostom left us a vivid account in a rich epistolary *corpus*. In these epistles, the traditional resources of rhetoric are used to give voice to the exile's anxieties: therefore, the Antiochian father exploits ancient suggestions to strongly declare his own cultural identity and draw attention. This article sheds light on the way in which John Chrysostom uses the tools of classical *paideia* to urge to action. Special attention is paid to the literary representation of ἀθυμία: the description of this spiritual νόσος allows us to comprehend, through Chrysostom's voice, the consequences that his exile had in the lives of the faithful whom he portrays as tragic characters.

**8. Alessandra Coppola, "Alcibiades' Return and Purification"**

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Alcibiades returned to Athens from exile in 408 BC. In the general frame of a very carefully planned performance, the date of his arrival at Peiraeus seems to have been very badly chosen: it was the day when the Festival of the Plynteria was being celebrated. According to Xenophon this was considered a very inappropriate moment, because the goddess Athena was veiled and no Athenian would ever do anything important during that inauspicious day.

Scholars have tried to understand how Alcibiades, who was so careful about this self-representation, could have disregarded such a particular when he returned to Athens, also supposing that the date of the festival had been changed in accordance to the lunar calendar. But some details in the organization of the Plynteria might help concluding, on the contrary, that Alcibiades had actually planned his return very well also under this respect.

## **9. Altay Coşkun, “Imperial Homecoming(s) and the *Ara Pacis Augustae* in 13 BC”**

**by zoom**

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The most famous Roman inscription (*Res Gestae* 12) defines the return of Augustus from his campaigns in Spain and Gaul in July 13 BC as the political context for the most famous piece of Roman art and architecture, the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. Many scholars believe that the procession depicted on the north and south friezes of the monument illustrate Augustus’ very homecoming in that summer or the celebration of thanksgiving (*supplicatio*) in close connection with it, which had become a minor version of a triumph. Others prefer regarding the reliefs as a snapshot of the altar’s inauguration in January 9 BC. However, together with Gaius Stern, I shall argue elsewhere in more detail that the historical event represented on the friezes most likely was the procession that took place on the day of the inauguration of the site of the future altar probably in September 13 BC. Our collaborative research emphasizes the naturalistic depiction of the emperor’s family members, while admitting the multiple symbolic readings that the procession friezes allow, especially if viewed in their broader historical, architectural and iconographic contexts. In a certain sense, the senators enshrined the motif of Augustus’ homecoming into the cult of Roman Peace (and Prosperity) and eternalized the ritualized blessing that this should bring to the Roman people in the future. The highly conflated account by Cassius Dio (54.25.1–4) of the Senate’s decrees in honour of the returning emperor was composed as criticism against servile

flattering, but indirectly confirms the ideas underlying the Senate's decrees on the Actian Triumph, the cult for Fortuna Redux and the sanctuary of the Ara Pacis in 29, 17 and 13 BC, namely that the salutary effect of Augustus' victorious return(s) to Rome should become a permanent blessing irrespective of the singular historical events.

## 10. Salvatore Costanza

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According to classical sources, Jason's coming back to Iolkos embodies the return from exile after an unjustified usurpation. In this case, Pelias overthrew his half-brother Aeson, and so he forced the latter's new-born son Jason into exile. In his 4th Pythian Ode for Arcesilaus IV of Cyrene, Pindar's mythical digression focuses on this perspective with respect to Jason's arrival in Iolkos many years later, but in fact, the young hero is coming back to his homeland. Jason proclaims that he is not at all a stranger, as his uncle claims as he attempts at first to contemptuously dismiss him (171: ὦ ξείν'). Jason instead draws evidence that he is coming home in order to lay claim to his father's right to the throne (188-89: ἰκόμαν | οἴκαδ'; ἀρχαίαν κομίζων πατρός ἐμοῦ βασιλευομένην). It is interesting to note that Pindar recounts this story because he is making a claim in favor of the return of the exiled Damophilos, a disgraced member of the royal family in Cyrene. Given his authority through poetry, he may advise the king to reconcile with his opponents.

In sum, the mythical, familiar conflict of the Aeolidae Jason and Pelias corresponds to the historical infighting among the Battiadae. Pindar seems to suggest this opposition should shortly put an end to their power after the overthrow of Arcesilaus IV (444).

## 11. Chiara Di Serio "Tales in Athenaeus' The Deipnosophists about Divine Statues that Favour Journeys"

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This article focuses on two stories contained in Athenaeus' *The Deipnosophists* 15. Both stories are given in the section in which Athenaeus of Naucratis discusses the use of crowns in festive rituals. The first story (*Deip.* 15.672a - 673d) is attributed to Menodotus of Samos: here the heroine Admete escapes from Argos, reaches Samos with the help of Hera, and becomes the caretaker of the temple of the goddess. Then the Argives decide to send some Etruscans to steal the *simulacrum*. But the Etruscans, having boarded the ship

with the statue, are unable to set sail. Thus they unloaded the *simulacrum* on the shore and leave. Admete retrieves it and takes it back to the temple, giving the goddess the necessary care. For this reason, every year since then, the inhabitants of Samos celebrate the feasts called Tonaia in honour of Hera. In the second story (*Deip.* 15. 675f - 676b attributed by Athenaeus to Polycarmus of Naucratis, a certain Herostratus, on his return journey from Cyprus to Naucratis, is saved from a storm thanks to the sailors' prayers to the statue of Aphrodite on board. As a token of his gratitude, Herostratus prepares a banquet at the temple of the goddess, and his relatives and friends offer crowns of myrtle. These stories allow several reflections. Firstly, they narrate the founding acts of the use of wreaths in celebrations. Secondly, they contain the idea that divine statues are able to manifest the power of the god himself, as they are endowed with superhuman qualities.

## **12. Francesca Diosono and Loredana Lanceini, "Going through a Lake of Darkness. The Nemi Crater as a Gateway to the Roman Underworld"**

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Lake Avernus and the lake of Nemi have played a very important role in Roman religion and mythology. Both lay on collapsed volcanic craters along the Tyrrhenian coastline, and it has been immediately noted that the peculiar nature of the landscape surrounding the two lakes is suggestive enough to feel a divine presence in these places. But connections between the two lakes are less superficial than it appears.

In his Commentary to the *Aeneid* (6.136), Servius establishes a strong parallelism between the lakes of Avernus and of Nemi. According to our author, Aeneas has to pluck a golden bough to enter the underworld, whose gate is near the Lake Avernus, following the instruction of the Sybil: it was the very same golden bough that Orestes brought to Nemi, and it played a central role in the ritualistic fight for the *rex nemorensis* between the priest in charge and the challenger. The centrality of the golden bough in both myths implies that the lake of Nemi also is linked to the Underworld.

Avernus in particular is known for being a gateway to the Underworld: Virgil presents the lake in this way, and he locates here Aeneas's *katabasis*, while Homer places here Odysseus' necromancy. It appears therefore logical to



explore the possibility that the lake of Nemi could have had similar relation to the underworld.

The present paper will focus on the connection between the sanctuary of Nemi and the underworld, using archaeology to confirm the presence of cults dedicated to Orestes and Hippolytus. These two figures appear as Diana's *paredroi*: thanks to her they were reborn in the Colli Albani.

