

**Dis/embodiment and Im/materiality:
Uncovering the Body, Gender and Sexuality in Late Antiquity.
In Memoriam Marianne Sághy (1961– 2018)**



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KEYNOTE LECTURES	3
Grace Ledbetter: Plato and Plotinus on Eros	3
Uma Chakravarti: Celibacy, Sexuality and Salvation in Early South Asia: The Body and Beyond	3
Susanna Elm: Eutropius the Consul, Eutropius the Eunuch: Power and Representation in the later Roman Empire	5
CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS	6
Punsara Amarasinghe	6
Eirini Artemi	7
Floris Bernard	7
Gábor Buzási	8
Jonathan Cahana-Blum	9
Cristian-Nicolae Gaş par	10
György Geréby	11
Andra Jugănaru	12
Gábor Kendeffy	14
Isabelle Koch	15
Chiara Militello	16
Emese Mogyoródi	17
Stanimir Panayotov	18
István Pásztori-Kupán	19
István Perczel	20
Jordan Poole	12
Ana-Maria Răducan	21
David Rollo	22
Makiko Sato and Peter Steiger	22
Nathalie Schuler	24
Orsolya Severino-Varsányi	25
Trpimir Vedriš	26
Marianne Sággy (1951 – 2018)	27

KEYNOTE LECTURES

Grace Ledbetter: Plato and Plotinus on Eros

Abstract: Both traditional and feminist readings of Platonic *eros* in the *Symposium* fail to do justice to the central role that creative generation plays in Plato's theory. After formulating this interpretation of Plato, I will go on to consider how Plotinus' views on *eros* maintain and depart from what I argue is one of the most radical features of the Platonic view.



Biography: Grace Ledbetter is Professor of Philosophy and Classics at Swarthmore College and Director of the Honors Program. Her work focuses on Plato, Homer, and Greek Tragedy. She is the author of *Poetics Before Plato: Authority and Interpretation in Early Greek Theories of Poetry*, and most recently of “The Power of Plato’s Cave,” “Truth and Self at Colonus,” and “Translation into Dance: Adaptation and Transnational Hellenism in Balanchine’s *Apollo*.”

Uma Chakravarti: Celibacy, Sexuality and Salvation in Early South Asia: The Body and Beyond

Abstract: From very early times a divide existed between renouncers and householders in the religious traditions of South Asia such as in Buddhism and Jainism. While the renouncer pursues

salvation goals, the householder creates and sustains production and is also engaged in the reproduction of the family, lineage and property relations. Celibacy driven religious/philosophical systems founded monasteries and laid down elaborate rules for sexual abstinence. Since the normative salvation seeker was a man, women came to be associated with the body, sensuousness and the enticement of men requiring stringent monitoring. Ironically women had to fight to be included among salvation seekers and clamoured to be let into the sangha, the Buddhist monastic order. Elaborate rules were then laid down for regulating the conduct of monks and nuns in relation to each other as well as between renouncers and householders. The body and its potential lapses were sought to be kept in order through rules that included dress, deportment and speech, to prevent sexual lapses and improper conduct. In a parallel but later tradition in early medieval times within the devotional cults in Hinduism, which privileged the householder status and abjured monasticism the challenge for men and women was to pursue their religious devotion and simultaneously perform their duties as householders. While the male devotees managed to successfully straddle the householder-devotee roles women found it more difficult to pursue their devotion without hindrance and some of them were forced to exit from their “duties” as wives. Refusing to remain trapped by their bodies they found ways to liberate themselves from the household and practice full time devotion to their chosen Gods leaving a rich tradition of poetry for future generations to draw inspiration from.



Biography: Uma Chakravarti has written widely on Buddhism, the 19th century, gender, caste and labour and has an ongoing interest in the history of marginalized groups. *Gendering Caste: Through a Feminist Lens* (Stree, Kolkata, 2003) brings together many of these concerns. Currently Uma Chakravarti is working on a book tentatively titled *The Dying Lineage: The Politics of Reproduction in the Mahabharata*. Among her recent works is an edited collection titled *Thinking Gender, Doing Gender: Pedagogies, Histories, Cultural Practices*. Uma Chakravarti is also a documentary film maker. Her films dwell on the lives of unknown women and have been screened widely in India and abroad.

Susanna Elm: Eutropius the Consul, Eutropius the Eunuch: Power and Representation in the later Roman Empire

Abstract: Eutropius, the consul, was also a eunuch, that is, of the “third gender.” Most scholars have focused on that fact, guided by Claudian, who portrayed this as an abomination. But what about the fact that Eutropius *did* become consul, and therefore held the highest office, just beneath the sacred emperor himself? What does this fact tell us about the relation between body, gender, power, and the sacred at that time?



Biography: Susanna Elm is Professor of History and Classics at Berkeley, and is the author of *Virgins of God. The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1994) and *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (UC Press, 2012). Her research interests are in the Later Roman Empire and its transformation into a Christian Empire. Her research might be called intellectual history, but firmly anchored in social history, i.e. administration, law, economics, material culture. Elm’s next forthcoming monographs are *New Romans: Dress, Manliness, Extraordinary Bodies and Power in the Later Roman Empire* (UC Press, 2020) and *Sold: Augustine of Hippo on Slavery, Taxation and Original Sin*. She is also working on a short history of Early Christianity with Professor Rebecca Lyman, commissioned by Cambridge University Press. In addition, she is pursuing her interests in contemporary medicine and its relation (if any) to ancient medicine. Elm is part of the faculty of the graduate program in Ancient Mediterranean History and Archaeology and is on the executive committee of the California Consortium of the Study of Late Antiquity. In addition, she is part of Lares/Penates, a Northern California group on Late Antique Religions et Society, as well as the Rome and Reception

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Punsara Amarasinghe

(Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa, Italy)

Taming Desires through Practicing Desires: Examining the Role of Karmamudra as a Technique Embodying the Sexuality and Woman to Reach Enlightenment in Vajrayana Buddhism in Late Antiquity

Abstract: Buddhism is solely a philosophy based on idea that would not stand for the purity of soul as it strictly denies the existence of soul (*nathma*) and the theory of knowledge developed by Buddha had insisted the renunciation from sexual passions as he saw sexual desires prolonging man's quest to reach *Nibbana* which is the bottom line of Buddhist philosophy. Abstaining from every form of sexual activity was an important part that all Buddhist monks were expected to fulfill in early Buddhism and the *Pali vinaya* codes of early Buddhism had clearly mentioned that having sex would end the career of a Buddhist monk or nun in early Buddhism. However, it would be an interesting task to observe the approach developed in late antiquity in *Vajrayana* Buddhism which completely adopted a different stance of sexuality from the early Buddhism and its monastic orders. *Vajrayana* or commonly called Tantric Buddhism emerged in Medieval India in 7th century AD and culminated during the period of Pala Empire in India. Instead of upholding the sex as greater evil to the creed which was mainly practiced in the monastic order in early Buddhism, *Vajrayana* introduced a technique called "*Karmamudra*" as contemplative practice, but this was purely focused on sexual practice with a physical or visualized consort. This technique called *Karmamudra* was perceived by Buddhist teachers in Medieval India as an essential practice that would help one's self to reach the enlightenment in this life. Furthermore, this technique was widely practiced as an alternative to the preexisted monastic solitary techniques which loathed and abstained monks from engaging in any form of sexual activity. As a *Vajrayana* Buddhist technique for spiritual enlightenment between late antiquity and early medieval eras in India, *Karmamudra* enabled the attaining of enlightenment through intimacy with another person. New inclusions such as allowing the voices of women to arise their roles in *Karmamudra* followed in Tibet as practice of *Vajrayana* Buddhism was spread to Tibet in early Medieval period. This paper is devoted to examining how strongly the embodiment of sexuality appeared in a renouncing religious tradition like Buddhism in late antiquity and will further seek the role of woman as a sexual consort in creating the contemplation of Buddhist monks who practiced *Karmamudra* as a technique of enlightenment. The outcome of this paper will prove how ironical it has been the drastic way Buddhism changed its attitude towards the embodiment of body, gender and sexuality from early Buddhism to the Buddhist practice in late antiquity. The methodology of this paper is mainly based on the *Vajrayana* Buddhist texts and the early Buddhist Theravada texts and it would take a comparative and doctrinal approach.

Keywords: Renunciation, Buddha, Vajrayana, Karmamudra

Biography: Punsara Amarasinghe studied Classics, History and Politics at Royal College, Colombo, Sri Lanka prior to joining Faculty of Law, University of Colombo. After having obtained LL.B in 2015, he went on to study LL.M in International Law and Legal Theory at South Asian University in New Delhi, India under SARRC scholarship. He graduated LL.M with a Distinction

in 2017 and his thesis titled *Evaluating the Concept of Justice in Medieval Hinduism with Thomas Aquinas* was presented before Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka in the same year. After serving as a visiting lecturer at Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo for a short time, he spent a year as a research fellow at Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. His research areas include History of International Law, TWAIL Scholarship, Critical Legal Studies focusing on Human Rights, Classical Hindu Law and Colonial Legal History in South Asia. Besides his affiliation to International Law, he shares a passion in oriental religions. PhD research of Punsara deals with Social Economic Rights in the Global South and Neo-Liberalism. Punsara is a life member of Royal Asiatic Society.

