



MIMXX

Promoting the Classics



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Introduction



Hello and welcome to *The Classical Association in Northern Ireland's* 2020 Annual. It is a pleasure to be writing this as *CANI's* incoming Convenor and I am delighted to present to you a selection of activities and events that we have hosted over the last year.

If you have clicked on this latest annual then, in some way, you have an interest in the Classical world and we are delighted that in these pages we will be able to present to you the wide-ranging events that have been able to share in the last academic year.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, *CANI* found a way to spread our love and excitement for the Ancient World – we went virtual! Be it with online blogs on Nero's Afterlife, our series of online lectures or the *Belfast Summer School*, *CANI* has a plethora of events that we have shared.

At *CANI*, we pride ourselves in encouraging as many people as we can to engage in Classics and Ancient History. With that, this year saw us begin our *CANI Outreach Webinar Series*. This saw young scholars sharing their work via online talks on our YouTube channel; don't forget to like and subscribe! We have been very excited to see what fantastic research has been done by undergraduates, postgraduates and early career academics in our field. It has been a real honour to provide a platform for them to share their brilliant work.

Whoever you are, whatever your background is, if you are interested in what you read and would like to hear more about what we do, including what we will be getting up to in the next academic year then please connect with us on social media. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube!

Please do connect with us in whatever way you can, even become one of our members! We would love to have our *CANI* family grow and are always ready to welcome new members into the Classics community in Northern Ireland!

Finally, I, the *CANI* board, our members and followers would like to give a special thanks to our out-going Convenor Helen McVeigh, for her tireless work in developing *CANI* into what it is today. I hope I can continue in her footsteps to share our common love of the ancient world, be it online or in person!

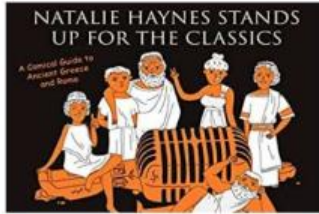
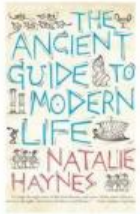
Amber Taylor
CANI Convenor

For more information on the work of the Classical Association in Northern Ireland or to become a member, see www.classicalassociationni.wordpress.com or email classicalassociationni@hotmail.com

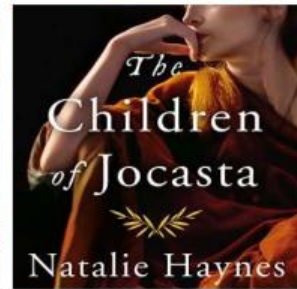




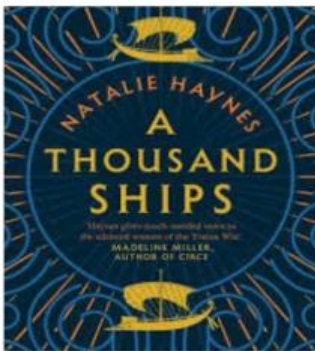
Announcing CANI's Honorary Patron: Natalie Haynes



CANI are extremely proud to announce that Natalie Haynes has been appointed as our Honorary Patron!



Natalie is the author of not only *A Thousand Ships*, which was shortlisted for the 'Women's Prize' in 2020, but also *The Amber Fury*, *The Children of Jocasta*, *The Ancient Guide to Modern Life* and *Pandora's Jar*. Natalie has also announced that she is writing two more as-yet-untitled books on Medusa and Medea.



As well as a fantastic author, Natalie is a prodigious broadcaster. The six (with

more to come) series of BBC Radio 4's *Stand Up For the Classics* can be found on Audible and BBC Sounds. It sees Natalie and various guest experts take a serious but amusing look at various people from the Ancient Greek and Roman worlds. During lockdown, she produced a series of videos called *#OvidNotCovid*, looking at various female characters in the *Heroides* of Ovid. You can watch these videos by heading over to Natalie's Instagram page: [nataliehaynesauthor](https://www.instagram.com/nataliehaynesauthor). Perhaps most exciting of all is that at the time of writing this, Natalie has just been announced as a presenter of the returning cult archaeology show *Time Team*!