The chthonian nature of Diana Trivia in Nemi is clearly apparent if we take into consideration the lake's importance in the sacred landscape of *lucus Dianae*. In studying previously unexplored aspects of Diana's local cult, the presence of an underworld gateway linked with the nearby lake is proposed.

**13. Chris Faraone, "Instructions for the Homecomings of Menelaos and Odysseus (*Od.* 4 and 11): The Suppression of Female Oracular Speech by Panhellenic Poets?"**  
**panel chair**

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Scholars have often wondered why Circe sends Odysseus to the Tiresias to get information about his homeward journey, when she reveals later that she knew the way herself. Some scholars have rightly suggested that we have traces here of a version of the *Odyssey* in which Circe is the one who gives the instructions. Circe's speech to Odysseus uses the language of the instructional oracle and may have even be echoing Sibylline speech and that in the second version of the story the power of her local, Sibylline speech has been demoted in favor of the panhellenic viewpoints of Tiresias, a figure co-opted from a completely different epic cycle about Thebes. In my paper I will try to answer the question why Circe's oracular power has been suppressed and why a similar suppression occurs in Book 4, where Menelaus first consults a local nymph for such homecoming instructions, but in a similar way is forced to appeal to a "higher" prophetic authority.

**14. Gerard Freyburger, "The Impossible Return Home of Lucius in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*"**  
**by zoom**

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In this paper I would like to tell of an impossible return home : this is recounted in Book XI of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and concerns Lucius. Isis decided so because she wished to wrest her new follower from the

self-destructive passions he had developed in his home country, Corinth. She inspired him to leave his homeland and to make an initiatory voyage to Rome where he has henceforth to live as a perpetual exile among the priests of Isis (but he is now safe from his bad passions). I want to analyse this story. First of all, we will focus upon these passions which so beset Lucius in his homeland, then we will follow the voyage he took to Rome and finally we will see how he lives as an exile in Rome and, in conclusion, what is the benefit he obtains from his renunciation of a return to his homeland.

Paradoxically, it is, in effect, a form of exile which he is living out in Rome. Not only he is obliged to speak in Latin to make a living, but, above all, he is completely immersed in the exotic nature of the Egyptian rites of Isisism, to the point of displaying marginal behavior: having become a *pastophore* of Isis, from then on he has to go before the heart of the population in Rome with his head entirely shaven openly displaying his complete baldness to all and sundry.

### **15. Marie-Laure Freyburger, "Cassius Dio, a Bithynian exiled to Rome"**

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**by zoom**

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First we will trace the life and brilliant career of this Roman Senator from Bithynia who came from a long family line of notable personages and who kept company with five or six emperors, was the friend of several of them, and was elevated to the rank of consul on two occasions.

We will study the nature of his position as a Senator coming from an eastern province and his relationship with Roman power. We will come to see that he represents a perfect example of his own theory relating provincial elites with power which he developed at length in his Roman History which was written in Greek for a Greek-speaking readership.

Finally we will take a rather more emotional perspective in relation to how he saw Rome and Italy and how he spoke of his homeland in order to discern whether his attachment to his "little country" is the stronger of the two and whether his numerous visits to Rome were for him nothing but a "golden exile."

### **16. Andrzej Gillmeister, "Coming back to the Sources or Why Crassus cannot Come back Home: a Journey through the Modern Ideas on Roman Rituals."**

**panel chair**

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Marcus Crassus set out on the Parthians expedition bidding farewell to bad omens which he conspicuously ignored. Crassus' *profectio* took place differently than previous ones. Why was that?

For a researcher of the ancient world, coming back home has an additional meaning of returning to the sources. Taking as a starting point the events surrounding the *profectio* of the Roman leader, I have observed some odd ideas in contemporary theories about ritual (and sacrifice) in Roman religion. I will attempt to look at the issue from an emic point of view. Plutarch Cras. 16.3 and Dio 39.39.1-7 are the two most famous sources for the opposition of the tribunes to Crassus' venture. I will also analyze Roman vocabulary related to sacrifice in order to demonstrate more clearly how a contemporary view of the past can say more about the researcher than the object of his research. The return to the sources, I believe, will yield an interesting and more nuanced picture of the ritual and sacrificial practices of the ancient Romans.

[The paper presents partial results of research conducted as part of a project "The Priests of Jupiter" funded by the National Science Centre UMO-2019/35/B/HS3/00809]

## 17. Victoria Gyóri, "Keep Ithaca Always on Your Mind: Tiberius and Odysseus"

by zoom

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Tiberius' so-called abandonment of Rome for Capri in AD 27 was also a personal *nostos*. While the self-image Tiberius created and propagated was much more subtle and private than Augustus', it is no less deliberate and significant. One component of Tiberius' self-representation was an association with Odysseus. Numerous parallels can certainly be made between the itinerant lives of both Tiberius and his hero Odysseus, such as how Tiberius spent the same number of years on Rhodes as Odysseus did on the island of Calypso. Tiberius' own admiration and emulation of Odysseus was displayed at his villa at Sperlonga. First, the impressive statuary programme showcases specific *exempla* of Odysseus' exploits which can evoke moments and virtues from Tiberius' own life, such as the statue group depicting Odysseus dragging the limp body of Achilles recalls Tiberius' *pietas* for Drusus as he brought his brother's body home from Germany (e.g., Val. Max. 5.5.3). Second, the very location of Sperlonga near Monte Circeo conjures an Odyssean landscape.

However, little or no attention has been paid to Tiberius' (in)famous move to Capri as another Odyssean parallel. This is an interesting phenomenon because it was a *nostos* to Tiberius' philhellene roots. Tiberius, an avid philhellene, spent his early childhood in Neapolis, Sicily, and Greece (Suet. *Tib.* 6). During his stay on Rhodes, he completely immersed himself in the culture of the island (Suet. *Tib.* 13.1; Tac. *Ann.* 2.59.2). He was fluent in Greek and was a keen student of Greek literature and mythology (Suet. *Tib.* 70-71). The island of Capri was of course Greek in origin and traditions. In the same way that Sperlonga does, Capri instils the memory of an Odyssean landscapes as it was inhabited by the Teleboi who came from Acarnania, which is associated with Ithaca and was known as the land of the Sirens.

Tiberius' move to Capri was a *nostos*, a return home and reintegration to a Greek environment which Tiberius had cherished and thrived in since his youth. It is another link connecting Odysseus to Tiberius. Like Odysseus, Tiberius survived all his "wanderings" (e.g., campaigning) and came home to a Teleboan island. More importantly, perhaps, like Odysseus' complicated *nostos*, Tiberius' *nostos* was not a "retirement" - Tiberius did not "escape his trials" on Capri (cf. *Ody.* 1.20). Tiberius' permanent companions were welcomed Greek intellectuals, such as Thrasyllus. However, other (deceitful) visitors also spent long periods of time with Tiberius on Capri, such as Sejanus (Tac. *Ann.* 4.58, 4.74; Dio 58.4.9, 58.9.2). Like Odysseus' methodical sleight of hand in successfully ousting the suitors, the letter Tiberius sent from Capri to the Senate in AD 31 was skillfully crafted to reveal only gradually its true content: the ultimate denouncement of Sejanus, the betraying would-be usurper, who plotted against Tiberius and members of his family.