Eirini Artemi

(Hellenic Open University, Athens, Greece)

The Aspect of the Body in the Writing of On the Soul and the Resurrection by Gregory of Nyssa

Abstract: The dialogue entitled *On the Soul and the Resurrection* can be considered as the most important one. This work, a dialogue between Gregory himself and his sister Macrina, was modeled on Plato's *Phaedo* and shows quite clearly the debt our author owes to Plato for his literary form, besides the borrowing of ideas. This paper will examine the connection of the body and the soul. The soul is totally unlike the body in essence, still dwells in it and vivifies it while the body is alive. It coalesces with the union of the bodily elements. But when the body is dissolved in death and its elements return to their own, the soul does not perish with it. Due to its intellectual and dimensionless nature, the soul does not dissolve but survives and remains attached to all the elements which were once crafted into its body. Being dimensionless, the soul is neither contracted nor dispersed as are dimensional things. Hence nothing prevents the soul from remaining present with all of natural elements of its former body, regardless of how they are dispersed. So even in death the soul survives in union with the body's elements. We will examine how Gregory has been influenced by Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas about the body and the soul and what are his views about the Body, the Soul and Desire and their connections to gender, sex, and sexuality.

Keywords: body, soul, resurrection, Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas

Biography: Dr. Eirini Artemi is a professor at Hellenic Open University in the postgraduate level of Theology. She has master and doctorate of theology and post doctorate in ancient Greek and Byzantine philosophy. She has participated in many conferences and her articles are published in many international journals.

Floris Bernard

(Ghent University, Belgium)

Cross-dressing and Undressing: Gender Switching and Sexual Desire in the Lives of Transvestite Saints

Abstract: Several late antique (and later Byzantine) saints' lives feature "transvestite" or cross-dressing saints: female saints who adopt an outward male gender identity, by dressing as men and

taking male names. They enter male monasteries, and often manage to conceal their true sex until after death. This gender switching enables us to reconsider late antique attitudes towards gender categories, sexual attraction, and bodily beauty, and how these intersect with monastic ideals.

On the one hand, this cross-dressing can be interpreted as a renunciation of femininity as a step towards sainthood: the saint in a certain sense surpasses gender difference by transitioning from a marked (female) gender to the unmarked one. While this is certainly a valid view to a certain extent, this paper aims to show that the texts themselves present a more ambiguous image. Far from “losing” its gender, the body of the cross-dressing saint becomes a site where concepts such as female aggressive sexuality, gender segregation, and latent eroticism are played out and questioned. Equally ambiguous is the status of female (and indeed male) beauty, which these texts on the one hand seem to oppose to the saintly ideal of an emaciated unattractive body, but on the other hand confirm as traditional literary tropes of the beautiful hero or heroine. The act of undressing, which often occurs in these texts, is narratologically speaking the *dénouement* of the story, but is clearly surrounded by increasingly uneasy attitudes towards viewing the naked body. These texts, by default concerned with trickery and disguise, also are imbued with the sexualization of theatre.

The question can be asked whether the positive markings of bodily beauty and desire can be interpreted as literary substrates shared with older pagan traditions (notably the novels). This leads us to a final consideration of what these texts are: “sources” on late antique sexuality and gender attitudes, or rather stories that still retain universal narrative patterns of love and romance barely concealed under the tectonic shifts of Christian sexual morality.

Keywords: hagiography, gender, cross-dressing

Biography: Floris Bernard obtained his PhD in 2010 with a dissertation on 11th century Byzantine poetry. This research resulted in a book entitled *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry (1025-1081)* (published in 2014) and in a translation of two Byzantine poets in the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library series (2018). He has also initiated a database of metrical paratexts in Byzantine manuscripts (DBBE). After postdoc fellowships at Ghent University and Dumbarton Oaks, he became assistant professor at Central European University, where he taught on Byzantine topics. He is since 2018 affiliated with Ghent University. Floris Bernard especially works on poetry and epistolography of the tenth to twelfth centuries. His work is interested in social contexts of Byzantine literature: education, competition, sociologies of reading, humor, gifts, and emotions.

Gábor Buzási

(Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary)

Transgression with the Nymph: Emperor Julian on Female Deities and Incarnation

Abstract: Emperor Julian’s (361–363) hymn *To the Mother of the Gods* is a Neoplatonic interpretation of the myth of Attis and the festival associated with it, celebrated during the days of the vernal equinox. Accordingly, the youthful god, expected to ever remain with the Mother in the celestial realm of ether and light, falls in love with the Nymph, descends into the sublunary world of matter, and enters her cave where he loses control. Their union is detected, the god is punished with castration, yet he ascends back to the Mother restored and rejuvenated. The consequence of the god’s “fortunate fall” is the creation of the visible cosmos. Apart from his intention to integrate

the cult of Attis into his universalistic polytheism on Neoplatonic principles, the emperor is clearly giving an alternative interpretation, not devoid of polemic, of the incarnation, suffering and resurrection of Christ. At the same time, his account of divine contact with matter and with the corporeal world involves interesting reflexions on the role of female principles in this cosmic process. The primary aim of this paper is to offer an explanation of the essence and function of the Mother of the Gods and the Nymph both within the Iamblichean Neoplatonic framework of the hymn and in its wider pagan and Christian religious context. Female deities (especially Athene, Aphrodite and the Moon) play a significant role also in the emperor's hymn *To King Sun*, with important parallels to the scheme of the hymn *To the Mother of the Gods*, and illuminating details on the descent and ascent of the human soul. Finally, Julian's discussion of female deities sheds some light on his relation to women, and his views on sexual ethics, rooted in Neoplatonic metaphysics, cosmology and anthropology.

Keywords: Neoplatonism, Emperor Julian, Iamblichus, myth of Attis, Easter, incarnation and resurrection, female deities, sexual ethics

Biography: Gábor Buzási is an assistant professor at the Institute of Ancient Studies of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, teaching Biblical Studies and Late Antique religions. He studied at Eötvös Loránd University and KU Leuven, where he defended his dissertation on the solar theology in Emperor Julian's *Hymn to King Sun* (2009). He also taught at Pázmány Péter Catholic University and Central European University. His field of research is Neoplatonism, Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and Biblical interpretation. He is a member of CEU's Center for Religious Studies and Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies. He was a research fellow at Villa I Tatti in Florence (2009) and at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Munich (2019).

Jonathan Cahana-Blum

(Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)

The Im/materiality of the Will? The Life of Dositheus and Delicia Children in Late Antiquity

Abstract: *The Life of Dositheus*, a 6th century *vita* that has come down to from the monastic center at Gaza, tells the remarkable story of a *delicia* child who had become a monk and, after his death, consecrated as a saint. Originally a sexual slave boy of a high official in the Byzantine army, Dositheus receives a vision while visiting Jerusalem, and, due to his apparent self-conversion, is led to Seridus's monastery in Gaza. Perceived as highly effeminate, the abbot decides it unwise to let him join the other brothers, and asks Dorotheus, the head of the infirmary, to take him under his responsibility. Despite what one may have expected, the effeminate boy does not accomplish any great feats of asceticism, or, as expressively stated in the *vita*, any deed of asceticism at all. On the contrary, when he is declared a saint by the monastery's spiritual leader, Barsanuphius, some brothers murmur and complain since they often saw him sleep in late or devour extra food that patients left. However, according to the *vita*'s writer, the boy's effeminate corporeality and materiality did not hinder him from entering sainthood. In the end, it was only his obedience, and, especially, his deprecation of his own immaterial will that mattered.

My paper will analyze this peculiar yet challenging text through two lenses. First, applying feminist criticism of the devaluation of materiality, I will explicate how this text's ideological

apparatus does not expect a saint to be an ultra-masculine spirit, but is at ease with the idea that sainthood can be reached when the subject is still very much obligated to their corporeal and expressively feminine materiality. Second, applying queer theory and reading strategy, I will try to read the *vita* against itself. In doing so, I will first inquire how much “will” in particular or subjectivity in general did *delicia* children had in antiquity. Provided with this important context, I will then evaluate how did Dositheus handle his subjectivity by entering and living in the Gazan monastery, and how does a text which culminates in Dositheus forcing his own will on his superior Dorotheus can still praise the former as an *exemplum* of obedience. My analysis will suggest that, for Dositheus at the very least, the new Christian ideological prospect that did not always unreservedly criticize materiality, combined with the socio-historical development of monastic communities, proved liberatory. As such, these combined phenomena could be seen as widening the conceivable opportunities not only for women, but for other subjugated effeminately encoded classes in late antiquity as well.

