

OIKOS THEORY & METHOD SEMINAR 2009 “FRAGMENTS”

PROGRAMME

Friday 16 October

- 12.00 Arrivals, lunch
- 13.30 Onno van Nijf (Groningen University, Ancient History)
“*There is a lot of truth in that hole: on (not) reading ancient inscriptions*”
- 15.30 Coffee & tea
- 16.00 Keimpe Algra (Utrecht University, Ancient Philosophy)
“The Fragments of the Early Stoics: Problems and Approaches”
- 18.00 Dinner
- 20.00 Glenn Most (University of Chicago, Greek/Ancient Philosophy)
“Collecting Fragments. Historical and Methodological Reflections on a Modern Philological Practice”
- 22.00 Drinks

Saturday 17 October

- 8.00 Breakfast
- 9.00 Folkert van Straten (Leiden University, Classical Archaeology)
“Damaged Goods. The Joy of Counting Bits and Pieces”
- 11.00 Coffee & tea
- 11.30 Vincent Hunink (Radboud University, Latin)
“Hardcore Philology: Reading Ennius’ Annals”
- 13.30 Evaluation
- 13.45 Lunch
- 14.30 Departure

COURSE DESCRIPTION

‘There is a lot of truth in that hole’: On (not) reading ancient inscriptions

Onno van Nijf (Groningen University)

Inscriptions tend to be considered as ‘hard evidence’ but each published text is just as much a modern artefact as a literary text. Stones can be damaged, fragmented, illegible, inaccessible, or even non-existent. Each editor has to make decisions about how to render the stone as a text, and we as readers have to make decisions about whether or not to follow the editors in their choices. Then there is the related question how we want to use these texts: what kind of history do we want to write on the basis of (incomplete) inscriptions? In this class we shall discuss how epigraphers deal with such matters: and about how we should deal with epigraphic texts.

Preparation:

J. BODEL, “Epigraphy and the ancient historian”, in: J. BODEL (ed.), *Epigraphic evidence. Ancient history from inscriptions*, London: Routledge (2001), 1-56.

The Fragments of the Early Stoics: Problems and Approaches

Keimpe Algra (Utrecht University)

This talk will focus on some of the problems we face when dealing with fragments of, or testimonies on, the work and thought of early Stoic philosophers (basically: Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus). Among the questions that will arise, or should arise, for anyone using any of the existing collections of fragments are: (a) to what extent does the nature and purpose of our sources affect the nature and reliability of the information they provide, and (b) is it possible (and if so, under which conditions) to identify the contribution made by individual Stoics to what was in antiquity often seen as the philosophy of an entire school?

These questions will be addressed on the basis of a selection of examples, and we shall briefly review the different ways in which various editors (Von Arnim, Hülser, Edelstein-Kidd) have approached question (b).

Preparation:

K. A. ALGRA, “Zeno of Citium and Stoic Cosmology: Some Notes and two Case Studies”, *Elenchos* XXIV, 3 (2003) 9-32;

Optional:

K. HÜLSER, „Was wird durch eine Fragmentsammlung wie FDS rekonstruiert?“, in: W. BURKERT et al., *Fragmentsammlungen philosophischer Texte der Antike*, Göttingen 1998, 273-287.

Collecting Fragments. Historical and Methodological Reflections on a Modern Philological Practice

Glenn W. Most (University of Chicago)

Preparation:

Glenn W. Most, ed., *Collecting Fragments - Fragmente sammeln. Aporemata I* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1997).

Damaged Goods. The Joy of Counting Bits and Pieces

Folkert van Straten (Leiden University)

“I also went to a museum where they had all the heads
and arms from the statues that are in all the other museums”
Steven Wright, *I Have a Pony*

In archaeology the term fragment is used in a down to earth, rather literal, manner for a (small) piece that is broken from a (larger) material object, which is different from its usage in classical philology, where ‘fragment’ often denotes a quotation from a text that in its entirety is no longer with us. The quoting authors included these passages for a reason, because of their literary or linguistic or historical or whatever interest. The survival of material fragments is, on the whole, more random.

There are also practical differences. For text fragments the question whether to keep them or throw them away does not arise, if only because they do not occupy any space to speak of, especially in this electronic age. For material fragments the matter is not quite as straightforward.

Obviously no one would advocate discarding a fragment of an important work of art such as the Parthenon frieze, but what about all those boxes full of unprepossessing potsherds produced by excavations and surveys? They fill storerooms, they are not much use unless adequately published (which is costly), and even then they are far less readily accessible for further study than even the most basic corpus of textual fragments. So for all those shards flakes splinters and chips the question may be asked: do they really count for something, can we make them count, or should we at least count them?

In preparation for the Nunspeet Seminar the participants are invited to ponder these and related questions with regard to a small corpus of archaeological fragments they will be sent. Just to be clear, you are not expected to prepare an exhaustive interpretation of each individual piece (though by all means do have a go if you are so inclined), but on a more basic level (or a more elevated level, depending on how you stand) to reflect on the general methods by which these fragments may be usefully employed, and on sensible criteria for either keeping them or throwing them in the ecologically appropriate bin.

Preparation:

To be announced

Hardcore Philology: Reading Ennius' Annals

Vincent Hunink (Radboud University of Nijmegen)

Of Rome's first National Epic, the Annals of Ennius (239-169 B.C.) no more than a few hundred scattered lines are extant. But even in this sorry state, his work shows remarkable poetical genius and talent and deserves to be read. As Horace famously put it (Sat. 1,4,62): here you will find *disiecti membra poetae* 'limbs of a dismembered poet'. Dismembered, yes, but still a poet.

In this talk, the speaker will discuss his bilingual edition (in Latin and Dutch) of Ennius' Annals published in 2006, as a volume in the Bibliotheca Latina Archaica, a series exclusively devoted to fragmentary archaic Roman authors. The edition has the explicit aim of presenting the material in as readable a form as possible, thereby allowing genuine *philologi* to appreciate the Latin fragments as pieces of poetry.

The chosen format and method will be exemplified on the basis of the material for book six of the Annals. Some word and lines of this book were recently discovered in a papyrus from Herculaneum.

Preparation:

To be announced