



Regione Toscana



CLASSICAMENTE

Dialoghi senesi sul mondo antico

(V series)

INTRODUCTION

Following the successful results of last year's series of seminars, the PhD students belonging to the *Anthropology of the Ancient World* curriculum of the PhD course in *Classics and Archeology* would like to promote a fifth cycle of seminars of the series *Classicamente. Dialoghi senesi sul mondo antico*. The series is characterised by a particular interest in the different methodologies and research perspectives which represent the main fields of enquiry of anthropology of the ancient world ever since its first development (with the works of Gernet, Vernant and Detienne), but it also focuses on how different inter-disciplinary approaches can contribute to its constant innovation. In addition, one of the main goals of this year's edition is to create a meeting point for scholarship on antiquity and contemporary debate on its reception in modern societies, underlining the cultural, social and ideological aspects which spark from the interaction between present and past.

The cycle will be structured in four sessions, each one orientated around the following topics:

1) Forms, customs and language of polytheisms around the ancient Mediterranean

Studies on ancient polytheisms allow us to appreciate the meaning and relevance of the relationship between our contemporary cultural patterns and ancient religious systems. The similarities, shared functions and differences that emerge from such a comparison offer a possible starting point for an enhancement on our perspective on today's world.

The key-role of religious representation in the construction and organisation of life and, consequently, in an individual's space of action in ancient societies are closely intertwined. This fundamental premise gives us the chance to reflect on the various forms in which this interaction between individual and religious custom takes place.

We will therefore gladly welcome papers that touch on themes and aspects of ancient religion from an anthropological point of view: "making" the divine (naming divine entities, narrating theogonies and relationships between gods, forms of iconographic representation of deities, oracular language), rituality and ritual spaces (ritual topography, the relationship between norm and custom in religious activity, mystery religions, divination, diving practices, sensory experiences in religious activity, relationship between *sacra privata* and domestic cult, divine configurations in context), otherness and access to religious life (female agency, slavery, conflict and interaction between different forms of religion, reception of pagan religion in early Christianity).

2) Body and Senses

The correct role to ascribe to our senses in epistemology forms a question which runs throughout all ancient philosophical speculation, finding a wide space for discussion, for example, in Plato. If the cognitive value of sensations is discredited by this particular author, because the objects of sense-based knowledge are in a constantly changing flux and because sensual (and sexual) desire is effectively unsatiable, like a pierced jar (*Gorgias*), the impetus towards philosophy, or at least the initial impetus, is nevertheless expressed in openly erotic and sensual terms (*Symposium*, *Phaedrus*). Plato's position can be a starting point for a discussion on the way in which, in antiquity, the respective roles of the mind (or, put in more emic terms, of the *psyche*) and the body are construed as regards the formation of knowledge. Hence, one may also explore the value given to what can only be experienced through the body, in terms of sensory perception and, thus, sensual desire, pleasure and pain.

Another interesting field of study is the issue concerning the functions taken on by our senses in structuring inter-species relationships in a world, such as the ancient one, in which non-human animals are much more part of daily life than they are in today's societies. In this context, which metaphors are employed to describe animal appearance and behaviour? How are animal *voices* perceived and then culturally de-coded? Also, how are other forms of Human-Animal communication represented and imagined, such as those that regard touch and physical contact?

Thus, with this section of our CfP our goal is to create a moment of discussion on issues regarding the cultural configuration, representation and speculation on human senses and on the relationship between the latter and the concepts of cognition, body and sensuality through the analysis of literary, epigraphic, historical and philosophical texts belonging to antiquity, starting from the perspective of Anthropology, Historiography, History of Literature and History of Philosophy. We also welcome papers coming from scholars of History of Science and History of Medicine in Antiquity.

3) Texts and Images: inter- and multimodal communication

The apparently obvious distinction between "text" and "image" and the specific characteristics of either media have been challenged by the studies in Visual and Social Semiotics that have been appearing since the second half of the twentieth century. The analysis of aspects such as the production process of images and texts, their formal organisation, their materiality and transmedia circulation has indeed led us to observe the existence of numerous forms of intersections and intercommunication between texts and images, a phenomenon we now label as "multimodality". An epigraphic text with specific graphic characteristics can indeed carry different meanings that do not belong to the glottographic component of writing, in the same way that a given iconography can refer to a specific (literary) text, or a text and an image combined on the same medium can establish a dense network of internal and external references, the reception of which varies depending on the culture of provenance of the receiver. Applying this "multimodal literacy" perspective to antiquity has been extremely productive, as we can already observe in studies on epichoric alphabets and non-alphabetic writing systems.

We therefore welcome papers that touch on issues regarding inter- and multimodal communication and the relationship between texts and images, including, but not limited to, visual aspects of writing in its use and learning; interaction between graphic and glossematical aspects in writing; iconic and/or social value of writing, para-graphic writing and pseudo-graphic writing; iconography with textual references or 'illustrations' of texts; figurative codes with conventional meaning; relationship between writing and/or figurative cultures and signs such as *maison marks*, stamps, seals; relationship between artistic-figurative cultures and specific forms of writing and their reception and re-elaboration in different cultures.

