

Book of Abstracts

Introductory speech

Franco Montanari (Università di Genova)

Ancient Scholarship and Ancient Theatre

The paper presents a concise overview of the development of interest in the study of dramatic poetry (comedy and tragedy) in Alexandrian philology, starting with Zenodotus. In conclusion, some current avenues of research are indicated to bring new content to the topic of ancient scholarship applied to dramatic poetry.

Panel 1 – Hellenistic Scholarship and Scholars

Fausto Montana (Università di Pavia)

Παίζειν from Aristophanes to his ancient commentators

This paper addresses issues concerning the vocabulary and methodology of the ancient commentators of Aristophanes' comedies, with a focus on the use of the word παίζειν.

Claudia Nuovo (Università di San Marino)

How old is 'Old'? Chamaeleon's legacy on Ancient Comedy

Together with Theophrastus, Chamaeleon of Heraclea (4th–3rd century BC) is recognized as one of the earliest known authors to dedicate a monograph to comedy. According to the surviving testimonies, the title of his work, cited by Athenaeus, alternates between Περὶ κωμωδίας and Περὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας κωμωδίας. While scholars have predominantly favoured the authenticity of the title Περὶ κωμωδίας, this paper argues that the title Περὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας κωμωδίας is equally, if not more, plausible.

If validated, this hypothesis would suggest that Chamaeleon was the first to use the term ἀρχαία κωμωδία in a quasi-technical sense, providing early evidence of its conceptualization as both a chronological and literary category. Although Chamaeleon's use of the term may differ from the meaning it would later acquire, this interpretation highlights his pivotal role in shaping the discourse on comedy. Furthermore, such a conclusion might prompt us to reconsider Chamaeleon's broader approach to theatrical genres. It suggests that his works on comedy, tragedy, and other forms of drama were likely conceived as components of a unified vision – an ambitious project aimed at mapping the evolution of dramatic genres in ancient Greece as a continuous, interwoven history, rather than as isolated traditions.

Simone Fiori (Università di Genova)

Alexandria meets Byzantium. Hellenistic scholarship on comedy in the *Etymologicum Genuinum*

Although still largely unpublished, the *Etymologicum Genuinum* is among the most important products of Greek scholarship. This massive lexicon, the oldest of the four major Byzantine etymologica (mid-9th century), is definitely more than a sheer collection of etymologies; instead, it should be regarded as a truly encyclopedic work. What makes it special is its wealth of quotations and learned material, which depends mostly on earlier sources and thus often ultimately dates back to the Hellenistic age.

Given this background, this paper aims to investigate the presence of (fragments of) Hellenistic scholarship in the *Etymologicum Genuinum*. It will be shown that the *Genuinum* preserves certain fragments of comic exegesis by various earlier scholars, both well-known (e.g., Lycophron, Eratosthenes, Aristarchus, Didymus) and lesser-known (e.g., Harmatius and Nicadius). This material stems from all kinds of ancient scholarship on comedy (λέξεις, συγγράμματα, ὑπομνήματα) and covers both Old and—to a lesser extent—New Comedy. Particular emphasis will be placed on the textual transmission of these fragments, which seem to have reached the etymologica mainly (exclusively?) through intermediate sources. Quite remarkably, fragments of

Hellenistic scholarship on Old Comedy are likely to have come to the *Genuinum* from different sources than those on New Comedy: while the former are largely indebted to the Atticist tradition, the latter have followed a different, more obscure path.

Panel 2 – Scholiography

Patrick Finglass (University of Bristol)

The value of scholia for the textual criticism of Sophocles

This paper examines the value of the ancient scholia for the textual criticism of Sophocles. If we had no scholia, how different would our texts of Sophocles look today? And when we do find good readings, what do they tell us about the transmission of Sophocles' text, and about the engagement of ancient scholars of Sophocles with textual problems?

Marco Comunetti (Università di Genova)

The dynamics of the interaction between offstage and onstage spaces in the scholia on ancient Greek theatre: a sketch

This presentation offers an overview of ancient Greek scholia that address the offstage dimension of theatre and the dynamics of its relationship with the onstage action. This topic arises in discussions pertaining to a variety of contexts: scenes of murder and suicide, the interplay between seeing and hearing, the arrangement and structuring of plot details and events, the entrances and exits of characters, the use of theatrical machinery, issues concerning settings and scenery, as well as the proper attribution of lines and the punctuation of a specific passage. The remarks of ancient scholars on such matters display varying degrees of depth and sophistication: they range from concise and straightforward annotations, intended to support a basic understanding of an episode, to more elaborate observations that explore the causes and modalities of the staging, as well as the effectiveness and plausibility of the representation, the playwright's art and technique, the audience's expectations and reception of a given scene.

Paolo Scattolin (Università di Verona)

Hunting (or fishing) for quotations: some remarks on the use of *loci similes* for exegetical purposes in the scholia.