## **18. Patrick Hunt, "Hannibal's Hard Homecoming: Hardly Nostalgic."**

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**by zoom**

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When Scipio strategically invaded Africa late in the Second Punic War and forced the Carthaginians to recall Hannibal from Italy, it was mutually distasteful for both Carthage and Hannibal. Hannibal's veterans were mostly too old to be truly effective, the South Italians were worthless and the Celts had gone home north. In 202, Carthage gave Hannibal no *bona fide* resources except mostly untrained recruits, untrained elephants and had been lax for a decade in allowing most of their Numidian allies switch their allegiances to Rome with Scipio's ample bribes and more appreciation for their cavalry.

Scipio even chose the North African battlefield. Scipio had learned more from Hannibal than anyone in Rome. It was a complete peripety, and Zama was almost a *fait accompli*. Hannibal barely had time to go home and enjoy the Barcid family estates at Hadrametum. Perhaps one of the greatest ironies was that Hannibal had spent more of his life outside Carthage than within Carthage, and how much he knew Carthage other than its antipathy to him is moot. Decades later, Scipio's famous epitaph could just as well be Hannibal's.

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**20. Aleksandra Krauze-Kolodziej, co-author “The Journeys of Orpheus: Itinerary between the World and the Underworld, Between the Life and the Death of The Thracian singer”**  
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**21. Loredana Lancini, co-author “Going through a Lake of Darkness. The Nemi Crater as a Gateway to the Roman Underworld”**  
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**22. Fernando Lopez Sanchez, “King Pyrrhus in the West: in the Footsteps of Agathocles.”** **by zoom**  
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Hellenistic diadochoi were impresario-like builders of kingdoms, but, on occasions, they were also just preservers of established states. In the West no king more than Pyrrhus deserves in his lifetime the fame of a vigorous and entrepreneur ruler. He is considered a would-be kingdom builder, his campaigns characterized in ancient and modern literature as “adventures”. Therefore, his campaigns in Italy and Sicily are unanimously considered failures and his journey back to the Balkans after all his fights in Italy and

Sicily similar to the inevitable return of all mercenary nostoi of the age. I see Pyrrhus's campaigns in Italy and Sicily and his return to the Epirote kingdom differently: the former as the necessary steps to secure the grandeur and the interests of both Tarentum and Syracuse, the latter as a series of tactical movements inspired by Agathocles during the last part of his tyranny.

In my opinion, Pyrrhus could not do much more than Agathocles when it came to secure and maintain the trading routes in the central Mediterranean of Syracuse and Tarentum. Confronted with a chronic shortage of manpower and money, the limits of the power of Pyrrhus in securing his enterprises were too evident to be ignored. However, and in my view, the return of Pyrrhus to the Balkans does not necessarily mean that he had abandoned those goals. Italy and Sicily were connected enterprises, while Corcyra and the western Balkans remained intimately linked to both Tarentum and Syracuse. Had Pyrrhus won in his new Macedonian enterprise, it is not clear he would not have come back to the west. From this perspective it is difficult to consider Pyrrhus just as a *condottiero*.

**23. Sonia Macri,**  
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**24. Francisco Marco Simón, “Heureux Qui, Comme Ulysse, A Fait Un Bon Voyage: Invoking The Deities of the Roads in the Latin West.” by zoom**  
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Travelling away from the usual places of dwelling and worship provoked anxiety in the traveler, not only because of the uncertainties and dangers that could arise, but also because of the precariousness of his/her own social identity in a strange environment. The deities were therefore invoked not only for protection during the journey, but also to help maintain the traveler's identity during the liminal period of travel and to facilitate the return home (Muir, 2011). One of the most important means of maintaining the individual's attachment to his family and community of origin was the ritual vow or promise of departure and its fulfilment on return, through formulas of the *pro itu et reditu...* type.

Although there were several specific divinities invoked by travelers in the Roman world (such as *Fortuna Redux*, or the *Lares Viales*, not to mention

Hercules or Mercury), this contribution focused on the analysis of the epigraphic and iconographic evidence of some female divinities always mentioned in the plural as guardians of roads and crossroads in various provinces of the Latin West: the *Diviae*, *Triviae* and *Quadriviae*. An approach was made to the key elements of their divine personality and their possible origin, and an analysis was made of their cultic geography, their relationship with other deities and the character of the dedicators of their altars and votive plaques, both individual and collective, as well as the chronology of the evidence and the different spatial modalities of their cult.

**25. Attilio Mastrocinque, “The Face of Eurydice”** **co-organizer**

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Eurydice could not come back to this world because Orpheus looked back at her. Persephone had forbidden this but Orpheus disobeyed. Is there a logic for such a rule? A relief in the Archaeological Museum in Naples shows Orpheus looking at his wife after having removed a veil from her face and the face of dead persons was a sensible element in the ancient funerary art. We find two forms of hiding their face: by veiling it or by depicting the person except his face, by letting it unwrought. Euripides and several Roman sarcophagi depict Alcestis with her head veiled after her return to the house of her husband. On the other hand, some funerary busts from the necropolis of Cyrene show deceased women with their face flat and many sarcophagi of the Roman period are completely sculptured except the face of the buried person. The current explanation based on an untimely death cannot explain the large number amount of such cases; and it would have been were absurd to wait for the death of the customer before carving his or her portrait. There was a religious rule forbidding the vision of the face of dead persons, but it is impossible to ascertain what kind of people abided by this law and what religious stream forbade this.

**26. Nicolas Meunier, “From Withdrawal to Return in the First Decade of the *Ab Vrbe Condita*: An Example of Livian Contradictory Dialectic”**

UCLouvain (Université catholique de Louvain)

**panel chair**

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It is no longer necessary to demonstrate to what extent Livy’s narrative, far from being a faithful and scrupulous account of historical facts, is first and

foremost a literary work, a narration, a collection of *exempla* that should serve as models or anti-models for readers, as the Paduan himself says in his *Praefatio* (Liv. *Praef.* 10). Far from leaving the composition of his narrative to improvisation, Livy adopts a prior overall structure and follows guiding principles, the most important of which is contradictory dialectic, inspired by the art of oratory and rhetoric, in which Titus Livius was trained. This is particularly evident in the first decade, on which this paper will focus. Thus, withdrawals from the civic community, whether individual (in the form of imposed exiles or voluntary withdrawals, examples being numerous: Tarquin the Superb, Coriolanus, Cincinnatus, Kaeso Quinctius, etc.) or collective (in the form of a *secessio* of an entire *ordo*) are systematically followed by a return or an attempt at return. Now, both the withdrawal and the return happen to be narrative motifs already present in Greek literature and myths (the withdrawal in connection with the figures of the tyrant or the lawgiver, or as a consequence of the *στάσις*, the return developing as we know from the Homeric motif of the *νόστοι*), but without being associated in such a systematic way as in Livy. The aim of this paper will therefore be, on the basis of different examples from the first decade, to evaluate the influence of Greek motifs, but above all to highlight the originality of the Latin (and Livian in particular) tradition, notably in the contrasting of withdrawals and returns.