4) Identity performativity

Considering the relationship between the new perspectives offered by Social Sciences (see Bell, Bourdieu, Bourriaud, Butler, Connerton, Goffman, Schriewer, Turner) and the methods belonging to the disciplines canonically associated with the study of antiquity, scholars have been able to promote and develop a discussion

on the processes of *identity construction within different ancient societies*. What is most original in the latest studies on the topic is the focus on *the performative character of identity*, which is to say identity as a dynamic, unstable process which constantly undergoes (re)affirmation, (re)negotiation, (re)formatting and (re)definition.

These assumptions give rise to the need to talk about identity processes (or '*identisation*') rather than crystallised 'identities' envisioned as *a priori* entities, and to dwell upon the ways through which different societies engaged with these social, psychological and linguistic processes *via* an active participation in supra-individual contexts.

We therefore welcome proposals regarding: the relationship between the function of contemporary identity categories and ancient societies; identifiers and identity *evidence* (dress-code, physical alterations, ordeals, ritual formulas, skill in using specific objects, de-nominations etc.); identity dynamics (identifying others, identifying oneself and being identified); identity dimensions and *negations* (individual, collective); events, spaces and means through which *other* identities can be represented.

WHERE AND WHEN

This fifth series will hopefully be held in person in the DFCLAM (Philology and Critique of Ancient and Modern Literatures) Department's facilities at the University of Siena, with the possibility of following the event online.

Normally, each session is held over one or two days. The session normally starts with a brief lecture by a keynote speaker, who will be someone of academic relevance who works on some, or all, of the issues covered in the papers that follow. After each presentation, we encourage questions and further discussion.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

This Call for Papers is aimed at young scholars belonging to the following categories: MA graduates, PhD students, researchers involved in post-doc programmes and, generally speaking, early career researchers who, in all cases, **have obtained the title of PhD no earlier than 5 years before the deadline of this Call**. To submit a proposal, please send an abstract (**no more than 500 words**) together with a **basic bibliography**, using the **following form** <https://forms.gle/LrEJ5awFfrWNqXNH8> by midnight (24:00) of 15/06/2022.

In the form, you'll have to specify your name, surname, title of the paper, topic of interest, academic affiliation together with brief CV containing academic titles, experience and any publication.

We ask any interested MA graduates to also send a **mandatory cover letter** signed by a university lecturer. We also welcome **panels** with two or more speakers, preferably representing different research perspectives, to enhance the dialectic and inter-disciplinary dimension of our sessions, an aspect we very much believe in. If presenting a panel, we ask you to submit a brief presentation (200/250 words max.), in which the reason behind the panel is clearly underlined. Only those who wish to submit a panel with two or more speakers are invited to send abstracts, CVs and a brief panel presentation the email address dialoghisenesi@gmail.com, with the following subject: *Panel Proposal Dialoghi Senesi V Series*. In the mails text, please state clearly the name, surname and academic affiliation of each speaker, plus the titles of each individual presentation and of the panel.

We also invite you to fill in the **Questionnaire** attached to this Call, the purpose of which is to enrich the discussion on the relationship between each presentation and the contemporary debate on the reception of antiquity.

The authors of the selected proposals will be contacted as soon as possible in order to organise the calendar of each session and all other related questions.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Proposals will be assessed by a scientific committee formed by Alessandro BARCHIESI (Siena/New York-NYU), Marco BETTALLI (Siena), Maurizio BETTINI (Siena), Simone BETA (Siena), Daniela BONANNO (Palermo), Corinne BONNET (Toulouse), Tommaso BRACCINI (Siena), Gianluca DE SANCTIS (Tuscia), Stefano FERRUCCI (Siena), Alessandro FO (Siena), Cristiana FRANCO (Siena-Unistrasi), Manuela GIORDANO (Siena), Mario LENTANO (Siena), Sonia MACRÌ (Enna), Enrico MEDDA (Pisa), Francesca MENCACCI (Siena), Francesca PRESCENDI (Paris), Silvia ROMANI (Milano), William SHORT (Exeter), Andrea TADDEI (Pisa), Cristiano VIGLIETTI (Siena).

FURTHER INFORMATION

The scientific and organising committees reserves the right, according to their quality, to submit some of the papers to the publication process in the scientific journal *I Quaderni del Ramo d'Oro*, in the forms considered appropriate and after having undergone double blind peer review. **Abstracts can be submitted in the following languages: Italian, English, French.** If presenting in a language other than Italian, **we kindly ask you to present a written version of the paper to allow a more thorough discussion.**

For any further information, please write to dialoghisenesi@gmail.com.

OPTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE – CLASSICAMENTE '22 CfP

Please answer briefly and effectively (6/7 lines max.) to some or all of the following questions, in order to allow us to get a better understanding of your scientific orientation. This edition of Classicamente aims in fact to integrate the academic debate on 'our' research topics with open reflections on the contemporary cultural phenomena involving them, even conflictually, among which the 'decolonisation of Classics' and the so-called 'Cancel Culture'.

- 1) Which research method(s) have you employed whilst working on your presentation?
- 2) Which research question(s) does your presentation set out to answer?
- 3) What other disciplines, alongside those canonically associated to Classical Studies, interest you and can enhance and enlighten your research in an original way?
- 4) Can your research or your presentation contribute to the current debate on Cancel Culture? If so, how?