

*23rd Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Student
Conference*

Order and Chaos

March 18th, 2023

Program



The University of British Columbia
xwməθkwəy̓ əm (Musqueam) Territory



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies
Faculty of Arts

We in the Department of Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies (AMNE), who are hosting this conference, acknowledge that UBC-Vancouver is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

Though we are gathering in a virtual space, we want to acknowledge that we as hosts are situated on lands that have always been a place of learning, culture, history, and tradition for generations of Musqueam people.

SCHEDULE

8:45-9:00 Opening Remarks

9:00-10:30: Panel 1 – Rulers and Government

Mallaury Guigner (Université Paul Valéry 3), The Importance of the Office Holders Related to the Care of the King's Body in Maintaining the Order of the Country in Egypt

Louis Polcin (University of British Columbia), Mosaics of Identity: Herodian Legitimization and Displays of Kingship

Michelle Nardelli (Université de Rennes 2), The Pacification of the Alpine Region from Augustus to Mussolini

11:00-12:30: Panel 2 – Material Culture and Archaeology

Tabasom Ilkhan (Simon Fraser University), Bioarchaeological Investigation and a Preliminary Study in the Mobility in the Center of the Iranian Plateau During the Bronze Age, Kafarved-Varzaneh

Louise O'Brien (University of Liverpool), Reframing the Hawara Mummy Portraits: A New Approach to Hybridity in Graeco-Roman Egypt

2:00-3:30: Panel 3 – Philology and Literature

David Eich (Freie Universität Berlin), Order within the Chaos: The Organizational Principles of Enumerations in Sumerian Literary Texts

Patricia Hatcher (City University of New York), Ordering Pliny's Naturalis Historia Book VIII: Creating the Monstrous 'Other'

Cristalle Watson (University of British Columbia), "Bringing Order out of Chaos in the "Creation" Episode of Proba's Cento Vergilianus

4:00-5:30: Panel 4 – Re-examinations and New Approaches

Matthieu Hagenmuller (Sorbonne University, Paris), A New Approach to Ancient Egyptian Punishments

Nick Trcalek (Tufts University), The Antonine Itinerary: A Beautiful Mess

Michael Hensley (Catholic University of America), A King by Any Other Name: Remembering and Reconstructing the Aksumite Past from Medieval Evidence

6:00-7:30: Keynote Address – Law Without Order in Severan Rome

Zachary Herz, Assistant Professor of Classics, University of Colorado-Boulder

Closing Remarks

Note: The Zoom meeting room is available for socialization during the day's breaks.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Zachary Herz, Assistant Professor of Classics, University of Colorado-Boulder

Zachary Herz is an Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Colorado-Boulder. He specializes in the legal and intellectual history of the imperial period, and particularly in how imperial authors used the symbolic framework of law within political and ethical discourse. He received his J.D. from Yale Law School in 2014 and his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 2018. His current book project, which has received support from Boulder's Center for the Humanities and Arts as well as the Loeb Classical Library Foundation, considers how Roman conceptions of imperial power changed, and were changed by, Roman ideas about the rule of law. Today's talk will present a portion of Prof. Herz's book research, with a particular focus on legal responses to political chaos during the third century C.E.

ABSTRACTS

Panel 1 – Rulers and Government

The Importance of the Office Holders Related to the Care of the King's Body in Maintaining the Order of the Country in Egypt (Mallaury Guigner)

During the Old Egyptian Empire, and particularly the Fifth dynasty, (2500 - 2350 BC), important mutations occur under various points: administrative, social, political and religious. These reforms must be related to the rather obscure succession that takes place during the transition of the Fourth and Fifth dynasties, after the reign of Menkaura (2680- 2500 BC). However, we are not witnessing the collapse of the state. New conceptions are put in place with as actors the holders of offices related to the care of the king's body. Among them are hairdressers, manicurists, barbers, functions that did not exist before. It is clear from their titles that changes are taking place around them, visible mainly in their tombs in the Memphite region. Their purpose is to keep the king in place so that he can himself overcome chaos and maintain order in the country: the maat.