Keywords: Christianity, monasticism, slavery, children, sexuality, effeminacy, corporeality, feminism, queer theory

Biography: Jonathan Cahana-Blum is a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He conducted previous postdoctoral research as a Fulbright Fellow at Harvard Divinity School and held a Sapere Aude fellowship from the Danish Council for Independent Research at Aarhus University. He has published extensively on Christian Gnosticism, gender, sexuality, queer theory, and on the philosophy of Hans Jonas in such venues as *Numen*, *Journal of Religion*, and *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. His first scholarly monograph, *Wrestling with Archons: Gnosticism as a Critical Theory of Culture* has just been published with Lexington Book / Rowman & Littlefield.

Cristian-Nicolae Gaș par

(Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Discarnate Bodies: Defleshing the Ascetic in Late-antique Hagiobiographic Discourse

Abstract: The emergence of Christianity as one of the major competitors (at first) and then as the dominant factor in the ideological marketplace of Late Antiquity brought about one of the most important transformations of the spiritual world of the Later Roman Empire. This is, perhaps, best visible in the emergence in the public discourse of the ascetic “holy man” as a privileged type of idealized human existence, a development that would have a deep and long-lasting influence on the way human bodies were colonized by various forms of ideological discourse.

The present paper discusses several examples of what can be called a rhetoric of discarnation, i.e., a multi-purpose rhetorical strategy focused on defleshing the human body, employed by authors of various hagiobiographic texts produced and circulated mostly for the benefit of members of the educated elite of the Eastern Roman Empire between the third and the sixth centuries CE.

In doing so, I intend to discuss first the various forms this rhetoric of discarnation could take, from the simple *topos* used as a building block in several *vitae* of exemplary holy men and women of Late Antiquity, to the more elaborate narrative and discursive segments, which provide detailed and well-articulated descriptions of a particular type of spiritual exercise. My discussion will then move to the function of this rhetoric of defleshment in the context of *vitae* of exemplary

individuals, ranging from political leaders and public officials to ascetic philosophers and Christian hermits. Without neglecting its other uses, I will focus on the way late-antique authors used the rhetoric of discarnation to discipline and deny the sexual(ized) human body. This was an important element in any ascetic program that ultimately aimed at producing idealized angelic, i.e., incorporeal, bodies - the only adequate medium in which the proponents and practitioners of this rhetoric of discarnation could live their textual and real-life existences as perfect holy (wo)men.

By choosing the examples I will discuss from texts belonging to various “genres” and denominations, I will try to emphasize the omnipresence of hagiobiographic discourse in various late-antique textual environments, from Ammianus Marcellinus’ Latin history of late-antique emperors to the encomiastic monastic biographies of Theodoret of Cyrhus (ca. 444 CE), from the *vitae* of “pagan” intellectuals composed by Eunapius of Sardis, to their various Christian counterparts, such as the well-known *Life of Anthony*, the less-known *Vita Sanctae Syncreticae*, or the mini-*vitae* contained in the anonymous *Apophthegmata patrum*. This purposefully wide selection is meant to suggest that the rhetoric of discarnation was practiced, with slight occasional differences of tone and purpose, in essentially the same way across various confessional divides by late-antique authors who chose hagiobiographic discourse as the privileged textual incarnation of their ideologies.

Keywords: Late Antiquity, hagiography, rhetoric, sexuality, body, holy man

Biography: Cristian Gașpar, PhD in Medieval Studies. Currently teaching Classical and Medieval Latin at the Central European University, Department of Medieval Studies and the Source Language Teaching Group. Author of various studies and articles on topics such as early medieval hagiography in Central Europe, late antique hagiography and intellectual history, history of sexuality, language and heritage. Translator of the “Life of Saint Adalbert Bishop of Prague and Martyr” [first annotated English translation of *BHL* 37], in *Saints of the Christianization Age of Central Europe (Tenth-Eleventh Centuries)*, ed. G. Klaniczay, trans. and ann. C. Gașpar and M. Miladinov, 95-181 (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2013). Also translated (into Romanian) Porphyry’s *Vita Plotini*: Porphyrios, *Viața lui Plotin*, in *Viața lui Pitagora. Viața lui Plotin*, trans. A. Piatkowski, C. Bădiliță, and C. Gașpar (Iași: Polirom, 1998), and the Minor Prophets for the New Romanian Septuagint: *Septuaginta*, vol. 5, *Osea. Amos*.

György Geréby

(Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Male and Female in the Protevangelium of James: A Hidden Debate

Abstract: In a series of articles I tried to show that the Protevangelium Jacobi (dated to the end of the second century) is a piece of “narrative theology” which despite its surface structure (a “pious tale”) has a deeper reading where the stories and images can be deciphered as containing a kind of proto-orthodox theological doctrine. The Protevangelium defends certain alternative contemporary schools of theology. The key is provided by its delimiting formulations which are meant to exclude existing rival alternatives. One of its central features is the stress on the equality of the sexes, and the positive view on child-bearing. Joachim and Anna, man and woman, play an equal role in the unfolding story of the preparation of the birth of the Christ, and child-bearing is described in unquestionably positive terms. I will first point out the elements of the metaphysically

founded theological alternatives, and then I will show against whom is the Protevangelium directed. The rival theological schools in this case are certain trends in “Gnosticism” that are emphatically against the role of the female and consider child-bearing as the source of metaphysical evil.

Keywords: apocrypha, Gnosis, role of the female in the second- and third-century debates, giving birth, theology of the female

Biography: Historian of philosophy. Associate professor at the Central European University, Budapest. Studied in Budapest (ELTE), classics and philosophy, then at Oxford and Fribourg. CSc (PhD) at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Taught at the University of Pecs (Hungary), ELTE (Budapest) and since 2007 at CEU. Guest lecturer at the University of Liverpool (2 semesters), Rutgers University. Keeley Research Fellow at Wadham College (Oxford). Isaiah Berlin Visiting Professor at Corpus Christi College (Oxford). Primary interests: the history of Late Antique and medieval philosophy and theology, and in the last decade political theology. Book: *God and Empire* (in Hungarian). A book in the final stages on the Protevangelium of James as narrative theology.

Jordan Poole

(University of Liverpool, UK)

Female Medical Agency in the Roman Empire: A Case for Amulets

Abstracts: For women in the Roman Empire, access to medicine was fraught with difficulties. Aristotle’s *Politics* famously categorises women as inferior counterparts of their male contemporaries. This philosophical formula was later developed by medical writers, such as Galen and Soranus, who would explain the physical and psychological areas of divergence from the male paradigm by attributing all maladies exceptional to the female body through the workings of their reproductive physiology. If we take these literary accounts as the primary mode of access to medical knowledge and treatment, we are left with a sorrowful image of female healthcare in the Roman world: either indistinguishable from the male default or strictly gynecologically-centred, vastly oversimplifying their bodies and its treatment. Yet, it was possible that women perceived themselves as having greater agency over their access to medical treatment, accessing divine assistance in leu of “traditional” male-centred modes, espoused in the literary accounts. By incorporating the much-overlooked material evidence into the conversation, we can evaluate the extent to which such alternative modes of medicine granted greater personal bodily liberty.

The aim of this paper is two-fold. First, I will identify and examine late antiquity amulets from the Imperial Roman Empire that depict womb iconography as objects of medical purpose. These amulets could have been intended to ward off gynaecological complications, which if the “traditional” model of antiquity is to be believed, impacts the female form in instances where a matching male malady cannot be identified. Otherwise, the objects could have served as an active means of treatment, a medium between the female patient and the divine practitioner, or a symbol of thanks for successful healing.

Second, by evaluating the personal nature of these objects, I will consider how we may include such objects into the discussion of female agency. The utility of a treatment, which places the

divine in the position of medical practitioner, as opposed to a male physician, offers the opportunity for greater liberty of the female body and places control back into the woman's hands. Moreover, we gain an insight into who could interact with the divine in this manner and disassociate themselves from the stigmatised male treatment without believing they have chosen a death sentence in payment for their dignity.

Keywords: female medicine, womb amulets, divine practitioners, late antiquity, agency

Biography: After completing my Undergraduate and Masters degrees at the University of Liverpool, the latter of which examined the perceptions of the ideal physician in the works of Galen and Aelius Aristides, I am now embarking on a PhD at Liverpool, with the aim of developing my knowledge of the social history of medicine in antiquity. My thesis explores the role of sacred artefacts as objects of alternative medicine for women in the Roman Empire and their impact on female perceptions of their own agency with regards to their bodies. I am in my first year of research and am currently considering the possibilities of using modern feminist scholarship to re-examine long-held perceptions of female medicine in the ancient world.

