



CALL FOR PAPERS

Exploring Rhetorical Strategies Across Greek and Latin Imperial Prose

PANEL ORGANIZATION:

ORGANIZER 1:

name	Olivier Demerre
e-mail	Olivier.demerre@ugent.be
affiliation	Ghent University
country	Belgium
biography	<p>Olivier Demerre (Olivier.demerre@ugent.be) is a junior postdoctoral research fellow based at Ghent University. His doctoral dissertation examined the influence of Roman love elegy on the construction of characters who act as <i>praeceptores amoris</i> in the novels of Longus and Achilles Tatius. His current postdoctoral project, funded by the Flemish research fund (FWO), explores how attention to concepts and tools developed in the context of rhetorical theory and (sophistic) oratory enhances our understanding of the concept of fiction in antiquity through a systematic study of trial scenes in ancient Greek and Latin novels. Olivier has published articles and presented papers at international conferences on ancient Greek and Latin novels, on multicultural exchange in the imperial period, and on imperial rhetorical theory and practice.</p>

ORGANIZER 2:

name	Laura Loporcaro
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affiliation	Ghent University
country	Belgium
biography	<p>Laura Loporcaro (laura.loporcaro@ugent.be) is a postdoctoral researcher at Ghent University, as part of the ERC project <i>Philology as Science in 19-Century</i></p>



Europe. She completed her DPhil in Classics at Oxford in 2022. Her first book, *Reading Quintilian*, is forthcoming with Oxford University Press. Alongside Quintilian, she has published on the reception of antiquity in music. She is currently working on the history of classical philology in early 19th-century Germany, focusing on the figure of Friedrich August Wolf.

PANEL SYNOPSIS:

This panel aims to enhance our understanding of how rhetorical theory and practice contributed to shape Greek and Latin literary practices across prose genres in Imperial literature up to the third century CE.

In the imperial period, rhetorical training constituted the lion's share of the educative curriculum (e.g. Criboire 2001; Morgan 1998). Recent scholarship, exploring the presence of rhetorical features across genres from epic to didactic writing including rhetorical theory itself (e.g. Van der Eijk 1997, Gunderson 2017, Peirano-Garrison 2019), has emphasized the role of rhetoric in shaping literary practices, cultivating creative writing skills, developing reflective concepts about literary creation, and discussing norms and conventions through e.g. canons and reading lists (e.g. Webb 2017). However, not only do many texts still await analysis in this direction, but during the period under consideration, scholars have predominantly envisaged the literary impact of rhetoric within linguistic boundaries, aligning specific concepts or strategies in Latin texts with Latin rhetorical treatises and those in Greek texts with Greek treatises (Habinek 2017). Rhetorical performances were attended by multilingual and multicultural intellectual communities, and there is evidence for bidirectional exchanges in other domains of cultural and literary production (e.g. for ancient novels Jolowicz 2021). Therefore, while the influential role of rhetoric has been established, many Greek and Latin literary and technical texts still require a more refined conceptualization of the nature and extent of this rhetorical influence in the Imperial period.

This panel explores whether and which rhetorical concepts and strategies appear to be particularly prominent, whether and which specific rhetorical strategies appear to be adopted in ways that are genre- and/or culturally specific, and whether literary practice may endorse or challenge specific strategies or concepts. It further examines whether and to what extent the categories developed in intertextual studies can be applied to interpret the role of rhetoric in ancient literary genres, such as prose fiction and didactic prose, and explores other avenues for conceptualizing this relationship. More broadly, it encourages discussion on the fundamental question when we can detect strategies that appear to be specifically 'rhetorical' at all: when the use of what we read as rhetorical strategies can be taken to indicate an active engagement with rhetorical culture, and why. It particularly welcomes abstracts on case studies working across the Greek and Latin linguistic spheres and aims to explore whether key rhetorical concepts were formulated differently in Greek and in Latin rhetorical texts, whether Latin texts show engagement with contemporary Greek rhetorical theory and (sophistic) practice, and whether specific strategies and concepts originating in or redefined by Latin rhetorical theory can be traced within Greek literary texts or Greek rhetorical treatises.



Observations:

Please submit an abstract of **no more than 300 words** in English, French, German or Italian, a **brief scholarly biography** indicating **current affiliation**, and the preferred **duration of the paper** (20 or 40 minutes) to olivier.demerre@ugent.be and laura.loporcaro@ugent.be by **20/02/2025**. A decision regarding acceptance will be communicated by **28/02/2025**. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Olivier Demerre (olivier.demerre@ugent.be) and Laura Loporcaro (laura.loporcaro@ugent.be).

Bibliography:

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- Jolowicz, D. 2021. *Latin Poetry in the Ancient Greek Novels*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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