

"New Directions in Flavian Epic"

The five participants of this panel will present on Valerius' *Argonautica*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and Silius' *Punica*. Since Flavian epic is one of the research areas of president Augoustakis, we consider it a fitting tribute to our colleague and friend to share our most recent work on his favorite poets. A summary of the five contributions followed by the individual abstracts and bibliography provides the scope and aims of this panel.

The first paper "Sonic Images in Flavian Epic," inventories environmental and human-generated sounds in Flavian epic, compares their reception by internal characters and external readers, and invites broader reflections on the ancients' auditory experience. Investigating the aural aesthetics of the epics also serves as an introduction to the subsequent papers on individual authors. The second paper, "Reversal of Fortune: Statius' *Thebaid* and Valerius' *Argonautica*," examines the *Thebaid*'s dynamic engagement with Valerius. Statius often 'rewrites' Valerian passages in order to reverse what can be read as positive sequences in his predecessor's text. This analysis thus seeks to complement recent studies on the Argonautic aspects of Statius' *Thebaid*. The third paper, "Empowering sadness: Grief, gender and action in Statius' *Thebaid* and Virgil's *Aeneid*" explores the ways that the *Thebaid* responds to the representation of grief and gender in the *Aeneid* and takes it in a new direction. For instance, Polynices functions to a certain extent as an Aeneas figure, except that his grieving is always destructive rather than constructive. In contrast, the women of the *Thebaid* often use grief as a stimulus to action and reconciliation (Hypsipyle, Argia and Antigone, the Argive women), whereas the women of the *Aeneid* are for the most part destructive (the burning of the ships, Euryalus' mother). The fourth paper, "Temple Monuments and Literary Memory in Silius' *Punica*" argues that Silius' temples are monuments commemorating the writings of Vergil, Livy, Ovid and other Latin authors. In

figuratively erecting temples that memorialize his literary exemplars, Silius extends the imagery of his esteemed Augustan predecessors Vergil and Horace, who drew on the contemporary practice of victorious Roman generals vowing and building temples for the commemoration of imperial conquests. The final paper, "Searching for Ovid at Silius' Cannae" investigates the direct and indirect instances in which Silius acknowledges Ovid as a historical person and as a poetic predecessor.