**27. Mariangela Monaca – Emanuele Castelli – Mauro Mormino  
“Returning home? The Visionary Journey of the Sibyl and the Christian  
Testimonies from East to West, and Back Again.”**

Università degli Studi di Messina (all)

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Return home, but which home? This paper will focus on the journey of the Sibyl from East to West and back to East again. This is the imaginary journey of a prophetic typology through his messengers, inspired women bearing a message, each one of them located in distinct cities or among different peoples but all travelling to other lands and shores: from Greece to the East and then to Rome, reaching Cumae and then in Egypt until the Bosphorus and there Constantinople. The message of the Sybil, in fact, shaping new literary *topoi*, will return “home” every time transformed, having borrowed new and diverse instances from the socio-cultural and historical-religious milieux of those who knew and interpreted it: but still without changing its contents and forms. A mapping of the visionary journey made by the Sibyl and



her prophecies and of her subsequent return “home” will allow to highlight this continuous movement between persistence, recovery and mutation. Our enquiry will start from the *Shepherd of Hermas*, which contains the earliest well-attested Christian reference to the Sybil and then, through the account of sources of Western and Eastern Christianity, it will follow the paths of this *Nostos* up to the Byzantine hagiographic and eschatological-apocalyptic tradition of the IX-X centuries. In particular, among the numerous examples, will be considered the case-study represented by the *Life of Andrew the Fool* and its apocalyptic section with its references to the Cuman and Tiburtine oracular tradition. Throughout this peculiar and venturous journey, we can observe how this prophetic chain remained substantially uninterrupted and was a sort of *lingua franca* among peoples and cultures. The oracular journey of the Sibyl - placed at the foundation of a prophecy that is capable of agglutinating the different religious traditions - becomes a vector, making a "tour of the world" that has no end. The Sibylline oracles followed paths marked out by peoples and religious traditions and they still resonate today in the many *milieux* that, in various manners and with different purposes, lay claims to the prophecies and oracles of the Sibyl.

## **28. Francesco Mongelli, “The Right to Come Back Home: *Postliminium* and Women’s Wealth.”**

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Festus’ *De verborum significatu* preserved the entry *postliminium receptum* (244L), through the *codex Farnesianus* (IV A3). Another entry, *postliminium receptus* (245L), is preserved in the Paolo Diacono’s Epitome of the same work. We know through this source that *postliminiun* allowed free people, who had been prisoners abroad, to come back home fully reintegrated in their civic rights. This right had a long previous tradition and other ancient applications: interesting definitions could be observed also in Cicero’s *Topica* (36) or in Gellius’ *Attic Nights* 6.18.7-8, dealing with a case to date back to the Second Punic War. Later, this ancient right became an increasingly important topic in the pattern of the imperial legislation, particularly starting from the Severan Age.

Between the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century CE, for the first time, the emperor Septimius Severus extended the right of the *postliminium* to the children of the prisoners, as we know through a rescript

preserved in the *Codex Iustinianus*, addressed to the governor of Moesia Inferior C. Ovinius Tertullus 9.50 (51).1. This is the most ancient imperial rescript handed down to us dealing with *postliminium* and was noteworthy, since we read it in a shortened form also in three different fragments of the *Digest*, that is to say a very rare circumstance. According to the rescript, if a woman had come back home alone with a child, after a period spent as a prisoner, her child would retain her juridical status, but was considered illegitimate, even if the woman had been imprisoned with her husband. At any rate, the illegitimate children had recently asked for the opportunity to inherit from their mothers (*senatus consultm Orphitianum*, 178 CE), and that was the case also for the children of a prisoner, as Ulpian states (*ad legitimam eius hereditatem admittetur*).

The attention of the Severan emperors and jurists to *postliminium* recommends a new examination, for up to now, the rescript to Ovinius Tertullus about *postliminium* has not been considered alongside other imperial legislation that stressed the role of the women's wealth that contributed to the family's welfare and improvement. Contemporary imperial legislation considered how wealthy women provided a contribution to the maintenance of the social and economic structures of the empire.

**29. Mauro Mormino, co-author “Returning home? The Visionary Journey of the Sibyl and the Christian Testimonies from East to West, and Back Again.”**

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For abstract, see Monaca – directly above.

**30. Geoffrey Nathan, “Coming Homes: The Experiences of Paulinus of Pella”**

**by zoom**

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Current interest in migration, forced movement, and refugees in the modern world has raised a serious set of concerns about those displaced through both natural and manmade events. These include the attempts of such individuals to return home or more often to make new ones. Quite apart from the practical questions of survival, the psychological, social, and cultural

discontinuities often have severe impact both upon those driven from their communities and those (not always willingly or happily) receiving them.

Sadly, these are not new phenomena. In the Western Roman Empire, a series of political and economic crises frequently characterized life in the fourth and fifth centuries and invite discussions about the refugee experience in Late Antiquity.

The aristocrat Paulinus of Pella and his family faced similar challenges, especially during Paulinus' attempts to return to and recover his properties in Bordeaux. His autobiographical poem, the *Eucharisticos*, offers an intimate account of his personal circumstances, which included danger in general and more specific to him. His attempts to return home must be weighed against his own wealth, which included owning multiple estates. Was he coming home or coming homes? His life in the fifth century moreover mirrored profound political and economic shifts, and the broader concerns of refugees in trying to return to their properties and their lives.

Paulinus' perambulations invite the consideration of several issues: what constituted "home"? Did refugees either singly or as a group have similar experiences and were they recognized as a distinctive feature of the social topography of late antique Gaul? Finally, can Paulinus' account indicate both the practical and less tangible effects on the displaced? These questions focus not only on the status of these unwilling migrants, but also on the discourse of what defined community in an age of transformation.

### **31. Josh Nudell, "An Armada from Athens Revisited: the Sicilian Expedition and the Genesis of the Ionian War."**

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Histories of the Sicilian Expedition usually focus on Athens, and with good reason. Athens supplied the largest number of ships, all the leaders were Athenians. Thucydides' account reads as an Athenian tragedy that largely subsumes the allies into the crowd of soldiers. Moreover, it was in the aftermath of the disaster that the Aegean *poleis* slipped through the Athenian grasp.

Scholars have offered explanations for the outbreak of the Ionian War that range from anti-Athenian sentiment stemming from wartime measures like the Standards Decree that primed the Athenians to reject Athenian hegemony (e.g. Kagan 1987; Lewis 1977; Westlake 1979) to a change in Persian policy

(e.g. Debord 1999; Hyland 2018) to an ephemeral mood (Hornblower 2008). When scholars invoke Sicily, it is to follow Diodorus Siculus in arguing that the failure created contempt for Athenian hegemony (τὴν ἡγεμονίαν αὐτῶν καταφρονηθῆναι, 13.34.1). However, another cause of the Ionian War has received too little attention up to this point: the Ionians who fought in Sicily.