Natalie has been a frequent and fantastic guest of CANI since our re-founding, presenting several talks in Belfast. We cannot wait for our Honorary Patron to return to these shores... and... if you go check the *Programme of Events 2021-22* on the last page of this Annual, you will see that it is really not all that long a wait...



The 'Donation of Odoacer' Part I: The Career of Pierius



Flavius Odoacer is most famous as the man who deposed the 'last' western emperor Romulus Augustulus in 476, becoming the first non-Roman ruler of Italy for centuries. He did technically act as a viceroy for the eastern emperor Zeno, but in reality, Odoacer ruled Italy and some adjoining lands north to the Danube and across the Adriatic Sea in his own right as 'king of Italy'.

It was in this role as *rex Italiae* that Odoacer was able to reward his loyal underlings with land grants. One such land grant came on 18 March 489 to a *comes domesticorum* called Pierius. The grant in itself was not particularly special or significant in terms of value, amounting to 40 *solidi* per annum worth of land top up to a much larger previous grant.

However, its importance comes in the fact that the original text of Odoacer's land grant to Pierius survives. This makes Odoacer, despite the previous 500 years of Roman imperial history and extensive administration and bureaucracy, the first ruler of Italy for whom an original text of a legal act has survived. Pierius' grant is also the only surviving document from the civic scriptorium of Syracuse prior to the Roman reconquest in late 535 (Tjäder (1955) I.35).

It is worth noting that while the name of the *rex Italiae* is listed as 'Odovacar' throughout the document and I have chosen to go with 'Odoacer' for this blog, his name appears with various other spellings in the historical sources: we would also see Odoacar, Odovacris, Odovacrius, Adovacris and the Greek versions of Οδοαχος and Οδοακρος. It is unsurprising then that there is no firm conclusion on where his name originates from...



The recipient of the donation, Pierius, is much less well known. Indeed, in similar documents from Roman history – donations, certificates, discharge papers, epitaphs, various inscriptions – it is usual that the subject of the document is otherwise unknown. However, while Pierius is hardly famous, he is known from other historical sources beyond the 'Donation of Odoacer.' His appearances in the pages of Eugippius' *Life of St Severinus*, the *Auctarium Prosperi Hauniensis* and the *pars posterior* of the *Anonymus Valesianus*, while short on each occasion, show that he was prominent within the regime of Odoacer. Unfortunately, the only actions recorded for Pierius come from the period 488-490 (which, as will be seen, encompasses the last two years of his life), meaning that there is very little information about his career as a whole.

Even in these limited sources, there is a slight discrepancy in the position that he held during this period. During his service in Noricum in 488, he is recorded as a *comes* (Eugippius, *V. Sev.* 44.5). He is similarly listed as *comes* at the Battle of Adda in 490 (*Auct. Prosp. Haun.* s.a. 491), which would seem to confirm his holding of that position. However, *Anonymus Valesianus* XI.53 records him as the commander of Odoacer's household bodyguard – *comes*

domesticorum. Such a high-ranking office would explain not only why Pierius was put in command of important actions such as the evacuation of Noricum in 488 and of Odoacer's forces at Adda River against Theoderic in 490, but also why the *rex Italiae* would promise to reward him with 690 *solidi* worth of land.

For him to rise to *comes domesticorum*, Pierius must have had a career of some substance. Unfortunately, as there is no hint of his age, we can only infer where and who Pierius might have served pre-488. For Odoacer to appoint Pierius as the commander of his bodyguard suggests that he trusted this man to protect him, a trust that could have been cultivated over the course of many years of loyal service to Odoacer and perhaps some of the later western Roman emperors.