Andra Jugănaru

(Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece / Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest Hungary)

From the Depths of Sin to the Highness of Holiness: The Female Body as Witness of the Journey to Sanctity in the Life of Mary the Egyptian

Abstract: *The Life of Mary the Egyptian*, attributed to the Patriarch of Jerusalem Sophronius (c. 600 AD) follows a pattern of hagiographical accounts on “God’s Holy Harlots,” as Lynda Coon termed the women whose literary portraits evolve from depraved to saints. Unlike the other similar *vitae*, this text stands apart for the use of innovative motives, such as Mary’s presence in the wilderness of Jordan, her miraculous crossing of the river by walking over it, and the transformations of her body. The aim of this paper is to explore the functions of Mary’s body in her metamorphosis from the worst of women to the holiest of women, who surpasses even the most holy man of her era. I will argue that Mary’s body is the witness of her spiritual ascending journey. As her clothes deteriorate during the forty years of harsh asceticism in the desert, they bring to light a new body, which, in spite of its physical deterioration, mirrors holiness. Mary exploits her female body at its extremes, through her erotic force which surpasses the strength of men’s spirituality.

Keywords: Mary of Egypt, female asceticism, body

Biography: Dr. Andra Jugănaru graduated the PhD program of the CEU Medieval Studies Department under the supervision of Professors †Marianne Sághy and István Perczel in 2018. She defended her PhD dissertation, titled “Family Double Monasteries in the Fourth and the Fifth Centuries: An Inquiry into the Theological Roots, Social Context and Early Evolution of an Old Practice” with the distinction *summa cum laude*. Her previous studies include a BA in History and a MA in Medieval Studies at the University of Bucharest, as well as a MA in Medieval Studies at CEU. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, researching “The Women’s Virtues According to the Cappadocian Fathers,” and a teaching fellow

at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) of Budapest (Spring Semester 2018-2019). She is a member of the Hungarian Patristics Society and of the International Society for Patristic Studies.

Gábor Kendeffy

(Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary / Hungarian Patristic Society)

Saint Augustine on Sexuality and Marriage

Abstract: In the years before his ordination Augustine does not assign an important place to sexual desire among the consequences of the Fall. He regards it as one of the forms of the ill-oriented love. From the end of the fourth century sexual lust figures more prominently in the works of the church father. Nevertheless, even within this later period the outburst of the Pelagian controversy leads to a modification of the church-father's view regarding sexual desire. In his treatise *On the Good of the Marriage* written before the controversy, even though sexual lust is regarded as something wrong, the sexual act itself is commended and praised as long as it is accomplished with the purpose of procreation within the bounds of marriage. Augustine's view derives from his conception of marriage as a form of friendship (*amicitia*), which belongs to the category of goods worth striving for in for their own sake. Thus, the negative evaluation of sexual desire is checked by the high esteem of marital relationship. Whence, for example, the saint's evaluation of the lust-motivated intercourse as a venial sin, and his indulgence toward the wife who serves the vicious desire of her husband. If she did otherwise, the church father argues, she would commit the capital sin of pride. Later, at the time of the Pelagian controversy, he comes to the opinion that sexual desire is both the first punishment and the most striking expression of the soul's disobedience to God. Sexual lust is contrasted with the other passions in that while the latter only lead to an act when the will gives assent to them, the former overcomes volition. As I will try to prove, this specific characterization of sexual desire is achieved through two different channels. One is the use of the word *libido*, used in two different senses without any indication: a) to denote a voluntary decision to have sexual intercourse, and b) in the sense of spontaneous sexual excitement. The other is to omit the Stoic distinction between the two psychological phenomena called *pathē* (passions) and *propathēiai* (pre-passions) – and this in the very context of an account of sexual lust within the framework of the Stoic theory of passions! As to the late Augustine's view about marriage, a tragic tension is pinned down between sexual desire as an evil and marriage as a good in his anti-Pelagian treatise *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, which denies that sexual intercourse is possible without concupiscence. Whence the claim that Christian marriage, a good and natural relationship, can only be maintained by committing vicious acts regularly.

Keywords: Saint Augustine, concupiscence, sexual act, marriage, Pelagianism, will, theory of passion.

Biography: Gábor Kendeffy, PhD, Dr Habil., is associate professor at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Theological Faculty, Department of Philosophy. His researches are focused on the philosophy of church fathers and Hellenistic philosophy. His main interest is the thought of Lactantius and saint Augustine. Besides publishing essays and papers in these fields both in Hungarian and foreign languages. and translating several patristic and pagan philosophical works from Latin, he is the author of two books in Hungarian: *Church Fathers and Scepticism* (1999); *What Good Is the Evil For? Lactantius's Theology* (2006). He has been a collaborator in several national research programs and regular speaker at national and international

conferences, including Oxford International Patristic Conference. He is the president of the Hungarian Society for Patristic Studies.

Isabelle Koch

(Aix-Marseille University, France)

From Matter to History: Towards a Disembodied Interpretation of Human Sexuality in Augustine

Abstract: Augustine is an important figure in the occidental history of sexuality's representations. He is well known for his early commitment with Manichaeism, a heretical sect whose doctrines established a strong link between matter, sexuality and evil. Manicheans had a physicalist conception of evil: evil is a dark substance, an obscure matter opposed to the light, so the moral improvement implies to keep oneself away from bodies, because bodies, and especially female bodies, contain parts of this dark substance. Therefore, as far as sexuality is concerned, Manicheans preached abstinence: lust and sexual intercourses are conceived as produced by a mixture with the bad corporeal nature (*naturae malae commixtione*) and the only way for purifying oneself is by refraining from sexual activities.

As an “auditor”, Augustine was interested by Manichean theories, and convinced by their idea of evil as a bad corporeal substance (without going as far as to practice abstinence). But he progressively felt disappointed by the lack of theoretical precision of Manichean positions. Thereafter, he developed an understanding of libido and sexuality which focuses on human will, not on flesh, materiality or animality of our bodies. I will defend the thesis that Augustine has developed a new conception of sexual lust which is, in some way, disembodied or at least disconnected from matter, physicality and gender.

Keywords: matter, dualism, Manichaeism, history, sin, sexuality, will

Biography: I am Associate Professor in Ancient Philosophy at Aix-Marseille University (France). I studied at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris). I have a Ph.D. from Nanterre University, and a H.D.R. (Habilitation à diriger des recherches) from Paris Panthéon Sorbonne University. My research focuses on the links between ethics and metaphysics in Late Antiquity; history of ancient moral concepts; debates around Stoic determinism (Cicero, Galen, Alexander of Aphrodisias). Among my publications on these topics, the most important are a long chapter on Cicero's *De fato* in M.-O. Goulet-Cazé (dir.), *Études sur la théorie stoïcienne de l'action* (Vrin, 2011); a French translation with commentary of Augustine, *La Cité de Dieu. Livre XIV* (Cécile Defaut, 2012, 135 p.); and a book on Alexander of Aphrodisias (*La causalité humaine. Sur le De fato d'Alexandre d'Aphrodise*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, forthcoming, 550 p.). Recently I published two books as an editor: one, with A. Balansard, on the history of the Platonic corpus (*Lire les dialogues, mais lesquels et dans quel ordre? Définitions du corpus et interprétations de Platon*, Academia Verlag, 2013); the other with D. Doucet, *Figures de l'identité d'Homère à Augustin* (PUP, 2014).

Chiara Militello

(University of Catania, Italy)

The Two Aphrodites: Plotinus, Proclus and the Sublimation of Bodily Desires

Abstract: The figure of Aphrodite plays a major role in the thought of two of the greatest philosophers of late antiquity, Plotinus and Proclus. As a matter of fact, both these Neoplatonists devote important passages of their works to this goddess. In *Enneads* 3.5, concerned with the interpretation of the myth of Eros, Plotinus discusses the nature of Aphrodite, who in different myths is either the mother of Eros or otherwise associated with his birth. Two key statements by Plotinus are that there are two Aphrodites, and that Aphrodite stands for the soul. The difference between the two Aphrodites is the one is heavenly and produces the appropriate kind of love, while the other one (the goddess of marriage) is associated with the material world. In both cases, Aphrodite is the soul, and as such she must be linked and contrasted to Zeus, who symbolizes the intellect. The duality between a higher Aphrodite and the goddess seen as a cosmic force is also found in Proclus, who focuses on Aphrodite in two texts, which are part of his general project of defending polytheism against Christianity: *in Rep.* 15, about the relationship between Ares and Aphrodite, and *in Crat.* 183, where he identifies the etymology of the name “Aphrodite” itself. As Tuomo Lankila has shown, Aphrodite is here seen as an immaculate principle of life as well as the goddess of bodily beauty and love. These two views do not contradict each other, as erotic madness is seen as a way to purify the soul (also see Proclus’ two hymns to Aphrodite).