Mosaics of Identity: Herodian Legitimization and Displays of Kingship (Louis Polcin)

Josephus notes that Herod, often known as “Herod the Great,” instituted a permanent shift in Jewish history; for the Roman-Jewish historian, Herod was the first ruler who “destroyed the long-held customs which were inviolable.” (Antiquities 15.267) While Josephus uses this claim to place Herod within a specific literary topos, Herodian engagement with non-Jewish practices is clear; Herod constructed a number of cities in honor of Augustus and other Roman patrons, such as Caesarea and Sebaste, complete with temples to the imperial cult. (Bellum Judaicum, 1.403–415; Ant. 15.326–341, 363) Yet Herod also maintained Jewish ritual baths in his palatial complexes, refrained from displaying “graven images” of people or animals in Judea, and even massively expanded the temple in Jerusalem. (BJ 1.401, Ant 15.380–423) These seeming contradictions have led scholars to develop the so-called “many faces” approach to

understanding Herod, whereby he operated according to local tradition, with little regard for any centralized, structured approach to legitimizing his kingship on a wider scale. In this study, I argue that we need not understand Herod's support for Jews and non-Jews alike as contradictory; instead, I suggest that Herod adopted a predominantly Hellenistic and Roman form of rulership. I further seek to foreground a specific practice of Hellenistic rulers that has hitherto not received sufficient attention in Herodian scholarship: the support and respect for a wide array of local cults and traditions in exchange for political loyalty. This is a key link that allows us to consider Herod's support for multiple local cults, including the Jerusalem temple, as subsumed within a common Hellenistic conception of widespread religious toleration. Within this Hellenistic framework, Herod could gain the support of each cultural group that came under his authority, thus engaging productively with the wide array of cultural and theological communities within his kingdom.

From Chaos to Order: The Pacification of the Alpine Region from Augustus to Mussolini (Michelle Nardelli)

This paper aims at discussing the concepts of order and chaos in the literature of the Augustan age (in particular, the campaign in the Alps), and to analyse the references to such themes in the propaganda of Mussolini's regime during the Fascist dictatorship (1922-1943). The alpine campaign (16-12 B.C.) led to the final submission of the Alpine peoples and the establishment of the province of Rhaetia. Historical sources (e.g., Strab. Geog. IV 6 and Hor. Od. IV 14) describe Augustus' echoing themes proper of imperial propaganda. Indeed, Alpine environment was described as completely inhospitable, left at the mercy of nomadic peoples, such as Raeti and Lepontii. In such a chaotic context, Augustus is depicted as the leader bringing peace to a naturally warlike region and securing the Alpine passes. He also started a process of deep transformation of the alpine region, with the construction of roads and the fortification of the passes, with the aim of safeguarding the transit of people and goods from Italy towards the regions beyond the Alps. In the 1930s, Mussolini built his personal myth on similar themes, showing himself as the strong leader bringing order in a world of chaos and indirectly relying on the myth of Augustus. Indeed, after World War I, Italy was suffering from a severe economic crisis and his institutions felt threatened by the uprising of the socialist movement. Clear conquest as the transition from chaos to order (this being from barbarism to civilisation), certainly examples of the narrative representing the Duce as a man capable of providing order in a time of great instability are the urbanisation in the Lepini Mountains, described as "barren and craggy in appearance", and the reclamation of the Agro Pontino. In this marshy area located southern to Rome (described as "a terrible fomite of pestiferous emanations"), the dictator also founded some cities, which names made explicit reference to the Roman world (i.e. Latina, Littoria).

