

**CfP: Music and Power: The View from Hellenistic and Imperial Literature (SCS 2024)**

2024 SCS Annual Meeting (Chicago, January 4–7)

Panel sponsored by MOISA (The International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and its Cultural Heritage);

organized by Francesca Modini (University of Warwick) and Pauline LeVen (Yale University).

Submission deadline: March 10, 2023

The interplay between music and power is so pervasive that it often risks going overlooked or taken for granted. We may not be consciously aware of this, but even current electoral campaigns would not be the same without carefully handpicked soundtracks. So far, scholars have focused on analyzing the political functions of both musical performances and theory with special attention to archaic and classical Greece; they have probed, for instance, how lyric genres were framed by their political contexts, the political ramifications of theatre music, or the dynamics between rule and musical education as envisaged by Plato. In comparison, the overlapping between music and politics in postclassical periods still offers the opportunity for exciting developments. Moving into this direction, this panel explores the relationship between politics and music as reflected in Greek and Latin literature of the Hellenistic and Roman periods down to Late Antiquity, including but not limited to: Hellenistic and imperial Greek and Latin poetry (e.g. epic, lyric), rhetorical prose writers of the Second Sophistic, technical treatises.

Possible questions to be investigated and topics to discuss include (but are not limited to):

- **The use of musical concepts and images as political allegories.** Do texts of these periods draw on musical imagery as a commentary to (contemporary) power and politics? What do musical details add to their political discourses?
- Do **prose texts** engage with political music differently from **poetic ones**?
- What is the relationship between musical allegories of power and **ongoing musical performances**? Are the engagement with music and the musical propaganda of Hellenistic and Roman rulers reflected in contemporary texts and their use of music with political ramification?
- **Gender politics.** Are musical notions and images used to define gender power relations in these texts? What do such musical elements tell us about contemporary power dynamics between genders?
- **Power and musical theory.** Do political issues infiltrate theoretical discussions of music, and to what effect? As a result of their drawing on earlier sources, are musical treatises like Aristides Quintilianus' or Pseudo-Plutarch's completely insulated from political implications?
- **Changes over time.** Does the use of musical allegories of power evolve over the broad timespan considered here? For instance, how is it different, if at all, in Late Antique texts?

- Is the political significance of music affected by the **advent of Christianity**? How do Christian authors capitalize on musical imagery to discuss or address secular and divine power?

In an effort to showcase the best papers and the most innovative research in the field of ancient music and postclassical literature, we also welcome abstracts that tackle the panel theme through an interdisciplinary approach open to comparative exchange.

Abstracts for 20-minute papers to be presented at the 2024 SCS Annual Meeting should observe the instructions for the format of individual abstracts that appear on the SCS website and should not include any self-identifying information. The deadline for submission is **March 10, 2023** and all prospective presenters should be SCS members in good standing at the time of submission. Please address your abstract to [akramarzlegionaries.org](http://akramarzlegionaries.org) and any question related to the panel to [francesca.modini@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:francesca.modini@warwick.ac.uk). In accordance with SCS regulations, all abstracts for papers will be read anonymously by two referees.

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