The importance given to a goddess - indeed, to the goddess who symbolized the typically female-related traits of beauty, love and passion - may seem to show that Neoplatonists gave importance to the feminine. However, a more critical analysis, based on the pioneering works of scholars such as Elizabeth Spelman and Lynda Lange, shows that Plotinus and Proclus hijack the myth of Aphrodite to support their rational, masculine project. As a matter of fact, in the works of the Neoplatonists Aphrodite becomes the symbol of a love that is no more associated with the body (i.e. with the feminine principle), but rather with theoretical research, an endeavour typically associated with male traits. Plotinus subordinating Aphrodite as soul and principle of love to Zeus/intellect/perfect knowledge is a very clear sign of how Neoplatonic philosophers twisted the meaning of myth.

In this paper, I will show how Plotinus and Proclus turn the figure of Aphrodite from the goddess of bodily passion to the symbol of an immaculate path to knowledge. Among the different topics I will tackle, there will be the comparison between the etymologies of the name “Aphrodite” given by Plotinus and Proclus and the indirect influence of Christianity on Proclus’ take on the goddess. As a matter of fact, not only the whole theory of the henads is a reply to Christian theology, but some epithets used to describe Aphrodite seem to parallel the way Christians referred to Virgin Mary.

Keywords: Aphrodite, Plotinus, Proclus, Eros, bodily desires, Virgin Mary

Biography: Chiara Militello is a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Ancient Philosophy at Università di Catania. She has published four books, about the Neoplatonic commentaries on Porphyry’s *Isagoge* and Aristotle’s *On the Soul* and about Aristotle’s *Topics* and Alexander of Aphrodisias’ commentary on them. She has also written several papers on Neoplatonic philosophers (among them, “Self-knowledge and Self-reversion of the Irrational Soul in Simplicius’ Commentary on *On the Soul*” and “Aristotle’s *Topics* in the Greek Neoplatonic

Commentaries on the *Categories*,” in *Peitho*) and Alexander of Aphrodisias (e.g. “Emotions and Reason in Alexander of Aphrodisias: the Place of *aidôs* in the Human Soul,” Academia Verlag), but also on Pythagoreans (“From Heroes to Zeroes: The Pythagorean Refugees of the 6th and 5th Centuries”) and Plato (“*Aischynê* and the *logistikôn* in Plato’s *Republic*,” Brill).

Emese Mogyoródi

(University of Szeged, Hungary)

Immateriality and the Feminine in Parmenides

Abstract: Parmenides of Elea (5th c. BCE) is a seminal thinker in early Greek thought, acclaimed as a paragon of reason, reasoning or logic and/or of philosophy of nature, hence as a pioneer at the very foundations of Western science. Some crucial features of his poem, however, suggest that this account is one-sided. First of all, he presents his views in epic verse, traditionally believed to be inspired by the Muses; second, the poetic ego of his poem is a young man (*kouros*) who, after a mythical journey on a chariot, meets an anonymous goddess who initiates him into some profound knowledge (of both “Truth” and “Appearance”). Finally, the poem is thronged with traditional goddesses or female powers (*Hêliades*, *Nyx*, *Dikê*, *Themis*, *Peithô*, *Moirai*, *Anankê*), persistently featuring in all three sections (Proem, *Alêtheia*, *Doxa*), which strongly suggests that they play some explanatory role both in the arguments (see esp. *Peithô* in fr. 2) and the metaphysical (*Alêtheia*) and natural philosophical (*Doxa*) conclusions. Hence, a pertinent question might well be raised: What is the role of the feminine in Parmenides’ poem and philosophy?

These salient features have not, of course, escaped the notice of feminist philosophers. Contrary to what might be expected on the basis of the striking predominance of female characters, however, feminists unanimously portray Parmenides as biased against women, an architect of Western sexism and discrimination, a paragon of a type of *logos*-centered philosophizing that determined the rest of the history of Western thought, based as it is claimed to be by feminists, on the exclusion of women.

This paper analyzes the role and symbolism of light and night in Parmenides’ poem (and some relevant testimonies), connects them with his metaphysical and natural philosophical theses and argues that, in contrast with traditional Greek (patriarchal) notions, Parmenides not only associated positive qualities with the feminine, but accorded to it a fundamental ontological and cosmological status, and a crucial epistemic and salvific role. Thus, contrary to the interpretations of his feminist critics, Parmenides in fact advocated views that undermine much that they decry in Western philosophy.

Keywords: Parmenides, goddess, feminism, Western sexism

Biography: Emese Mogyoródi is Associate Professor at the Department of Philosophy, University of Szeged, Hungary. Her research fields include Presocratic philosophy (especially Xenophanes, Heraclitus, and Parmenides), the historical Socrates, and Plato’s ethics and political philosophy. She received fellowships from the Center for Hellenic Studies (Washington, D.C.), the National Humanities Center (NC), and the Institute for Advanced Study, CEU (Budapest). Her most recent book is *Achilles and Socrates: Moral Psychology and Political Philosophy in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Budapest, 2012) (in Hungarian).

Stanimir Panayotov

(Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Sexless Henology, Or, Is Plotinus' One Neutral to Sex and Gender?

Abstract: There is a widespread scholarly consensus that Plotinus' original notion of the One is beyond all predicates, including sex/gender. In this paper I set out the aim to disprove the thesis that the One in particular cannot be related to sex and gender (basing part of the argument on Zeke Mazur's work). My aim is to present the thesis that achieving a sexless notion of the One abets the disembodied status of the One via the relegation of the principle of materiality to the realm beneath the Indefinite Dyad.

To do this, I will first discuss why the consensus prevails, and present the argument that the thesis cannot explain away sex. Secondly, I will make the case for the One's reliance on sex by explaining how the correlative Indefinite Dyad as a parallel "first" principle guarantees the One's alleged sexless neutrality. Thirdly, I will discuss what does the presumed neutrality means based as it is on defining what I call the problem of grammatical neutrality. Lastly, I will discuss how the problem of grammatical neutrality relates to the problem of generation of matter.

The problem of grammatical neutrality of the One formalizes a sexless henology and consists in how the One culminates in unknowability, and I discuss whether unknowability can be qualified as unrelated to gender and embodiment in Plotinus. Plotinus abstracted the One away from its initial Pythagorean identification with maleness, culminating in the One's grammatical neutrality as an escape motif to disembodiment. Based on feminist philosophy accounts I present (J. Cooper, M. Miles) and critique (Irigaray), I will then subvert the argument that neutrality entails the incidentality (Dillon) of gendering female principles. The fact the Dyad is continuously feminine indicates that the abstraction of its femininity does not override the metaphysical boundlessness it expresses. And even though the two principles cannot be seen as identical, the retention of their gendering, despite their differing standing in terms of hierarchical metaphysics, can explain the One's alleged neutrality beyond all predicates.

While Plotinus does not tell us directly that the Dyad is the source of matter's evil (if and when it is qualified as such), his retention of the Dyad's femininity leaves open the opportunity to suspect the generation of matter there in her realm. The neutrality is precisely what indicates disembodiment. The escape to the One as an escape into neutrality is only possible because there is something to escape from – the Dyad and its offspring. The de-gendered neutrality of the One is thus itself generated by the gendered non-neutrality of the Dyad: whether or not matter is generated or not generated below the Dyad does not affect that neutrality. To claim the One's neutrality is self-sufficient and unrelated to its other and its gendering would amount to saying that the One does not need the Dyad as the principle of separation. This is why the problem of the One's grammatical neutrality reveals that there is a subtle hierarchy between it and the Dyad, and that the hierarchy itself is irreducible to neutrality, but is reducible to sex and gender.

Keywords: Plotinus, the One, sex, gender, henology, neutrality, grammar

Biography: Stanimir Panayotov (1982, Sliven, Bulgaria) is currently finishing his PhD in Comparative Gender Studies at the Central European University (Budapest, Hungary) with a specialization in Medieval Studies, titled *A Contribution to the Problem of Disembodiment in*

Continental Feminist Philosophy. He works at the intersections of continental and feminist philosophy, non-philosophy, Neoplatonism and new/speculative realism, and has specialized in these fields in Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana (2013); Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities – Skopje (2015); Linköping University (2016); American Research Center in Sofia (2016/17); Kingston University, London (2017); Utrecht University (2018). He is a member of Organisation Non-Philosophique Internationale since 2016. Co-director and co-organizer of Sofia Queer Forum (Sofia, 2012-present), as well as Summer School for Sexualities, Cultures and Politics (Skopje/Belgrade, 2012-2017). Since 2017 he is the editorial manager of *Identities: Journal for Politics, Gender and Culture*, as well as editorial board member of *Oraxiom: A Journal of Non-Philosophy*.