Panel 2 – Material Culture and Archaeology

Bioarchaeological Investigation and a Preliminary Study in Mobility in the Center of the Iranian Plateau During the Bronze Age, Kafarved-Varzaneh (Tabasom Ilkhan)

During the Bronze Age, a significant decline in population size was witnessed in the Iranian Central Plateau that, by many researchers, has been considered a product of climatic and ecological change. This research has been carried out based on collected human remains from several newly discovered Early Bronze Age (EBA) sites in the Kafarved-Varzaneh area, located in the Iranian Plateau's heartland besides the Zayandeh-rud river basin and eastern part of Gavkhuni wetland, Isfahan, Iran. Investigations on the region resulted in identifying more than 200 archaeological sites, from which three have been excavated so far and radiocarbon dated to c. 2700-2400 BC, displaying a flourished urbanization during a dark age when other places were depopulated or completely abandoned. Several graves and more than seventy human skeleton remains were unearthed either from secondary contexts or during fieldwork in 2018 and 2019. Paleopathological observation has been carried out, which led to identifying several abnormalities, including a bipartite navicular, hyperostosis, cribra orbitalia, and osteomyelitis. In general, this study shows that inhabitants were in relatively good health with an equal ratio of dental caries with other Bronze Age populations. Sixteen plant samples and forty teeth, including incisors and first molars, were considered for this analysis, and what is illustrated by preliminary $87\text{Sr}/86\text{Sr}$ results illustrate that most individuals were local. There is no evidence of long-distance migration, but some of them have regional values, which may be evidence of mobility within the Zayabdeh-rud basin region, but it could also be the result of importing food from the upstream area of the river.

Reframing the Hawara Mummy Portraits: A New Approach to Hybridity in Graeco-Roman Egypt (Louise O'Brien)

Hybridity permeates every layer of modern society, from art, to food, to religion. We experience hybridity as part of a world that does not always distinguish the specific cultures it is made up of. In the study of Graeco-Roman Egypt, we often take for granted the idea that this was not the case—that these cultures were clearly defined by social, legal, or political structures. However, we must ask, how accurate is this assumption? The Hawara mummy portraits embody this hybridity, providing a snapshot of an area of Egypt that underwent rapid assimilation during the Graeco-Roman Period. Yet their original reception, solely as artwork rather than as part of a wider display of funerary commemoration, removed the portraits from this context. Reconstruction, a new methodology aimed at rethinking the approach to syncretism, questions the deconstructive methods previously used to interpret the portraits by drawing on the work of Homi Bhabha and Jacques Derrida. It will consider three aspects: Reception, Content, and Perception, and will question how reception of material matches up to its contents. It works to rethink how hybrid material would have been used or perceived—who was the intended audience, and in what context would they have interpreted the hybridity presented? Would they see the distinct cultural components of the portraits: the Greek style, the Egyptian funerary belief, the Roman adornment? Or would they see such hybridity as a cultural whole, neither solely Egyptian, Greek, or Roman but all three at once? Only through interdisciplinary research, consulting classical, Egyptological, and art historical methods, can we begin to understand how hybridity could be perceived and received by both ancient and modern audiences. Using the case study of the Hawara portraits, we can build a more complete picture of how hybridity was not only displayed but experienced during this period.

Panel 3 – Philology and Literature

Order within the Chaos. The Organizational Principles of Enumerations in Sumerian Literary Texts (David Eich)

Ever since translations of Sumerian literary texts from the Old Babylonian period (2000–1500 BC) became available on a larger scale, scholars have written about the literary and philosophical qualities of the texts. However, crucial studies, data, and even text editions were often missing and, in many cases, are still missing today. This has resulted in widespread disagreement among Sumerologists on how to understand these texts. In my PhD dissertation I provide some of the missing data, and studies by analyzing a rhetoric device in Sumerian literary texts, called enumeration. An enumeration is listing of items within a narrative. It may take several forms, e. g. a catalogue, a chain, and it can consist of only three or up to twenty, thirty or more items. Frequently, for example, the names of gods or cities were enumerated, but also professions, animals, wooden objects, or the like. At first sight, these enumerations seem hopelessly chaotic: there is rarely a structure apparent, items that we expect to be grouped together are scattered, and overall, it seems impossible, to make sense of the whole. However, when looking closer, one recognizes organizational principles, subtle references between words on the semantic, phonetic, graphemic, and graphic level. They were implemented by the Sumerian scribes to create order within the chaos. I propose a presentation of my ongoing PhD work on these organizational principles. The title of my presentation will be: “Order within the Chaos. The Organizational Principles of Enumerations in Sumerian Literary Texts”. It will consist of a short introduction to Old Babylonian Sumerian literature followed by an overview of organizational principles including examples, and it will conclude with an outlook on what remains to be done and how to connect my ongoing to my previous research on the subject.