In this paper I will re-evaluate the Sicilian Expedition from the perspective of the non-Athenian, and particularly Ionian, forces. These contributions have traditionally been underestimated because Thucydides implies that they had fallen out of practice with warfare and were thus complicit in their own subjugation. Nevertheless, Thucydides' history is littered with accounts of Ionian soldiers fighting far from home, up to and including in the Sicilian Expedition (Thuc. 7.20.2; 7.57.3). Re-evaluating the evidence for Ionian contributions to the Athenian war effort, in turn, complicates straightforward assessments of the popularity of the empire and opens the possibility that it was not only Athenian weakness, but also the costs borne by the allies, that led the Ionians to entertain the offers from Persia that put in motion the events that led to war.

### **32. Giulia Pedrucci, “Kore/Persephone’s Journey to the Afterworld as a Path to Infertility”**

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As mythological figures, Demeter and Kore stand together as timeless symbols of this moment of transition between maidenhood, wifehood, *and then* motherhood. While contemplating these goddesses, historically situated and embodied women surely remembered — or learned soon enough — that pregnancies and babies would follow their marriage. The mythological narrative, however, focuses on this crucial transition rather than on the effective beginning of motherhood through pregnancy and childbirth. Kore is the maiden, the new bride, and the mother-to-be. She never becomes a mother.<sup>1</sup>

The absence of offspring can be explained by the functional reading we just mentioned: she a mother-to-be, not a mother. Demeter, in the Eleusinian myth, plays the role of the mother. There is, however, another way that can be explored in this regard and that is not necessary in contrast with the first one: Kore/Persephone’s marriage is sterile, since it takes place in the underworld. There is no life in the afterworld; therefore, she can not give birth to a child.

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<sup>1</sup> The only exception is the orphic tradition on Zagreus, see Photius, s.u. *Zagreus*.

This paper will explore if the journey of Kore/Persephone to the Hades can be seen as a path to infertility. In order to do so, other female creatures whose destiny is bonded to the realm of death will be taken into consideration.

### **33. Jessica Piccinini, “From East to West via Dodona. The evidence from the oracular tablets”**

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That a good number of oracular tablets from Dodona concern trade and business is a very well-known topic. From the first publication of tablets, it was clear that the success of commercial activities, most of them operated *kata thalassan*, occupied a significant place in the private queries to the oracle of Dodona.

In this cluster of evidence, very few attest to the destination of the journey; in some cases, the point of departure of the journey is inferred by the dialect in which the question was written, and by cross-comparison with the map of distribution of the name of the consultant in the rare cases in which a proper name is attested.

From such a combination of data, it results that in the great majority of cases, the radius of action is situated between Magna Graecia and Sicily (in particular the Rhodian colonies in Sicily, Agrakas and Gela) and the lower part of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. In other words, the consultants either are from or are directed to these areas. Two exceptions in this rule are two tablets, the focus of this paper, which will concern long-distance journeys.

#### *Versione originale:*

Che un buon numero di tavolette oracolari di Dodona avesse come argomento i commerci e i traffici marittimi è cosa ben nota. Fin già dalle prime pubblicazioni dedicate alle iscrizioni è stato chiaro che molti dei devoti frequentavano il santuario e ne interrogavano l'oracolo per questioni relativi a viaggi *kata thalassan*. Le tavolette in questione conservano memoria del luogo di destinazione del consultante, di cui solo raramente si conosce l'origine, che risulta però intuibile grazie al dialetto utilizzato o, in pochi casi fortunati, dal nome e dall'etnico del consultante stesso. Il dato più significativo che emerge dalle tavolette relative a traffici commerciali è il modesto raggio d'azione dei consultanti, i quali si muovevano per lo più lungo le rotte che collegavano la Grecia continentale alle coste della Sicilia e della Magna Grecia. Fanno eccezione due tavolette che, oggetto dell'intervento, sono relative a viaggi su più lunghe distanze.

**34. Beatrice Poletti, *The Greek progenitor of the Romans: The Legend of Aeneas in Dionysius of Halicarnassus' Roman Antiquities***

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In my contribution, I explore the version of the Aeneas legend given in the *Roman Antiquities* by the Augustan writer Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Specifically, I consider the significance of Aeneas' travels and settlement in Italy in the project of the *Roman Antiquities* as well as contemporary (Augustan) preoccupations with Roman ethnic origins. Aeneas was a key figure in Dionysius' history of Rome, which aimed to demonstrate the Romans' 'true' identity (that is, as *Greeks*). In Dionysius' view, the Trojans had a Greek genealogy and were thereby an originally Greek people. This version constituted a break from the Virgilian interpretation and common Roman views of the Trojans. Early Roman writers had accepted the idea of a Greek component in Rome's "pedigree." However, by choosing Aeneas over a Greek progenitor, the Romans had asserted their intention to distinguish themselves from the Greeks. Virgil presents a notion of Roman people as distinct from both Greeks *and* Trojans: the *Aeneid* concludes with Juno's plea to Jupiter not to let the Latins change their name or alter their habits in favour of the Trojans, but to have instead the Trojans renounce their name and identity and be incorporated into the Latin people (12.819-28). As I show in my analysis, Dionysius was conceivably aware of the difficulty of endorsing his account, which presented the Trojans as actual Greeks and eliminated any differences between the two groups, and he resorted to unique narrative devices to prove the validity of his arguments—as well as, ultimately, the Greek ancestry of the Romans.

**35. Lorina Quartarone, "Hell on Earth: a Study of *Odyssey* 19 as a Metaphorical *Nekyia*"**

**by zoom**

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In her recent book, *Myths of the Underworld in Contemporary Culture* (Oxford 2019), Judith Fletcher identifies the *evocatio* or 'dialogue with the dead' as an important moment which allows a heroic figure to "enact the appealing fantasy of gaining knowledge about the afterlife without actually dying" (2). Fletcher finds that at least part of this conversation involves "advising the living on how to behave" (3). Whereas Fletcher finds the

Odyssey's final book to be the "second *nekyia*" of the poem (23), I shall argue for an interpretation of book 19 as a metaphorical *evocatio* and *nekyia*: the fact that Homer peppers the narrative with several symbols or images that evoke the underworld –including references to death, torches and fire, and the burial shroud – suggest that this scene is a metaphorical visit to the underworld. Odysseus' interview with Penelope parallels his conversation with Tiresias in book 11, in that both of them discover important information on how to conduct themselves imminently. As they speak, Penelope visibly emotionally confronts the long absence of her husband and refers to him as "dead" (19.85, 142), states that she "will not ever welcome him home" (256), and weeps with grief; she also makes reference to the mourning of Procne, an icon of grief in Greek myth. Her description of the idea of leaving the palace to marry another man (19.580) also evokes the trauma of marriage for a young Greek girl who must leave her family and live in the house of her new husband – an experience which marks the death of childhood or innocence. During the course of their conversation or quasi-*evocatio*, both Penelope and Odysseus gather important information: Penelope likely (possibly subconsciously) understands the many hints that the disguised Odysseus offers,<sup>1</sup> and he learns not only that she has been steadfastly loyal but also that she plans to make the contest for her hand (something that only he could do) the very next day.