István Pásztori-Kupán

(Protestant Theological Institute Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca, Romania / Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary)

“Identical, But Not Alike”: *The Resurrection of the Body According to Amphilochius of Iconium*

Abstract: The statement in the Apostolic Creed referring to the “resurrection of the flesh” (Lat. *carnis resurrectio*) or of the body has been a theme of contention between various theologians and theological trends for many centuries. The question is exciting also because the idea concerning the “resurrection of the flesh” is present only in the *Apostolic Creed* of the Western Church, whilst it is absent from the *Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum* (381), although the so-called *Antiochene Creed* (379?), which could be regarded as the direct forerunner of the *Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum* and was included in the *Catecheses* of Theodore of Mopsuestia (surviving in Syriac), had contained the phrase. In our presentation we intend to discuss the manner how a famous Church Father of Asia Minor, Amphilochius of Iconium (ca. 340/345 – ca. after 394), a contemporary of Theodore and a close friend of the Cappadocian Fathers, interpreted this issue.

Although the times have been quite adverse against Amphilochius’s legacy (most of his works had perished throughout the ages), based on the surviving quotes and fragments we can conclude that he was not only a great theologian, but also a thinker endowed with a remarkably good sense of humour. Starting with the resurrection of Jesus, Amphilochius presents the question of universal resurrection in such effective and almost epigrammatically concise definitions, that these remain relevant even after the assessments concerning the notion of “person” of the spiritual trends of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Amongst these Amphilochian definitions we find the statement that the resurrected body is “identical, but not alike.” Based on the non-anachronistic interpretation of fourth century theological terms as well as considering Amphilochius’s consistent terminology it appears that for the one-time bishop of Iconium the idea of *bodily resurrection* meant mainly the *preservation of one’s personal identity*. This realisation in itself is a valuable legacy not only for modern theologians, but for a variety of contemporary discussions concerning what does it mean to be a person, how does it relate to fleshly presence, including time-space limited as well as boundless personal existence.

Keywords: body, person, identity, bodiless existence, bodily resurrection

Biography: István Pásztori-Kupán is professor of Doctrinal Theology at the Protestant Theological Institute in Kolozsvár/Cluj/Klausenburg in Transylvania, Romania and associate

professor at the Károli Gáspár University in Budapest. He obtained his bachelor's degree in theology in 1991 in Kolozsvár, his masters' degree in 1998 and his PhD in 2003 at the University of Edinburgh, and his dr. habil. at the Debrecen Reformed Theological University in 2010. His main focus of research is the Eastern Christological debates of the fifth century with a special interest in the so-called Antiochene theological network. His monograph entitled *Theodoret of Cyrus* appeared in 2006 at Routledge.

István Perczel

(Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

From the Indefinite Dyad to the Dyad of Eve and Mary: The Feminine Principle in Late Antique Philosophy and Theology

Abstract: Feminist philosophers have extensively treated the Platonic concepts of *Chora* and of the Indefinite Dyad, often identifying the two also with a third concept, matter, and seeing in this compound concept a symbol of ideological depreciation of womanhood. My paper would try to nuance this picture, Plotinus being in the centre of the investigation.

In late antique Platonist philosophy, the Indefinite Dyad (ἡ ἀόριστος δυάς) is neither *Chora*, nor matter simply, but the principle of universal manifestation out of the One (τὸ ἓν), which is everything and nothing and is a non-gendered, neutral principle. Thus, the feminine principle is the first to break this neutrality, and is neither less, nor more than our true self in its nascent, still unconscious state, at its deepest roots. The developed self or conscience, the Intellect contemplating the ideas as its contents, that is, the par excellence male principle, is subsequent in this order of things. Yet, faithful to her name, the Dyad is an ambivalent principle. It is the cause of Being before becoming the cause of descent as well as of non-being and evil at the end of the process. Thus, both the male principles and the ordered universe are situated between two femininities, a transcendent overfullness and an immanent privation. Only by considering this ambivalence can we understand the Platonist philosophers' ambivalent attitude to womanhood: women are either superior or inferior to men, but not equal as far as they are women and not simply human beings. Diotima is the initiator of Socrates into the Platonic lore on beauty and love.

This dichotomy is oddly echoed in late antique Christian theology, popular piety and iconography. Here, during the Christological controversies, gradually there evolved a concept in which Eve is the immediate cause of the Fall but Mary is the immediate cause and the symbol of divinisation. In this scheme, Mary, the Theotokos, represents human nature, which should receive the incarnate God, Christ, to realise her fullness. She is the unattainable peak of being human.

The lesson to be retained is that – according to these late antique theories – the human nature is feminine in its roots and there is a fundamental inequality (but no subordination) between men and women, without which the ambivalent concept of love would be impossible.

Keywords: Platonism and Christianity, Indefinite Dyad and Theotokos, the ambivalent concept of the female principle in Late Antiquity

Biography: István Perczel is professor of Byzantine and Eastern Christian studies at the Department of Medieval Studies of Central European University. He has dealt extensively with late antique and medieval Platonist philosophy, Christian Platonism and mysticism, Syriac manuscripts and he is also a specialist of the Saint Thomas Christians of South India.

Ana-Maria Răducan

(University of Sibiu, Romania / Institute of Advanced Studies for the Culture and Civilizations in Levant, Bucharest, Romania)

The Dynamics of Shame and the Development of a Christian Identity in the Acts of the Christian Martyrs

Abstract: *Erant autem uterque nudi Adam scilicet et uxor eius et non erubescabant.* [And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed (Genesis, 2,25 KJV)]

The aim of my paper is to analyze the dynamics of shame in the development of a Christian Identity, using some examples of the *Acts of the Christian Martyrs*. If according to Freud, the women's shame is perceived as a concealment of genital deficiency, shame may be also seen, in psychoanalytic terms, as a tension between the real ego and the ideal ego (Piers and Singer 1953). In Karen Horney's work, shame is linked to pride and to the development of a new identity, of a perfect self: "The individual may first have relatively harmless fantasies in which he pictures himself in some glamorous role. He proceeds by creating in his mind an idealized image of what he 'really' is, could be, should be. Then comes the most decisive step: his real self fades out ... The claims are his attempt to assert his place in the world, a place that is adequate to the significance of the idealized self and one that supports it. With his shoulds, he drives himself to actualize the perfection of this self... Pride and self-hate belong inseparably together, they are two expressions of one process." (Horney 1950, 109).

In this case, the negative affect of shame may be conceived as a functional tool in the search for identity of an individual. Moreover, *Gershen Kaufman* (in his work *The Psychology of Shame. Theory and Treatment of Shame-based Syndromes*, published in 1989) investigated the power of shame in shaping the evolving identity of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

From this point of view, one may argue that, in the case of the Early Christian martyrs, the persecutors' horrible behaviors, designed to humiliate, uncover or expose the martyrs' bodies (specially of the women's bodies) are used to place shame on their victims, in order to regulate their social role and activity. This is the reason why, for example, Anullinus orders Crispina to be shaved – *ut eius primum facies ad ignominiam deveniat – that her beauty might first thus be brought to shame* – Musurillo 2000). However, just as Crispina, the martyrs perceived this shame inflicted on their bodies as a mark of a Christian identity.

Keywords: shame, psychoanalysis, identity, Christian martyrs, female bodies, ideal ego

Biography: My name is Ana-Maria Răducan, I am a young postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Ecumenical Studies from the University of Sibiu, Romania, and also working as a specialist in Roman and Byzantine culture, at the Institute of Advanced Studies for the Culture and Civilizations in Levant in Bucharest. BA in Classics and MA in Medieval Studies from the University of Bucharest. During the preparation of my doctoral thesis (*The Meanings of the Eros in St. Symeon the New Thologian's Works*) at the University of Bucharest, I had the honor to meet Professor Marianne Saghy in Budapest (2014 and 2015), who is an indelible memory on my heart.

David Rollo

(University of Southern California, CA, USA)

The Ascendency of Venus in Martianus Capella's De Nuptiis Philologie et Mercurii

Abstract: The *De nuptiis* is usually (and rightly) considered one of the most influential circumscriptions of the seven liberal arts to have survived from late antiquity. Yet a curious and insufficiently recognized aspect of the text is the hostility some of the gods assembled for the wedding show toward the allegorized Arts themselves: if the deities in question are to be believed, the Arts are variously dirty, hirsute and dishonest charlatans who appear intent on ruining the nuptial revelry with the unremitting tedium of their self-expositions. The gods who make these remarks (Bacchus, Voluptas, and, most importantly, Venus) are associated with the pleasures of the body, and I shall argue that their contribution to the wedding is crucial. Were it not for their interventions, the physical union of Mercury and Philology would be postponed indefinitely, the transcendent language it would entail would never be made manifest, and humanity would never accede to universal wisdom. Ultimately, Martianus implies, arid scholasticism must be complemented by an appeal to the senses and the sensual pleasures that a new type of textuality would impart. That textuality is fiction itself, here associated with Harmonia, the last of the Arts to appear before the celestial senate and the nexus of all antitheses capable of reconciling the apparently antithetical domains of Pallas and Venus, the mind and the body.