Ordering Pliny’s *Naturalis Historia* Book VIII- Creating the Monstrous ‘Other’ (Patricia Hatcher)

Pliny the Elder wrote his *Naturalis Historia* in part as propaganda for the power of the early Roman empire, and much work has been generated on the idea via the geographies of Books III- VI and ethnographies of Book VII (see Mary Beagon 2005; Trevor Morgan Murphy 1997; Valérie Naas 2011; Greg Woolf 2010) . In many ways, this paper will continue the tradition by turning to Book VIII, Pliny’s work concerning animals that live on land. Seemingly random, the placement of the animal contents following Books VII’s ethnographies is actually not an accident. After descriptions of such people as the Cynocephali and Monocoli who live in exotic locations like India and Africa, Pliny moves in the next section to fantastic beasts that also populate those same locations. His process of Othering the animals, which exhibit unique characteristics such as size or intelligence, in turn helps to further Other the populations of those distant and unfamiliar lands. This paper will examine the steps by which this occurs, using the lens of Jefferey Jerome Cohen’s 1996 essay “Monster Culture (Seven Theses).” Cohen’s theses illuminate the ways in which the animals are categorized to give voice to Rome’s current cultural and political circumstances through (seemingly) ruptured taxonomies of distant beasts. The paper will conclude with a discussion of why Rome was repulsed by, yet still had a desire for, these “monsters.”

Bringing Order out of Chaos in the "Creation" Episode of Proba's *Centio Vergilianus* (Cristalle Watson)

The “Creation” episode (lines 35-135) of Proba’s *Centio Vergilianus* mediates between order and chaos on four levels. Firstly, the literal level: Proba depicts a scene in which God brings an

ordered universe out of primeval chaos. Secondly, the conceptual level: Proba, like other theologians of her day, must carefully balance the competing claims of, on the one hand, Christian doctrine regarding ex nihilo creation and, on the other, both the Genesis 1 account and pagan philosophical and literary accounts which depict the cosmos as having been formed from pre-existing matter. Thirdly, the textual level: Vergil's words and phrases are excerpted, moved around, and pieced back together in a process that might appear chaotic, but which is guided by a deliberate strategy on Proba's part. Finally, the personal level: God's creation of the world out of chaos is juxtaposed with, and reflected in, Proba's own poetic conversion from traditional epic (relating battles and political conflicts) to Christian epic (relating God's order and Christ's peace). I will explore the strategies by which Proba, on all four levels, creatively navigates between order and chaos in the Cento's "Creation" episode. In the process, I will make my own contribution towards bringing order out of literary chaos by proposing an emendation of the lacuna at line 42a-b.

Panel 4 – Re-examinations and New Approaches

A New Approach to Ancient Egyptian Punishments (Matthieu Hagenmuller)

Scholars have since the 19th century studied the Egyptian punitive system, but two methods have for the moment been dominant in this field. On the one hand, a judiciary approach has tried to list different types of crimes and punishments ; on the other, the notion of Maat, Order as well as Truth, has been seen as an all-encompassing basis on which real-life practices and legal codes were established. In this communication, my aim is to propose a slightly different approach, and to analyse punishments not as a distinct field, but as a part of social reality. This approach is derived from the theoretical frame developed in the 1939 book *Punishment and Social Structure*, by G. Rusche and O. Kirchheimer, later praised by M. Foucault. The point is not overthrow all that we know about the Egyptian legal system, but to ask new questions. The first would be about what we mean by legal system, and if all punishments can be linked to such a system. This question has been studied by scholars like S. Allam and C.J. Eyre, but needs today new inquiries. I will thus use some examples from my ongoing PhD research, such as images from private tombs showing beatings far from any clear legal frame. The second problem would stem from the seemingly 'pacifist' aspect of Egyptian society, caused by the paucity of clear records of violence, especially when we compare Egypt with the Near East. I thus aim to confront this matter, and to see how social conditions and political organisation can give us answers about the rarity of evidence for legal violence.