<sup>1</sup> Here I follow P.W. Harsh, "Penelope and Odysseus in *Odyssey* XIX," *AJP* 71 (1950) 1-21

### 36. Irena Radová, "Delos' Homecoming"

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*Nostos* means a longed-for homecoming. The premise of the narrative of such a return is that the hero/heroine finds himself in a foreign country from where he/she is trying to get back. However, in addition to returns, there is also a narrative of "anti-returns" in ancient literature, as represented by Virgil's *Aeneid*. Aeneas leaves his old home to find a new one whose glory surpasses all expectations and changes the existing order of the world. But it is not only the heroes who can contribute to a new world order in their newfound home, where they have arrived after long wanderings. Location can also play such a role. A prominent example of this is Delos in the hymn which Callimachus dedicated to that very isle. The island wanders vaguely in the sea at first so that no one knows in advance where it will be seen. But when it defies the threats of the goddess Hera, who incidentally drives various other geographical

entities (rivers, mountains, islands...) from their homes, it gains anchorage and a special significance as an island dedicated to the god Apollo. The presentation aims to show the different aspects of the island's wandering before it became Delos, and the consequences of this isle finding its new home.

**37. Antonio Salvati, “The Return to Life of Er and the *antarabhava*: A Historical-Religious Comparison”** **by zoom**

Università della Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli”

For the English version of the abstract, see Claudia Santi *infra*

*Il ritorno in vita di Er e l'antarabhava: una comparazione storico-religiosa* Lo scopo della mia presentazione è fare un confronto tra la storia di Er nel decimo libro della Repubblica di Platone e il concetto di *antarabhava* nelle prime scuole del buddismo. In primo luogo, verrà raccontata la storia di Er: Er era un guerriero che si credeva fosse morto in battaglia e che fosse tornato in vita poco prima che il suo corpo fosse bruciato sulla pira. Er descrive la visione che ebbe prima di tornare alla vita: vide le azioni e il destino delle anime disincarnate nello stato e nello stadio prima della loro reincarnazione. Quindi verrà trattata la dottrina buddista dell'*antarabhava*: nelle prime scuole buddiste, *antarabhava* è un'esistenza intermedia prima della successiva reincarnazione nel ciclo delle generazioni. Infine, verranno sottolineate somiglianze e differenze tra le dottrine platonica e buddista sull'aldilà per conoscerle meglio entrambe.

**38. Elena Santagati, “Pisistratus’s Exiles and the International Strategy Network.”** **host**

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Herodotus and Aristotle have slightly different presentations on the activities of Peisistratus while in exile as he planned his return(s) to power. Riding on his success in the war against Megara, Peisistratus launched his first attempt at tyranny, but his term in power was short. Regarding his first exile, most sources have little information, except Aristotle who says he married Timonassa during this time. There are hints of Peisistratid power in Brauron that may indicate that Peisistratus stayed there during his first exile. After coming out the worse in a political struggle, Megacles the Alcmaeonid was forced to seek an alliance with Peisistratus, but his return to power was also short. The sources provide more information about the second period of exile. Unnamed cities owed a debt of gratitude to him and provided funds, but it is a challenge to identify these cities. Lygdamis was a crucial supporter, and he was probably established on Naxos before Peisistratus’s third tyranny.



**39. Claudia Santi and Antonio Salvati, “The Return to Life of Er and the *antarabhava*: A Historical-Religious Comparison”** **by zoom**

Università della Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli”

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We compare the story of Er, warrior believed to have died in battle and to have returned to life just before his body was burned on the pyre, in Plato’s *Republic* 10 and Plin. *NH* 7.52.173 and the concept of *antarabhava* in the early schools of Buddhism. Er describes the vision he had before returning to life: he saw the actions and destiny of the disembodied souls in the state and stage before their reincarnations. Then, the Buddhist doctrine of *antarabhava* will be dealt with: in the early Buddhist schools, *antarabhava* is an intermediate existence of souls before their next reincarnation in the cycle of generations. Finally, similarities and differences between platonic and Buddhist doctrines on the afterlife will be underlined in order to know both of them better.

**40. Daniel Sarefeld, “Impossible returns in the Scythian *logos* of Herodotus”**

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In Book Four of the *Histories*, Herodotus sets out the history and culture of the Scythians in the course of detailing the ill-fated invasion of Scythia led by the Persian King of Kings, Darius the Great. Throughout this section of the work, Herodotus returns again and again to the theme of homecomings and their perils. For Herodotus, Scythian homecomings were fraught with danger.

This is clear from the very first chapters, where the Scythian horde is described returning from their twenty-eight year domination of Asia to find an army raised up against them in their own land. (Hdt. 4.1-4) In the course of the Scythian *logos*, Herodotus underscores this point repeatedly in his discussions of individual Scythians, for whom returning home was hardly possible. This can be seen in the story of the well-known Scythian sage, Anacharsis (Hdt. 4.76– 78), who was felled by the arrow of his brother, the Scythian King Saulios, upon his arrival in his homeland, and likewise in the story of the Scythian King Scyles (Hdt. 4.78–80), who was beheaded by his brother, Octamasades, on returning to Scythia. For them, as Herodotus makes quite clear, their adoptions of foreign, that is, Greek religious customs, were transgressions that made their returns impossible. However, other individuals

in the course of Herodotus's account who were not Scythians were shown returning home successfully, such as Thracian Salmoxis. (Hdt. 4.94\_96) What insights can Herodotus offer us about homecomings and their dangers, and about returns to Scythia in particular? Does Herodotus's Scythian *logos* seem to convey actual cultural attitudes of the Scythians with respect to the subject of returning home, or perhaps Greek ideas about religious initiations, or are these stories simply features of his narrative? Ultimately, is it true that you can't go home to Scythia?

**41. Ben Scolnic, “The Mythical Geography of Isaiah 23:1-14 and the Failure of Poseidon, ‘Averter of Disaster’ ”** **by zoom**

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In *Isaiah 23*, the ships of Tarshish, on their voyage home, howl to see the destruction of their home ports of Tyre and Sidon. “The Sea says: “I am like one who has never borne children” (23:4). Bible scholars struggle over the interpretation of this verse, wondering why a masculine voice speaks about bearing children. To the mythic mind, however, this verse makes perfect sense, for Poseidon has sired as many as one-hundred and forty children, including gods (e.g., Proteus), nymphs (e.g., Rhode), animals (e.g., Pegasus), monsters (e.g., Charybdis and Polyphemus) and two sons that are connected strongly to places mentioned in this passage (Belus, an early king of Egypt, and Agenor, king of Tyre (with his son Phoenix = Phoenicia). Now that those places (Sidon, Tyre, Cyprus, and Tarshish) are destroyed, it is as if the Sea never fathered them. The prophecy mocks Poseidon’s power to stop the return home of those he hates (Odysseus) or to ensure the safe passage of those he would protect (Theseus and Boötes). In contrast to the Biblical God, the prophet states, Poseidon has limited power and can only mourn and lament the fate of his progeny.