While names do not necessarily demonstrate ethnicity, 'Pierius' seems much more of a Roman than barbarian name (While not a particularly popular name, the volumes of the *PLRE* list 7 other men called Pierius – *PLRE* I.701, II.884-885, IIIb.1041; see below for more on the 'Pierii'). This, combined with the trust shown in him by Odoacer, could suggest that Pierius was an early supporter of Odoacer, perhaps joining the *rex Italiae* as he established control of Italy.



Odoacer's takeover of Italy and surrounding territories would have provided Pierius with opportunities to win sufficient acclaim for the *rex Italiae* to promote him to high office and reward him with lands and income. The question could be asked if the lands granted to Pierius in Sicily and Dalmatia were a reflection of his military service. While there was no major

conflict in Sicily with the Vandals until 491 after Pierius' death, the *rex Italiae* had confronted the Vandal king Geiseric over control of the island early in his reign. Perhaps Pierius had been involved in securing the Vandal cession of Sicily to Odoacer in the early autumn of 476 (Clover (1999), 237). Pierius could also have played a role in Odoacer's conquest of Dalmatia in 481, leading to his reward of the island of Melita (Cassiodorus, *Chron.* sa.481; *Fast. Vind. Prior* sa.482; *Auct. Haun. ordo prior* sa.482).

Pierius' overseeing of the evacuation of Roman provincials from Noricum could suggest that along with Odoacer's brother, Onoulphus, he was involved in Odoacer's war of 486/487 with the Rugians of Feletheus (Eugippus, *V. Sev.* 44.4; Crawford (2019), 212-213).



While much of the conflict with Theoderic came after the land grants, Pierius' potential service against Theoderic would also demonstrate his ability and loyalty to Odoacer. The first direct engagement between the forces of Odoacer and the Amal Goths came on 28 August 489 at the Isontius River (the modern Soča in Slovenia and Isonzo in Italy). Very little is recorded about the battle besides Theoderic's victory (*Fast. Vind. Prior* sa. 490); however, while there is no record of Pierius being present, the fact that Odoacer commanded his own forces at Isontius could suggest that his chief bodyguard was also present. If so, then Pierius likely had a role in the orderly withdrawal and the subsequent Battle of Verona on 30 September 489, where Theoderic inflicted a second, much more emphatic defeat on Odoacer (*Anon. Val.* XI.50; Cassiodorus, *Chron.* sa.489; Ennodius, *Pan.* 39ff).

Even if we are to posit Pierius' presence at Isontius and then Verona (Odoacer could just as easily have charged him with command of Ravenna), the aftermath of Verona introduces many more variables. The panicked and fractured retreat of Odoacer's defeated forces may have seen the *comes domesticorum* escape to Ravenna with Odoacer; however, Pierius could instead have been forced to join the majority of the retreating army in reaching Milan, where it surrendered to the advancing Theoderic (*Anon. Val.* XI.50-51). Plenty of those who surrendered found their way back into the ranks of Odoacer's army in the succeeding weeks and months. The most high-profile individual recorded doing so was Tufa, Odoacer's *magister militum* (*Anon. Val.* XI.51-52; Ennodius, *V. Epiph.* 111; Wolfram (1990), 281). A captured Pierius could have done so too, although his surrender would surely have been recorded alongside Tufa.

The ability of many of those who surrendered at Milan to return to their Odoacer allegiance stemmed from the *rex Italiae* undoing much of the damage caused by his defeats of Isontius and Verona even before 489 was out through the defences of Ravenna and the financial support of the Italian aristocracy. This continuation of war with Theoderic provided plenty of opportunity for Pierius to extend his military adventures throughout 489/490 – Odoacer's recovery of Cremona, the blockading of Theoderic at Ticinum (modern Pavia), the Burgundian raid on Liguria and a Gothic invasion by Alaric II. Ultimately though, the sources only record one other military action of Pierius beyond his involvement in the aftermath of the Rugian war of 488 – his command of Odoacer's forces at the Battle of Adda River on 11 August 490.

