

# Empire and Form

*Metamorphoses of Genre in Roman Literature  
I: Republic and Early Principate*

*University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts  
29–30 September, 2023*



Univerza v Ljubljani  
Filozofska fakulteta  
Oddelek za klasično filologijo

The event is part of a research project dedicated to the structuring role the Roman Empire as a new political reality in the Mediterranean played in the development of literary genres even before the Principate, but especially during the rule of Augustus and during the imperial era. This particular conference is dedicated to the Republican era and to the age Augustus as a period of transition.

After the victory at Pydna in 168 BCE, Rome became the ruling power of the Mediterranean and started to appropriate its cultural resources. The aim of this meeting is to explore in what ways the adoption and transformation of Greek literary genres reflected the fact that Rome was now the head of a vast empire with widely differing cultural traditions, social customs, political and religious institutions. How did the choice of topics and issues express the leading role of the Roman state and its supposedly superior moral code? What was the involvement of geographic and social peripheries in these processes? Which were the most creative (or overtly imperialistic) aspects of acquiring scholarly knowledge, including theoretical reflections on genre born in Alexandria and other intellectual centres of the East?

The conference focuses not only on the Roman *res publica* as a context of literature but specifically on the relationship between Empire as a (new) political reality and genre as an 'inherited' code of literary expression. The period of transition between the 'republican' empire (or 'empire before empire') and the empire of the emperors is particularly intriguing in this respect. This section is supposed to provide a bridge to a possible second conference on genre during the imperial era.

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The conference is part of the research project Empire and Transformation of Genre in Roman Literature J6-2585 and IMAGE - WORD - KNOWLEDGE. Transmission and Transformation of Ideas on the Territory Between the Eastern Alps and the North Adriatic 1400-1800, P6-0437 A, both funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency.

Front image: Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire: The Consummation of Empire* (1836). New York Historical Society. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

**Venue: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Aškerčeva 2, Room 343**

**Friday, September 29**

16.30: Official addresses and general introduction

*First session, moderator Marko Marinčič*

17.00: *Gregor Pobežin* (Ljubljana): Construction of space in Republican historiography

17.30: *Bernhard Söllradl* (Salzburg): Epic heroes fighting for Rome? *aristeia* in Republican epic

18.00: *Alfredo Mario Morelli* (Ferrara): Lucilio e l'autorappresentazione delle élites socio-culturali nel II sec. a.C.

18.30: Discussion

**Saturday, September 30**

*Second session, moderator Gregor Pobežin*

9.15: *Antonio Ziosi* (Bologna): Fragments of Songs and Fragments of Landscape in Verg. *Ecl.* 9: When Bucolic Poetry Clashes with History

9.45: *Lee Fratantuono* (Maynooth): Why does Virgil's Venus vanish? The cult of the Julian goddess in the early Augustan age

10.15: *Darja Šterbenc Erker* (Berlin): Augustan gods, literary genre play and transmediality in Ovid's poetry

10.45: Discussion; coffee break

*Third session, moderator Darja Šterbenc Erker*

11.30: *Marco Fucecchi* (Udine): Social conflicts and 'inclusive exemplarity' in Livy's Roman history

12.00: *Laurenz Enzberger* (Wien): *Iam se peccasse fatentem*: Pentheus as a tragic pastiche on Augustan Rome (*Ov. Met.* 3.513-733)

12.30: *Marko Marinčič* (Ljubljana): From 'fat lady' Lyde to Livia the Empress: Ovid's counter canon of Roman elegy

13.00: Discussion and final remarks