**42. Nikky Singh**

**panel chair**

Chair of Religious Studies, Colby College

[nksingh@colby.edu](mailto:nksingh@colby.edu)

**43. Gaius Stern, “Regulus, Hannibal and Why Roman POWs Can’t Go Home Again.”** **by zoom co-organizer**

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Before 216 BC, Romans used to ransom and exchange POWs (prisoners of war), just like everyone else, but after the shame of Cannae, the Senate put a halt to all efforts to regain MIAs (missing in action) and POWs. Two previous, terrible incidents burned in the Roman psyche, regarding surrender and prisoners. In 387 BC, Brennus forced the Romans to ransom the city for gold. In 321, a double Roman army was trapped and forced to surrender and walk under the yoke at Caudine Forks. These scars never healed, so when the plight of the POWs at Cannae and of the state revived bad memories, the Senate sacrificed the POWs to atone for Roman disgrace at the moment when Rome most needed soldiers.

Hannibal offered to ransom 10,000 Roman survivors, most of whom he captured in their camp, but, although the Senate was desperate for manpower, it rejected his offer. Having just lost about 70,000 soldiers KIA at Cannae the Senate decided to abandon to their fate the Romans POWs and instead purchased and freed 8,000 slaves who were enlisted into the army, to make a statement. Rome preferred newly free men who would fight for Rome over the recently free men who did not fight their way out. The POWs were sold into slavery, and thereafter, Romans would regard as useless any fellow citizen who surrendered or fell into enemy hands. Disdain for prisoners became a permanent feature of the Roman war machine. All soldiers knew they had to fight their way out of enemy hands and were all the fiercer for it, as Polybius testifies. The ethos was so well imbued by the AD era that when later citizens heard stories of Roman POWs, they assumed a mistake had been made, because *everyone knows there is no such thing as a Roman POW*.

**44. Kerasia A. Stratiki, “Heracles in the *Periegesis* of Pausanias. The Descent to the Underworld and the Return to the World.”** **by zoom**  
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In Corinth, Hercules was associated with the cult of Artemis *Soteira* in the *agora* of Troezen. In the part of the temple of this goddess it is said that Heracles also brought the dog of Hades from the Underworld. The same Dionysus brought back Semele. Was Artemis *Soteira* in Troezen a deity of the Underworld? The same surname can be given by Hecate, a goddess directly connected with the world of the dead. There is no doubt that the sanctuary was

a passage between the two worlds, as was the case in the "land gap" of Hermione, from where Heracles brought, according to local tradition, Cerberus. The "earth gap" of Hermione was located in the sanctuary of Klymenos, a local invocation (as mentioned by Pausanias) of Hades. However, according to the most widespread tradition, although Cerberus was in the cave of Demeter in Hermione, Hercules took him out of the city of Tainaro in Laconia, where there was an entrance to Hades. Hades welcomed him at the gate (Pylos) and the Pausanias seems to prefer, when he mentions the local tradition of Troezen for the sanctuary of Artemis *Soteira*, the version of Laconia.

**45. László Takács**

**co-organizer by zoom**

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**46. Anna J. Tóth, "The hero's journey – No way home."**

**by zoom**

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Two scholars, Vladimir Propp and Joseph Campbell proposed the existence of the "monomyth." that all tales are the same tale, "the hero's journey." According to Propp the universal storyline of fairy tales is a remnant of myths connected to ancient coming-of-age rituals. The crucial point of both theories, namely that the adventures take place in a symbolic otherworld, is older than their works and appears in many other researchers of the century. The popularity of this idea was partly a result of the emergence of the new concept of "liminality." The transitional phase of rituals expresses the liminal state of a person or a community by dissolving the normal binaries of life (physical integrity and symmetry: lameness, baldness; gender: cross-dressing, ritual homosexuality; human-animal boundary: transformation into animals, wearing leather and fur, raw meat eating; social order: ritual blasphemy, *licentia Saturnalia* etc. Greek hero-myths are full of such symbolism, it cannot be a surprise that they were often interpreted in the context of coming-of-age rituals.

In my paper I make an attempt to analyze the Greek hero-myth following the original method of Propp. This approach reveals the fundamental differences between the similar plots of tales and myths. The myths contain two separable sequences of adventures. 1.: divine father, suspicion of bastardry,

exposure to the forest, fostering by animals and shepherds in the wilderness. This sequence is followed by a second series of adventures that can have three possible outcomes (often combined): 1. heroic deeds in a distant, fairyland-like country (Pelops, Jason, Theseus), 2. foundation of a city (Theseus, Theban Dioscuri), 3. the hero returns home and destroys his family and city (Paris, Oedipus, Theseus). In the Greek myths there was no happy ending for the hero, or more precisely there was no way home. This means that the ritual background of these myths cannot be a coming-of-age ritual because its result is the opposite of reintegration into society. The abnormal birth and childhood of the hero creates an individual who is a potential *heros ktistes*, a founder. The hero myth should be interpreted in the context of rituals such as the *ver sacrum*. In the age of colonialization this scheme must have been still living: in Daniel Ogden's *Crooked Kings*, the marginality of the scape-goat/founder is expressed with the same symbolism as in the hero myths, though in the latter case the ambivalence of the hero is less explicit.

**47. Luciano Traversa, “*Ex provincia Romam redire. Political Reactions to the Term of Office between the Middle and the Late Roman Republic.*”**

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A tumultuous political reaction greeted several Roman magistrates who come home after completing a term in office and/or a provincial command. Several events will be examined from the second half of the third century BC after the first conquests *extra Italiam* to 43 BC, immediately before the Second Triumvirate. We will analyze the political debates which testify problematic returns to Rome *ex provincia* and deepen some reflections of recent research, such as Francisco Pina Polo's 2019 monograph, 'The Quaestorship in the Roman Republic,' according to which «political influences played a decisive role when it came to deciding the duration of a term of office» and Cristina Rosillo-Lopez's 2021 article, "Strategies of Prorogation in the Late Roman Republic," which carefully recovered «the practical and informal part of administration that is all senatorial work, initiatives and negotiations that took part outside the Senate and assemblies but ensured that the formal side could be successfully completed». The purpose is to reconstruct the political dynamics underlying specific cases: to this end one must investigate the use of some key terms such as '*de provincia decedere*' and '*redire Romam ex provincia*' in the sources, such as Livy, rhetorical texts - including the

fragments of the Republican orators, and the writings of Cicero. The attempt will reconstruct the various reactions to different types of *reditus ex provincia* by following their historical development and their relationship with the contemporary legislation *de provinciis*. One relevant issue is the denial of a triumph or the granting of a lesser honor, such as an ovation, in the event that the magistrate returns upon the expiration of office. Another issue is the timing of the return, early returns to Rome due to *revocatio imperii* or, on the contrary, the excessive cases of *prorogatio imperii* which require an end. The specificity of institutional reactions and where these voices are expressed also matter: on the one hand, the meetings of the Senate in the Temple of Bellona, where the commanders were received before entering the *urbs*, or on the other hand, the *contiones*, as in the case of *Oratio G. Gracchi ad populum cum ex Sardinia rediit* (124 B.C.).