The intervention of Alaric II's forces allowed Theoderic to escape the blockade of Ticinum and gather most of his forces together. With the Goths a little more desperate for a final conclusion and Odoacer more confident in a positive result, Theoderic quickly marched to face the forces under Pierius' command at the Adda River, "possibly near Acerrae-

Pizzighettone, where the road from Lodi to Cremona crossed the river” (Wolfram (1990), 282). Again, there is little detail about the Battle of the Adda River on 11 August 490, other than the result: a decisive Gothic victory (*Anon. Val.* XI.53; *Auct. Prosp. haun.* sa.491; Cassiodorus, *Chron.* sa.490; Jordanes, *Get.* 292ff; Ennodius, *V. Epiph.* 109-111, 127; *Pan.* 36-47). And one that proved fatal not just for Pierius, but in the long run to the regime of Odoacer too.

While it was ultimately fatal, Pierius had plenty of opportunity to render significant enough service to Odoacer in order to be rewarded with land, which will be seen in Part II.

The Pierii of the *Prosopography of the Late Roman Empire*

PLRE I.701 – husband of Coelia Nerviana, brother-in-law of Coelia Claudiana, a late third century Chief Vestal; an old friend of Libanius, accused of peculation during a stint as an *officialis* in the east before 359 (Libanius, *Ep.* 105)

PLRE II.884-885 – a late 4th/early 5th century correspondent of Symmachus, possibly an African senator (Symmachus, *Ep.* VIII.45); the early/mid-5th century monk, Nilus, seemingly corresponded with two separate men called Pierius (Nilus, *Ep.* I.316, II.167), while a certain Pierius was serving as city prefect of Ravenna on 9 June 440 (*NVal* 8.1)

PLRE IIIb.1041 – Pierius, *primicerius singulariorum* of Cassiodorus during his time as praetorian prefect of Italy in 534-535 (Cassiodorus, *Var.* XI.32)

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The ‘Donation of Odoacer’ Part II: Documenting the Donation



We saw last time that the career of Pierius must have been significant enough before his appearance in the historical record for Odoacer to promote him to his chief bodyguard, *comes domesticorum*. The wars of Odoacer’s reign – against the Vandals, Dalmatians, Rugians and Goths will also have provided Pierius with further opportunity to give sufficient service for the *rex Italiae* to feel that he warranted reward in the shape of significant lands in his kingdom.

The specific ‘Donation of Odoacer’ was written on papyrus shortly after the grant was made on 18 March 489 and despite its survival, it has not come through the intervening 15 centuries unscathed. The opening section is missing and the document has been divided into two parts. There is virtually no light to be shone on the first millennium of the document’s existence, but one could imagine it gathering dust in the archives of Ravenna or Syracuse, before the rejuvenation of interest in antiquity during the Renaissance.

Francesco Scipione, the 17th/18th century marchese of Maffei and antiquarian, suggested that the document was previously owned by Giovanni Pontano, a leading 15th century Italian humanist and poet. By this point, the introductory section of the document had been lost, and it may also have already been divided into two pieces. During the 1660s, the latter part of the document was in the possession of Cardinal Pasquale de Aragon during the 1660s, only for the two halves to be reunited in the library of the Monastery of St. Paul in Naples in 1702. In 1718, the second part was presented to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, through whom the fragment found its way to the Imperial Court Library in Vienna, which is now the Austrian National Library. The first part resides in the collection of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Naples. Despite these repeated movements, the division into two parts and the missing introduction, the bulk of text has survived.



The background to the document is a promise made by Odoacer to Pierius of land with an income to the value of 690 *solidi*. At some point before 18 March 489, the *rex Italiae* had made good on a substantial portion of this promise. The *comes domesticorum* had already received estates with an annual income of 650 *solidi* – the collection of *fundi* farms/estates called the *massa Pyramitana* near Syracuse in Sicily, which was worth 430 *solidi* per annum, and the Dalmatian island of Melita, modern Mljet in Croatia, worth 200 *solidi* per annum.