The Antonine Itinerary: A Beautiful Mess (Nick Trcalek)

The 'Antonine Itinerary', a seemingly chaotic collection of 251 land routes, is the most extensive itinerary that has survived from antiquity and is an important contribution to our understanding of ancient perceptions of space and travel. The document has received little scholarly focus since the 1970s, when Alfred Rivet scrutinized the British section. Following this renewed interest, Nicholas Reed elaborated on the view Dennis van Berchem set forth decades previously, in the 1930s. Reed (and van Berchem) saw the routes of the Itinerary as principally being organized around a few major routes: imperial journeys (actually taken or simply planned), and a plethora of minor routes: either alternative stages of the imperial journeys or annona routes (the latter included for an undetermined reason). While the Itinerary itself is likely a collection of a few planned imperial journeys supplemented by annona routes, the intentional selection, omission, and synthesis of different routes into a single document demonstrates that the purpose of the Itinerary as a whole is not exclusively related to the

purposes of its sources. Moreover, since the minor annona routes far outnumber the major imperial ones, it may be misleading to place too much emphasis on imperial routes, as this might obscure our understanding of the other 243 routes. The first half of my Master's thesis focuses closely on the African section of the Itinerary, finding clearly delineated sub-groups and route clusters (based on co-origin and co-terminal routes, linear route groupings, and internal route 'nodal' points) in order to make sense of the apparent haphazard organization and presentation of the routes by the Itinerary's composer. I believe that these same methods can be and should be applied to the remaining sections of the Itinerary, in the hope that the internal structure of the Itinerary can be further elucidated.

A King by Any Other Name: Remembering and Reconstructing the Aksumite Past from Medieval Evidence (Michael Hensley)

In the past fifty years or so, the field of Ethiopic studies has witnessed a significant increase in the availability of digitized manuscripts due to several projects, such as EMMML, EMIP, and Ethio-SPaRE. Partly because of the accessibility of these manuscripts and partly because of their staggering number and detail, scholars have readily turned to them for information about the Aksumite period (100 BCE–900 CE), the so-called 'classical' period of the Horn of Africa. However, despite the attractive qualities of this source of data, the manuscript evidence is problematic because of its late dating, with a large majority of manuscripts postdating the fifteenth century. Furthermore, the vast manuscript evidence is regularly at odds with the ancient documentation (inscriptions, coinage, ancient non-Ethiopic sources, and archaeology) on numerous topics, including the Christianization of the Aksumite Empire, the establishment of many churches and monasteries, and the names of the Aksumite kings. Yet when scholars eschew the manuscript documentation entirely, the paucity of the ancient documentation quickly becomes apparent, prompting scholars again to question if the surviving manuscript evidence really has no place in the reconstruction of the Aksumite past. In light of the challenges that the extant source material presents, this paper will investigate the limits of the Ethiopic manuscript evidence for studying the Aksumite period, thereby offering ways in which the manuscript evidence can and should inform our understanding of the ancient and medieval periods of the Horn of Africa. In particular, themes of memory and reimagining will play key roles. As a case-study, this paper will focus on the reconstruction of the names of the Aksumite kings, thus incorporating multiple sources (Aksumite inscriptions and coinage, the Book of Aksum, the Glory of Kings, and the King Lists, etc.) on multiple media (textual, numismatic, and archaeological) from multiple periods (ancient and medieval.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The AIGSC Committee would like to thank the Department of Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies, and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for their generous and ongoing support of this conference.

We would like to thank the members of the 2022-23 Organization Committee:

Co-Chairs: Sasha Boghosian, Setenay Mufti, and Chris Thoms-Bauer

We are indebted to our dedicated team of volunteer organizers, who poured countless hours of work into designing, planning, and hosting this event.

Thanks to Teresa Luther for volunteering as Zoom support.

The Committee also wishes to thank the entire AMNE Department for its support in this student-led initiative. A special thanks is due to Sheri Pak and Michael Griffin in all that they have done to ensure the smooth running of this event.