#### **48. Giulio Vallarino, “Remembering Home Abroad: “Foreign” Civic Subdivisions in the Greek Polis.”**

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Home was a mental construct depending on personal adherence to a social group, but the physical and religious appeal of certain parts of fatherland had a certain role. As a matter of fact, the texture of the Greek cities population often results from various additions of groups of people coming from abroad, sometimes originally united from the moment of the foundation, otherwise joining in subsequent times. How did the citizens keep alive the memories of those "old homes" set inside the new one? And how much did they care about? A way for answering this question could be looking at the inner structure of the Greek poleis, that is characterized by many types of subdivisions of the population (such as *phylai*, *phratriai*, *ghene* etc.), organized in different ways depending on the peculiar story of each city. Some of those subdivisions carry names that remind us of the geographic origin of specific social groups, incorporated into the city they live in. My paper will discuss the role played by these minor civic subdivisions in keeping their ethnic memories alive, browsing various examples taken from Greek literature and epigraphy.

#### **49. Kresimir Vuković “Coming Home to Rome: Rivers, Immigrants, and Nostalgia in the *Fasti*”**

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It is now widely agreed that Ovid revised his *Fasti* in exile, and there are several instances in the poem where the poet explicitly says so. Many of the episodes that betray exilic revisions portray migrants, foreigners, and exiles as Ovid uses their desires to reflect his own yearning: coming home to Rome. The Tiber presents a particularly interesting case study: paradoxically, the river of Rome has a fluid and foreign character (*advena Tiberis*), stressed several times alongside its designation as an ‘Etruscan river’ (*Tuscus amnis*). This paper aims to analyze the ambivalent relationship between Ovid’s rivers (particularly the Tiber), nostalgia, and liminal characters in the *Fasti*. Ovid relates the Tiber to the ambiguous characters of Janus (1.200-246), a god whose nature escapes stable definitions (thus reflecting the generic instability of the work itself). In the prophetic monologue of *Carmentis* (1.480-540), the seer consoles her immigrant son (Evander) in words very reminiscent of Ovid’s experience in the *Tristia*. The river is linked to female characters such as Anna Perenna (an exile from Africa) and Claudia Quinta, the heroine of a scene set on the Tiber (4.305-48), described in a way that recalls Augustus’ daughter Julia, exiled in the same year as Ovid. In Ovid’s conversation with the god of the river on the festival of the *Argei* (5.635-62), the stories Tiber tells are all stories of migration. The *Argei* ritual is explained as the last wish of the Greeks that had come to the site of Rome with Evander, recalling Ovid’s last wishes in *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In sum, the Tiber’s connections to migrants, liminal characters, and fluid identities reflect the fluid character of the river himself/itself and Ovid’s own plight as an exile. These episodes reinforce the unstable and ambiguous nature of the calendar poem where love elegy rubs shoulders with politics and epic themes with slapstick comedy.

## **50. Henry Walker, “The two Paths of Exile in Virgil’s *Aeneid*.”**

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Exile was one of the worst penalties that could be inflicted on a Roman citizen. Ovid assures us that going into exile was like going to your own funeral (*Tristia* 1.3.89); an exiled Roman was a dead man (*Tristia* 1.4.28). Cicero wrote suicide was better than exile (*Ad Att.* 3.4, *Ad Frat. Quint.* 1.4, *Ad Fam.* 14.4). This Roman nightmare was the fate of Aeneas himself, the ancestor of the Romans. Aeneas is an exile from Troy, and spends a part of his exile among the dead. As Aeneas enters the Underworld, the Sibyl warns him that it

is very difficult to escape from the Underworld and return to the upper air (*superas auras*, 6.129), to the everyday world of the living. Virgil depicts the Underworld as a prison in which souls are trapped (*inclusas animas*, 6.680), souls that long to reach the upper light of human existence (*superum lumen*, 6.680). But when Anchises teaches his son about the soul, the meaning of these words changes completely. Now it is living human beings who are trapped in darkness and a prison without light (*clausae tenebris et carcere caeco*, 6.734); now the air that we human beings should be aiming for (*auras*, 6.733) is not earthly life or the air that we breathe, but the aether of a Platonic heaven.

There is an extraordinary difference between the normal pagan attitude of the Sibyl, and the Pythagorean revelation that Anchises preaches. The idea that our human life is the equivalent of being buried alive, trapped in a prison, or sent into permanent exile goes back to Pythagoras and anticipates the Christian notion that we are exiles from Eden on this earth. Virgil presents us, therefore, with two very different notions of our journey in life. On the Pythagorean pathway of Virgil the philosopher, life itself is exile and all meaning must lie beyond this earthly existence; the desire to live in our world is dreadful (*lucis...tam dira cupido*, 6.721). On the pagan journey recounted by Virgil the poet, Aeneas and his comrades are exiled from their Trojan past and moving towards a new home, a Roman future here on earth.

The ultimate goal of heroic pagans is to go back home and live among their own people. Odysseus rejects immortality with Calypso for a human life with Penelope; Pollux does not want a divine existence without his brother; Juturna regrets that she cannot join her brother in death (12.879-881). This is the path that Aeneas chooses to follow. Rather than trying to escape from this world, he brings his troubles and his exile to an end when he takes up permanent residence in Italy as “*Indigitem Aenean*” (12.794).

Withdrawn but welcome to listen in

Rosalba Arcuri  
Paolo Barresi

Nicholetta Bruno  
Sondra Macri

Rita Pierini  
Roberto Trizio

1. **RH** Altay Coşkun, “Imperial Homecoming(s) and the Ara Pacis Augustae in 13 BC”
3. **RH** Victoria Györi, “Keep Ithaca Always on Your Mind: Tiberius and Odysseus”



2. **GE** Lorina Quartarone, “Hell on Earth: a Study of Odyssey<sup>19</sup> as a Metaphorical Nekyia”
12. **GM** Antonio Arcudi, “The Return of Philoctetes’
13. **GM** Anna J. Tóth, “The hero’s journey – No way home.”
5. **R** FranciscoMarco Simón, “Heureux Qui, Comme Ulysse, *A Fait Un Bon Voyage*: Invoking The Deities of the Roads in the Latin West.”
9. **RH**/Marie-Laure Freyburger, "Cassius Dio, a Bithynian exiled to Rome."
6. **LA** Geoffrey Nathan, “Coming Homes: The Experiences of Paulinus of Pella”
  
4. **GH** Josh Nudell, “An Armada from Athens Revisited: the Sicilian Expedition and the Genesis of the Ionian War.”
8. **Rel** Claudia Santi and Antonio Salvati, “The Return to Life of Er and the antarabhava: A Historical-Religious Comparison.”
10. **HG** Ben Scolnic, “The Mythical Geography of Isaiah 23:1-14 and the Failure of Poseidon, ‘Averter of Disaster’ .”
7. **GL** Kerasia A. Stratiki, “Heracles in the Periegesis of Pausanias. The Descent to the Underworld and the Return to the World.”
11. **RL Gerard** Freyburger, “The Impossible Return Home of Lucius in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*.”
14. **RH1** Fernando Lopez Sanchez, "King Pyrrhus in the West: in the Footsteps of Agathocles"
15. **RH1** Patrick Hunt, “Hannibal’s Hard Homecoming: Hardly Nostalgic.”
16. **RH1** Gaius Stern, “Regulus, Hannibal and Why Roman POWs Can’t Go Home Again.”