

THE EUROPAEUM

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The Europaeum *Classics Colloquium*: Critical Thinking in Classics Freie Universität Berlin | 16 – 18 December 2024

The study of ancient texts lies at the heart of the classical tradition, offering a window into the thoughts, beliefs, and practices of the Greco-Roman world. Yet the interpretation of these texts is far from straightforward, requiring careful analysis, contextual understanding, and critical reflection. This year's *Europaeum Classics Colloquium* seeks to explore the role of critical thinking in the reading and interpretation of all aspects of Antiquity and how application of rational inquiry can deepen our understanding of Antiquity's relevance for contemporary thought and practice.

While often considered a modern concept, critical thinking can itself be traced back to the ancient world. Greek and Roman, and non Greco-Roman, thinkers grappled with questions of logic, rhetoric, and epistemology, laying the foundations for the development of critical thinking as we know it today. Amongst the themes this Colloquium explores will be (1) how classical sources conceptualised and practised critical thinking, and how their approaches related to those of other ancient traditions; (2) how theories of critical thinking were applied across different domains such as philosophy, politics, law, literature, and education in the classical world; and (3) how classical ideas about critical thinking relate to, and can inform, contemporary debates about reasoning, argumentation, and the pursuit of truth.

The Colloquium seeks to generate a dialogue between classical sources and modern problems that will allow us to apply new insights to our own contemporary issues, including debates about education, media literacy, and public discourse. It brings together master's and doctoral researchers in Humanities and Social Sciences subjects who have a particular interest in classical perspectives on critical thinking.

Monday 16th December

Venue: Room L116, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin

- 9.15am Welcome (Prof. Melanie Möller, Freie Universität and Dr Miles Pattenden, The Europaeum)
- 9.30 Keynote: Prof. Miriam Valdes Guia (Complutense) "The Attic *demos* in the 6th century and 'critical thinking': between clientelism, political awareness, and agency"



- 10.45 Coffee Break
- 11.15 Student Panel 1
Anastasiia Morozova, “Classics at Operation in Late-Antique Literature and Philosophy: Emotions in Epistemology and Ethics of Boethius’s The Consolation of Philosophy”
Gregorz Pamula, “Writings of early Christian authors as a source of knowledge about late antique theatre”
- 12.45 Lunch
- 2.15 Student Panel 2
Ben Willstead, “What is it about the miniaturised, “aphoristic” but bipartite form of the epigram which has made it such a unique model for intellectual comment and critique in its reception from antiquity into the present?”
Jozef Legierski, “Agonistic memory as a method for research on cultures of memory”
- 3.45 Tea Break
- 4.15 Q&A with Victoria Moul (Oxford/UCL), “Being a Classicist beyond the Academy”
- 5.30 Close

Tuesday 17th December

Venue: Room L116, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin

- 9.30am Keynote Lecture: Kate Cook (St Andrews/KCL), title TBA
- 10.45 Coffee Break
- 11.15 Keynote Lecture: Fabian Zuppke (FU Berlin) “Crisis and Critical Thinking: on rationality and religiosity in late Republican Rome”
- 12.45 Lunch
- 2.15 Student Panel 3
Kenneth Arthur, “Xenophon on Lysander and the Thirty Tyrants”
Alexander Trott, “Infowar in the late Republic: Cato and Anticato”
- 3.45 Tea Break
- 4.15 Keynote Lecture: Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis (St Andrews) “Encountering classical objects: sensory approaches and critical thinking”
- 5.30 Close

Wednesday 18th December

**Venue: Room L116, Habelschwerdter Allee
45, 14195 Berlin**

- 9.30am Keynote Lecture: Prof. Emma Greensmith (Oxford), “Skewing Sacred Texts: Homeric Criticism and Biblical Exegesis in Late Antiquity”
- 10.45 Coffee Break
- 11.15 Student Panel 4
Selen Turgutalp, “Could the Trojan Horse have been a ship?”
Viktoriya Semenova, “The incorporation of Ignatian educational principles in the teaching of Roman law”
- 12.45 Lunch
- 2pm Visit to the Altes Museum

Student participants

Kenneth Arthur (St Andrews)
Anna Hacuhula (Jagiellonian)
Patrick Johnson (Oxford)
Jozef Legierski (Jagiellonian)
Anastaiia Morozova (CEU)
Gregorz Pamula (Jagiellonian)
Jan-Mlate Schulz (Leiden)
Viktoriya Semenova (Jagiellonian)
Megan Sharp (Oxford)
Alexander Trott (Freie Universität, Berlin)
Selen Turgutalp (Oxford)
Ben Willstead (Oxford)
Raven Yan Yi Yip (Charles University, Prague)