It is well-known that ancient scholiasts made extensive use of quotations with exegetical purpose, taking them primarily from Homer and the commented author but going so far as to plunder every useful literary source, including those chronologically subsequent to the commented author. A particularly interesting case is that of multiple quotations from archaic epic authors contrasted with Hellenistic poets in the ancient scholia to Euripides: it is important to recognize the flexible mechanisms of multiple quotations in order to appreciate the value of ancient interpretations. The scholia connected to *Hippolytus* 141-150 are examined for this purpose.

Panel 3 – Lexicography

Paolo Biagio Cipolla (Università di Catania)

Περὶ ἐργασίας. Hunting for tragic quotations in Hesychius' *Lexicon*.

Hesychius' *Lexicon* is one of the most important sources of indirect tradition for lost Greek dramas. In the present paper some examples will be analysed in which either the distinction between lemma and explanation or the authorship of the quotation are ambiguous.

Federico Favi (Università del Piemonte Orientale)

Athenaeus, Epicharmus, and a neglected criterion of Greek lexicography

Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists* are one of the main sources of Greek fragmentary literature. This massive work has predominantly been exploited as a mine of quotations, but in more recent times, scholars have devoted increasing consideration to Athenaeus as a writer and to the *Deipnosophists*

as a work of erudition. Inevitably, much remains to be done. The way in which Athenaeus collects, interprets, and manipulates his sources is a very challenging topic and one that hardly admits of easy generalisations. My paper will focus on some quotations from Epicharmus, with special attention for those contained in Book 7 of the *Deipnosophists*. Starting from a re-analysis of the sources that transmit the different bits and pieces that constitute Epicharmus' fragment 41, it aims to show that we can achieve a more satisfactory reconstruction of this fragment(s) if we recognise the (so far neglected) lexicographical and taxonomic criterion adopted by Athenaeus in his classification of fish species. Among other consequences, we might also be able to identify a “new” fragment of Epicharmus in a passage in Book 3 of the *Deipnosophists*.

Maria Giovanna Sandri (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Dramatic quotations in Greek treatises on tropes

Greek treatises on tropes transmit many literary quotations, which exemplify different kinds of rhetorical figures. Although the vast majority of them are Homeric, dramatic fragments may be found in these texts, too (some of them are not attested elsewhere, so these treatises sometimes represent gold mines for the texts of ancient fragmentary authors). The purpose of this paper is to investigate the use and interpretation of these passages, from the perspective of ancient grammarians and rhetoricians writing on tropes.

Panel 4 – Papyrology

Chiara Meccariello (University of Exeter)

Book cover blurbs or literary shortcuts? Dramatic hypotheses as para-texts

In this paper I will revisit the question of the function of Greek dramatic hypotheses by exploring their dual nature as both texts and paratexts. In the first section, I will examine a selection of papyri from Roman Egypt containing hypotheses with unusual layouts or headings. In the second section, I will discuss the use of dramatic hypotheses by literary authors of the Imperial period. Using these examples as a springboard, I will bring into relief the flexibility of dramatic hypotheses, demonstrating both their capacity to shape reading practices by offering readers, students and scholars ‘pre-packaged’ perspectives on drama, and their potential to fill gaps in knowledge, particularly in contexts where drama was consumed in fragments, whether by choice or necessity.

Gabriel Nocchi Macedo (Université de Liège)

Reading Sophocles in Egypt: quotations and *testimonia* in papyri

This paper aims to contribute to recent research on the reception of Sophocles in Antiquity by examining citations of his tragedies and references to the poet and his work in literary and documentary papyri from Egypt. After providing a general overview of the material, comprising approximately twenty texts, I will analyze several particularly interesting pieces, exploring how they enhance our understanding of the early reception of Sophoclean tragedies, especially their use in scholarship.

Elena Chepel (Universität Wien)

Theatre in Ptolemaic Egypt between politics and scholarship

Ptolemaic scholars, philologists, and poets are often seen as detached intellectuals, devoted to encyclopedic knowledge and literary pursuits with little connection to historical events. However, many were embedded in the Alexandrian court, actively engaging with the Ptolemaic dynasty's political agenda. Equally, Greek tragedies and comedies were not just subjects of philological study but were performed in Alexandria as part of royal festivals – state-sponsored institutions that reinforced the rulers' authority. The political dimension of Greek theatre in Ptolemaic Egypt is often overlooked, yet it likely played a key role in shaping scholarly interest in drama and its canonisation as one of the pinnacles of ancient literature. This paper examines scattered evidence from Hellenistic poets, papyri, and other sources to demonstrate that theatre was integral to the cultural politics of the Ptolemies in the third century. It also explores possible implications of the

performance context of theatrical plays for their representation and treatment by Alexandrian scholars.