Keywords: scholasticism, the Seven Liberal Arts, boredom, Venus, fiction and the body

Biography: David Rollo is Professor of English at the University of Southern California. He has also taught English at L'Université Française de l'Océan Indien on the French overseas department of La Réunion, and French for ten years at Dartmouth College. He was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and Princeton University. He is author of four books, most recently *Kiss My Relics: Hermaphroditic Fictions of the Middle Ages* (Chicago) and *Peter Damian's "Book of Gomorrah" and Alain de Lille's "Plaint of Nature": New Translations from the Latin* (Forthcoming).

Makiko Sato and Peter Steiger

(University of Toyama, Japan; Chaminade University of Honolulu, Hawaii, USA)

Man, Woman and Serpent as the Inner State of One Person: Anthropology Based on the Interpretation of Genesis 3 in Didymus the Blind and Augustine of Hippo

Abstract: The Bible has been interpreted in the Western world for more than two thousand years. Its exegesis has influenced anthropologies in each era of Occidental history since its compilation, even while the exegesis itself has been influenced by the anthropologies it encounters in each new culture. These biblically oriented anthropologies have sometimes influenced cultures beyond the Western world, both consciously and unconsciously. Among the books of the Bible, exegesis of Genesis has been the most popular matrix for explicating theological anthropology and the dynamics of the relationship between female and male. The interpretation of Genesis by early Christian Fathers has often been blamed for establishing a patriarchal understanding of the relationship between man and woman and has been criticized for perpetuating a view of femininity that relegates women as being inferior to men, just as Elaine Pagels (1988) most famously pointed

out. Augustine, whose view of women is frequently expressed in his exegesis of scripture, has been a principal target for criticism since his theology played a major role in the formation of western theological anthropology during and after the Middle Ages (Karen Armstrong 1986, Hans Küng 2001).

However, some Church Fathers, including Augustine, interpreted Genesis in reference to the Pauline letters; these exegetes nuanced their interpretation to argue that the male-female relationship presented in Genesis is not merely about physically gendered humans who have body and soul, but more about the complex interactions within the soul of each human, the “inner man” as termed by Paul. In this reading, physically gendered women and men both have femininity and masculinity within their one human person. Caution should be exercised in considering patristic exegesis of Genesis so as not to facilely accept the idea that these writers simply applied the gendered hierarchy of the external world to the inner human soul as an allegory justifying patriarchy, since if all human beings have both masculinity and femininity within their higher faculties, as these exegetes argued, then physical gender would not be enough to determine the social hierarchy. Greater attention must be given to the Church Fathers’ views on the “inner man” and how these relate to their anthropologies.

In this paper, the authors will focus on the interpretations of Genesis 3 by Didymus of Alexandria and Augustine of Hippo. It will first present how Didymus interprets key elements of the chapter, especially the Man, the Woman and the Serpent, and how it is based on his incorporation of anthropological indications in Paul’s letters. Secondly, Augustine’s earliest commentary on Genesis 3 is examined. Thirdly, the paper will clarify commonalities and differences between these interpretations by Didymus and Augustine. It will show that these Church Fathers created and deepened their anthropology in reaction to elements of Manichaeism anthropology. This paper will be written collaboratively by two researchers: one who studies Didymus and another who studies Augustine. Their collaborative research will contribute to understanding how the Greek Fathers’ anthropology influenced the Latin Fathers in late antiquity.

Keywords: Augustine of Hippo, Didymus the Blind, Exegesis of Genesis 3, theological anthropology

Biographies: Makiko Sato is a professor in Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Toyama University, Japan. She researches Saint Augustine’s thought, especially on the relationship of his language theory and his anthropology. Her recent research has been on the theme of “Research on the concept of femininity in Biblical exegesis in late antiquity.” This research is supported by JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) KAKENHI Grant Number 19K00103. Her research in the current paper continues and builds upon her recent article, “Women and Philosophy: A Rethinking of the Concept of Philosophy through Augustine of Hippo,” in *Contribution of Women to Con-viviality - In/Ad Spiration to Convivials* (Kyoyu-sha, 2019), in which the concept of woman and man that are applied to the inner state of one person in Augustine was examined.

Peter Steiger is an associate professor of Religious Studies at Chaminade University of Honolulu, on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. His research is focused on the Biblical exegesis of Didymus the Blind, his use of philosophy to interpret the bible, his theology of the role of the Christian teacher and how Didymus’ theology may have been the catalyst for several controversies in the late fourth century. He is currently working on Didymus’ commentary on the Book of Job, which he hopes to translate for publication in English in the near future.

Nathalie Schuler

(Free University of Berlin, Germany)

In/violability as Evidence in Heliodorus

Abstract: In Heliodorus' fourth-century novel *Aethiopica*, the bodily integrity of the heroine Charicleia is at the core of the narrative strategy. Not only is her wedding to Theagenes delayed until the very end of the novel, but the obstacles that stand between love at first sight and marriage put her in danger of being poisoned, burnt on the stake, and killed by a jealous pirate's sword. Endangered and affirmed, Charicleia's virginity and her inalterable beauty guide the narrative towards its happy ending.

The inviolability of the elite body in late antique literature has frequently been studied in the context of cultural history (König 2008, Harper 2013). Mikhail Bakhtin famously bases the narratological concept of adventure time on his claim that the heroes and heroines of the ancient novel emerge from their adventures physically and psychologically unscathed (Bakhtin 2008). Yet the epistemological character of (the absence of) bodily signs and symptoms has largely been overlooked. As a final retardation before their happy reunion, Charicleia and Theagenes are made prisoners of war by the Ethiopian king Hydaspes, who will later be revealed as the heroine's father. To test their suitability for ritual sacrifice, both protagonists have to step on a grid that burns the feet of anyone who has lost their virginity. Paradoxically, the status of the untouched body leads to inviolability, which in turn acts as life-threatening evidence. This paper takes the virginity test as a starting point to examine the interrelation of body and truth in Heliodorus.

While adventures do not leave a trace on the bodies of the protagonists, genealogy does. In the *Aethiopica*, both Charicleia's Ethiopian origin and Homer's descent from Hermes rest on bodily marks as evidence. In order to investigate more thoroughly the impact that mental images and passions have on the bodies of Heliodorus' protagonists, the body-soul relationship in late antique philosophy must be taken into account. Porphyry's dynamic model of a soul superior to, but closely intertwined with the individual body will be of special interest here. I hope to suggest that in the *Aethiopica*, the moments when the characters' bodies are most profoundly affected by their souls examine the possibility and the means of establishing truth. Thereby, this paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of Heliodorus' complex and playful take on contemporary philosophical discourses.

Keywords: Greek novel, inviolability, body and soul, virginity, evidence, adventure time, narratology

Biography: Nathalie Schuler is currently a PhD candidate at the Institute of Religious Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Her doctoral project on the ancient novel contributes to the research unit "Philology of Adventure" that explores adventure as a narrative and experiential pattern in literary texts from Late Antiquity to Modernity. The focus of her work is on representations and conceptualizations of the (gendered) body, namely the importance of in/violability, the interrelation of writing and genealogy and concepts of virginity. She is equally interested in the relation of the ancient novel to pagan and early Christian moral philosophy. Nathalie Schuler earned her B.A. in Greek Philology and her M.A. in Comparative Literature and Gender Studies from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

Orsolya Severino-Varsányi

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Incarnation and Gender in Ninth-century Arabic Christian Controversy

Abstract: Ninth-century Arabic Christian apologists, i.e. the first known Christian theologians who wrote in Arabic: the Melkite Theodore Abū Qurra (d. ca. 820– 825), the Jacobite Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidma Abū Rāḥīṭ a (d. probably soon after 830), and the Nestorian ʿAmmār al-Baṣ rī (d. ca. 840), composed their works to defend Christian teachings challenged by Muslims, i.e. the doctrine of the Trinity and divine filiation, or to contrast other Christian denominations, especially in the field of Christology.

In this apologetic literature and in the intra-Christian dogmatic debates, they used a wide range of words, terms or appellatives, to refer to a variety of concepts and notions of “body.” While there is a hierarchy of forms based on meanings, i.e. taking into consideration if a physical body, a bestial, or a human one is intended, most bodily terms appear in discussions about the Messiah, His body, Incarnation, (in)dwelling, and humanisation. When this latter group of notions is elaborated on, the dichotomy of body – taken from a human being, a woman – and divinity/spirit is presented, often with the help of the analogy of human generation, that of a human being born from his mother, in the unified form of body and soul.

In this paper, I seek to briefly present and classify the lexicon of the Arabic Christian authors, putting it into a context that takes into consideration the Patristic, Greek and Syriac Christian heritage these authors were drawing on; the challenges posed by the Muslim opponents; as well as the influence that an Arabic idiom defined by Islam had on the way these authors expressed their views. I seek to reflect on some (e.g. Aristotelian) views on reproduction and gender that defined the way how the birth/incarnation/humanisation of the Son was depicted.