It has been suggested that the *massa Pyramitana* took its name from and was therefore quite close to the offshore island-turned-promontory of Thapsus to the north of Syracuse. There was seemingly a pyramid at Thapsus right up until it was destroyed by an earthquake in 1542 (Marini (1805), nos.82-83), which could have given its name to this *massa*. That said, the name could reflect that of a previous owner (Jones (1964), 786, who also gives a brief look at the meaning of *massa* and *fundus*, highlights that while several *fundi* could be grouped together to form a *massa*, “*massae* were not necessarily continuous blocks of land, but rather a group of *fundi* under one management”).

The papyrus document comprising the ‘Donation of Odoacer’ is actually the *rex Italiae* completing his promise by giving his ‘*vir inlustris ac magnificus*’ slightly more than the outstanding 40 *solidi* per annum in lands adjoining the *massa Pyramitana* – the *fundus Aemilianus* (18 *solidi* p.a.), a portion of the *fundus Dubli* (15 $\frac{3}{4}$ *solidi* p.a.) and part of the *fundus Putaxiae* (7 *solidi* p.a.), for a total of 40 $\frac{3}{4}$ *solidi* and an overall total of 690 $\frac{3}{4}$ *solidi* per annum.



The text itself, in the hands of the *notarius* Marcian and the *magister officiorum* Andromachus (or members of their staff), combines the dry legalese of the Late Roman bureaucracy with the pomp and ceremony of the Christianised Roman world, even at a time when the Western Roman Empire was no more.

This combination provides a document where “the writing is cursive, of a bold and flowing character, without any spaces between the words, and quite undecipherable except by an expert” (Hodgkin (1885), III.165).

While spawned at the ‘royal/imperial’ court of Odoacer at Ravenna and being a direct donation to an underling, Odoacer himself did not sign the document, leaving Marcian and Andromachus to witness the donation. Could this be because the barbarian *rex Italiae* could not write?



With the document generated at Odoacer’s court, the matter was then placed in the hands of the *actores* or agents of Pierius (these may have been freedmen of Pierius as they refer to him as their *patronus*). These *actores* presented the deed of donation to officials at Ravenna, who obtained from Marcian confirmation that he and Andromachus, who had departed for Rome, had witnessed the grant by Odoacer to Pierius.


With this authentication, the matter then moved to the courts of Syracuse, the city in whose jurisdiction Pierius’ new lands came under. Gregory the *chartarius* and Amantius the *decemprimus* were dispatched from Syracuse with Pierius’ *actores* to the estates, where they interacted with the tenants and slaves attached to the lands (although a flaw in the document means that we are not sure what is said or done to them – were they merely being informed of the identity of their new master?). The *actores* are then given a tour of the estates, before returning to Syracuse where they take formal control of these new lands on behalf of their patron. They express his willingness to take on the fiscal responsibilities that came with the land and arrange for Pierius’ name to replace that of the former owner on the public register. Once this is done, Amantius added his signature to the document and the ‘Donation of Odoacer’ to Pierius was complete. The *comes domesiticorum* now had full rights to dispense with the lands as he saw fit and leave them to his descendents.

No one could have known that this legal right of inheritance would be activated within 17 months of the ‘Donation of Odoacer,’ as Pierius was killed at Adda River (*Anon Val XI.53; Auct. Prosp. Haun. s.a. 491*)

“The length of the documents relating to so small a property, the particularity of the recitals, the exactness with which the performance of every formality is described, the care with which the various gradations in the official hierarchy are marked, the reverence which is professed for the mandate of Odovacar, all show us that we are still in presence of the unbroken and yet working machinery of the Roman law: though the hand, not of a Roman citizen, born on the Mediterranean shores, but of a full-blooded barbarian from the Danube, is that which must, at the last resort, control its movements” (Hodgkin (1896), III.154)



