

## Workshop Report: “Plato’s Epic Entanglements”

The Workshop “Plato’s Epic Entanglements” took place at Durham University on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of June, 2023. It was organised by Marta Antola (PhD Candidate), Giulia Bernardini (PhD Candidate), Andrea Capra (Senior Member of Staff), Elena Sofia Capra (PhD Candidate), George A. Gazis (Senior Member of Staff), Andrea Giannotti (Early Career Researcher and Junior Member of Staff), Sarah Miles (Senior Member of Staff), and Maddalena Ruini (PhD Candidate). It had a hybrid format, taking place both online (Zoom) and in the Ritson Room of the Department of Classics and Ancient History. We benefitted from the generous funding from the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the Institute of Classical Studies, the British Society for the History of Philosophy, Durham University (Faculty of Humanities and Department of Classics and Ancient History), the Centre for Languages and Ancient Writing Scripts, and the Durham Centre for Academic Development.

The aims of the Workshop were to: broaden the understanding of Plato’s usage of genres such as epic, comedy and historiography; further explore Plato’s relationship with existing literary traditions; strengthen innovative methodologies that revolve around interdisciplinarity and cross-pollination between fields, opening a discussion between the participants. To this effect, we addressed Plato’s relationship with the concept of poetry in general and his treatment and usage of Homer in particular. We examined how Plato reuses comic or historiographical characters and techniques. We gathered domestic and international scholars at different stages of their careers (PhD Candidates, Early Career Researchers, Established Scholars) and with different areas of expertise (classics, philosophy, history, ancient medicine) and fostered conversations that broadened our understanding of Plato and his literary technique, in line or contrast with his contemporary literary traditions. We dedicated particular attention to creating occasions for informal discussion, organising prolonged lunch and coffee breaks, as well as a formal dinner.

The event was the second edition in a series of Durham’s academic workshops on Plato, which were inaugurated in 2019 with the International Conference ‘Plato on Comedy’. It was well attended both in person (24 participants) and online (24 participants), with speakers and discussants from universities across the UK, Belgium, Italy, the United States, Norway, and Cyprus. It met the favour of all attendees, both speakers and the public. The quality of the papers and posters showcased was especially praised. Given the relevance of the topics and methodologies, the organisers plan to expand and publish a number of papers presented. The possibility of publication will allow PhD Candidates and Early Career Researchers the opportunity to give a permanent meaning to their work.

The Workshop programme can be found at the bottom of this report.

The organisers are most grateful to the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies for their grant of £200, which allowed us to cover part of the Workshop dinner and refreshment expenses.

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“Plato’s Epic Entanglements” Workshop Programme  
Ritson Room, Department of Classics and Ancient History, Durham (UK)

Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>

10:00-10:30 Welcome

## PLATO, EPIC AND HOMER PANEL

10:30-11:00 George A. Gazis and Andrea Capra (Durham University): 'Socrates: Critic and Performer?'

11:00-11:30 Franco Trivigno (University of Oslo) – Online: 'The Role of Homer in the Argument of *Republic* 10'

11:30-12:00 Pierre Destrée (UCLouvain): 'Plato on How not to Banish Homer'

12:00-14:00 Lunch

## PLATO AND HOMER PANEL

14:00-14:30 Maria Pavlou (Theological School of the Church of Cyprus) – Online: 'Entangled between the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*; Allusions to Homer at the Opening of the *Protagoras*'

14:30-15:00 Marta Antola (Durham University): 'Socrates' Inner Perspective on 'Eros': Socrates' 'Erotics' through Odyssean Citations and References'

15:00-15:30 Tea Break

15:30-16:00 Sonja Tanner (University of Colorado): 'The Enemy Within: (Homeric) Ventriloquism, Performance, and Plato's *Theaetetus*'

16:00-17:00 Poster Session

17:00-18:00 Reception

19:00 Dinner

## Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>

## PLATO'S EPIC ENTANGLEMENTS PANEL

10:00-10:30 Giulia Bernardini (Durham University): 'Engaging with the Homeric Text through Comedy: Plato's 'Para-epic' Strategies'

10:30-11:00 Elena Sofia Capra ('Tor Vergata' University of Rome): 'No Time to Die. Masters of Flight from Homer to Herodotus in Plato's *Laches*'

11:00-11:30 Tea Break

11:30-12:00 Naoko Yamagata (The Open University): 'Homer in Plato: A Socratic Problem'

12:00-14:00 Lunch

14:30-15:30 ROUND TABLE (Chiara Blanco – University of Edinburgh; Andrea Capra – Durham University; Roberto Di Tuccio – Durham University; George A. Gazis – Durham University; Andrea Giannotti – Durham University; Fritz-Gregor Herrmann – Swansea University; Thornton Lockwood – Quinnipiac University/Clare Hall, Cambridge University; Maria Cristina Mennuti – Durham University; Sarah Miles – Durham University; Elizabeth Pender – University of Leeds; Marco Picciafuochi – 'Roma Tre' University of Rome; Maddalena Ruini – Durham University)

15:30-15:45 Concluding Statements