Keywords: incarnation, Theodore Abū Qurra, Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidma Abū Rāḥīṭ a, ʿAmmār al-Baṣ rī, interreligious debate, intrareligious debate, Arabic Christian Lexicon, Mariology

Biography: Lecturer at the Institute of Semitic Philology, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Piliscsaba – Budapest (2013-). Previous experiences: Research Fellow at the Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies (2007-2012); and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2012-2013). Supervisor of the Honours Program PPCU-Radboud University, Nijmegen, 2016-2017. Studies: PhD in Literary and Cultural Studies at PPCU (2013). Previous studies and grants: Kuwait University, Language Centre (2000-2001), “Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli”, Italy (2003), University of Damascus and Arabic Language for Foreigners, Syria (2004-2005); Université Saint-Joseph, Beirut (2007); Vatican Library (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana) and Vatican Secret Archives (2017). Membership: Public Body of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Körösi Csoma Association (Oriental Studies, Hungary); European Association for the Study of Religions. Monograph: *Ninth-Century Arabic Christian Apology and Polemics: A Terminological Study of 'Ammār al-Baṣ rī's Kitāb al-Masā'il wa-l-Ajwiba* (Orientalia Christiana II), Piliscsaba, The Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2015. Essays in books published by Brill; Peeters; Editions de Paris (Studia Arabica); GALE; Akadémiai (Hu), Universitas (Hu). Articles in scientific journals (*The Arabist*, *Parole de l'Orient*, *Keletkutató*, *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, *Vigilia*). Recent international congresses: Limerick (2015), Paris and Rome (2016), Rome and Leeds (2017), Wien and Bern (2018).

Trpimir Vedriš

(University of Zagreb, Croatia)

Chaste Ladies and Lustful Judges: Embodied Virtues and Vices in Passio Anastasiae

Abstract: The historical circumstances of the emergence of *Passio Anastasiae* are not completely clear, but recent scholarship (K. Cooper, R. Lizzi Testa, E. Consolino, F. Moretti) tends to date its compilation earlier than held previously. The legend in its extant form was seemingly shaped in Rome between the mid-fifth and the beginning of the sixth century while an older “kernel of the narrative” might have circulated in Rome earlier, possibly emerging in the social and literary context of the late fourth-century circle of Pannonian aristocratic women.

The legend, once labeled by H. Delehaye as “epic *passio* of little historical value”, tells the story of the martyrdom of a Roman aristocratic woman Anastasia and her companions – including Chrysogonus, another Roman of high status, three sisters of Thessalonika and Bythinian Theodota. The “historical identity” of St. Anastasia and her companions is to a large extent out of grasp of the historian. Her Late Antique *Passio* presents her as Roman noblewoman who, for the sake of Christians suffering in the prisons during Diocletian’s persecution, travelled far and wide, from Rome to Aquileia and Sirmium, where she was executed in the historically unrecognizable “Palmarian islands”. The present paper, while avoiding the discussion on the historicity of these martyrs and their cults, aims at exploring the literary mechanisms employed in constructing the *personae* of the martyrs and their persecutors.

In the focus of the paper will be main heroine’s “double identity” as both the virgin and the widow which has stirred some controversy in earlier attempts to accredit her with proper liturgical veneration. Yet, while *passio* might allow for a different reading of Anastasia’s relation with her husband, the medieval authors read the relevant lines as confirming her having preserved her virginity, even “under the marital yoke of her impious husband”. Having primarily in mind the (possible) context and audience of the legend I will explore the element of *edificatio* achieved by the usage of traditional dichotomy between vices and virtues deriving from the long usage in both Judeo-Christian and pre-Christian philosophical traditions. The “vices of the flesh,” having acutely important role therein, will receive special scrutiny.

Keywords: *passio Anastasiae*, Roman martyrs, vices and virtues

Biography: Trpimir Vedriš is Assistant Professor at Department of History at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. He studied history and ethnography at the University of Zagreb, philosophy at the Jesuit Faculty of Philosophy and obtained MA in Medieval Studies at the Department of Medieval studies at CEU. He holds PhD in history from University of Zagreb and Medieval Studies from CEU. His research and teaching focus on medieval hagiography and the cult of the saints in the Adriatic, history of Christianity, and modern receptions of the Middle Ages. He is a member of the Croatian Hagiography Society Hagiotheca. He has (co)edited conference proceedings including *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints* (co-edited with A. Marinković) (Hagiotheca, 2010.); *Saintly Bishops and Bishops’ Saints* (co-edited with John S. Ott) (Hagiotheca–Humaniora, 2012); *Cuius Patrocinio Tota Gaudet Regio. Saints’ Cults and the Dynamics of Regional Cohesion* (co-edited with S. Kuzmova and A. Marinković) (Hagiotheca, 2014) and *The Saints of Rome: Diffusion and Reception from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (co-edited with H. Doherty and D. Uhrin, Hagiotheca-Leykam, forthcoming). He is currently preparing the Croatian edition of the *Passio Anastasiae*.

Marianne Sághy (1961 – 2018)

Marianne Sághy graduated at ELTE in 1985, in History and French. Her academic interest turned initially to the history of late medieval France. She spent several months at the Centre d'Études Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale in Poitiers. She wrote her MA Thesis on *Pierre Dubois' Plan for the Recovery of the Holy Land in 1306*, and her D. Phil. Thesis on *Political Dreams in Late Medieval Europe: Philippe de Mézières and the Reformation of Christendom*. In 1986-87 she was among the first group of junior scholars who could study a year in Oxford with the stipend of the Soros Foundation. In 1989 she was admitted with a PhD scholarship to Princeton University, where she studied with Natalie Zemon Davis and Peter Brown. Under the direction of the latter she turned to the study of Late Antiquity and defended her PhD with a thesis in 1998 on *Patrons and Priests: The Roman Senatorial Aristocracy and the Church, AD 355-384*.

She started teaching at the Department of Medieval Universal History, at ELTE in 1985, a teaching activity she continued until the present. In 1993 she became a founding member of the Department of Medieval Studies at CEU, which became her principal workplace. In the past two and half decades she worked as an imaginative and dedicated teacher, directing the work of dozens of MA and PhD students, and nurturing their subsequent academic careers. Her academic services included the organization of workshops, large international conferences, including *Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome* in 2012, *Piroska and the Pantokrator: Dynastic Memory, Healing and Salvation in Komnenian Constantinople* in 2015, *Saints of Rome: Diffusion and Reception from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* in 2017, and *Pantokrator 900: Cultural Memories of a Byzantine Complex*—a conference she organized, but at which she was no longer able to participate because of her grave illness.

Her work as a scholar of late antique and medieval cult of saints and religious culture was internationally recognized, presented at a large number of international conferences, several authored or edited books, source editions and around 60 scholarly studies—resolutely thorough research written with flair and elegance. Her books include the Hungarian monographs *Versek és vértanúk: a római mártírkultusz Damasus pápa korában, 366-384* [Poems and martyrs: The Roman cult of martyrs at the time of Pope Damasus] (2003), *Isten barátai: Szent és szentéletrajz a késő antikvitásban* [Friends of God: Saints and hagiography in the Late Antiquity] (2005), *Szent Márton, Krisztus katonája* [Saint Martin, soldier of Christ] (2018) – English or French translations of these works were currently in preparation. Among the collaborative volumes she has edited two volumes on *Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome* (2016 and 2017); and several others, forthcoming shortly, upon which she kept on working till the last moment.

Beside her own research she dedicated much energy to making the most up-to-date results of international scholarship in patristics, hagiography and medieval studies available in Hungary. She translated to Hungarian two books by Peter Brown (*The Cult of the Saints; Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*), one by Robert Markus (*Saint Gregory the Great and his Age*), and one by Pierre Riché (*Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare*). Her mediation of scholarship was also active in the other direction, making Hungarian research and the work at CEU Medieval Studies known on the international scene. She participated in the editorial board of the *Annual of the Department of Medieval Studies*, and the *Hungarian Historical Review*. Between 1999 and 2003 she served as the academic secretary of Hungarian Cultural Institute in Paris—a mission that enabled her subsequently to develop the contacts of CEU and ELTE with French universities and research

centers. She was also very active in collaborating with Italian colleagues and research centers. Both these scholarly milieus were welcome additions to the mostly Anglophone and German academic networks of CEU. Her participation in the work of Hungarian Society for Patristics since 2001, and the launch of the Hungarian Hagiography Society, which she founded closely cooperating with Croatian, Italian, French and American colleagues in 2016, also served these goals.

Gábor Klaniczay

Notes

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DIS EMBODIMENT AND IM MATERIALITY

UNCOVERING THE BODY, GENDER AND
SEXUALITY IN LATE ANTIQUITY
[IN MEMORIAM MARIANNE SÁGHY (1961 - 2018)]

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