Odoacer’s choice of lands to reward Pierius may not be entirely random. We may be seeing the *rex Italiae* playing political games of loyalty and defence with various individuals and groups within his realm. Perhaps Odoacer was attempting to give Pierius a direct personal stake in the defence of certain regions of the Italian kingdom. Sicily and Dalmatia had only recently been taken over by Odoacer and were still threatened by neighbouring powers – the war of 491 shows that the Vandals had not given up on Sicily, while Dalmatia was claimed by Constantinople,



likely raided by barbarians and by 488 in the firing line of Theoderic the Amal. Could it even be that Pierius had some pre-existing connection to either Sicily or Dalmatia, making him even more likely to fight to protect these lands?

As the Goths wintered on his eastern frontier, Odoacer was forewarned about Theoderic's arrival and he may have done more with that forewarning than just prepare his main army to intercept the Goths at Isontius. He may have attempted to make sure that Theoderic could only enter Italy by the land route. It was suggested that Theoderic initially aimed to cross the Adriatic, only to be unable to find sufficient boats to ferry his forces to Italy (Procopius *BG* I.1.13). Could it be that Odoacer succeeded in maintaining control of whatever Adriatic fleet resided in Dalmatia through grants of land such as the island of Melita to Pierius?


That the grants to Pierius did not contain any land in Italy itself might hint at another of Odoacer's political concerns – the backing of the Italian upper classes. Their unwillingness to pay their share in cash, materiel and manpower had been a significant problem in the final decades of western imperial rule. And once the imperial balancing act between the Italian aristocracy and barbarian troops became impossible, the western empire fell apart.

However, while Odoacer initially was able to force aristocratic quiescence to his taking of land for his followers through the strength of his Italian field army (Procopius, *BG* V.1.8), in the face of Theoderic's impending invasion, Odoacer could not risk upsetting the Italian aristocracy by taking more of their land. Perhaps this is part of the reason why when he felt the need to reward Pierius, he gave him land in Sicily and Dalmatia.

Is there any potential evidence for any such policies of ensuring loyalty from his underlings actually working? Pierius himself did give his life in service to Odoacer, while even in the face of certain defeat following the Battle of Adda River, many of his men stayed loyal to the *rex Italiae* during the blockade of Ravenna. Sicily did stay loyal throughout Theoderic's invasion, including after the Vandal attack in 491, while Dalmatia failed to provide Theoderic with sufficient ships to cross the Adriatic in 488. The Adriatic shipping lanes became increasingly important as the war with Theoderic dragged on. It was not until Theoderic gained control of the fleet at Arminium, modern Rimini, on 29 August 492, that he was able to put adequate pressure on Odoacer's position in Ravenna to bring the war and ultimately Odoacer's reign to an end.

The 'Donation of Odoacer' is not only an important document as the earliest original text of a ruler of Italy, it also provides an intriguing window into the still heavily Romanised kingdom of a potentially illiterate barbarian. Over a decade since the deposition of Romulus Augustulus, the imperial hierarchies and bureaucracy continued to exist – positions and titles like '*vir inlustris ac magnificus*', *notarius*, *magister officiorum* are all mentioned while Odoacer is shown using the legal framework of the empire he overthrew, with the land grant to Pierius carried out through proper legal channels in Ravenna and Syracuse.

However, this 'Donation' provides just enough information to raise many largely unanswerable questions about its background on the eve of a major conflict between two barbarian powers for control of Italy. The gaps in the historical record leave us with mostly mere speculation about Pierius' career, his origins, and potential connections to Odoacer, the last western emperors and the regions in which he was given land.



The 'Donation of Odoacer' may provide the first original document from a ruler of Italy, but there is a document preserved in Egypt which contains the handwriting of the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius II (408-450) – <https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/2017/10/17/the-only-surviving-handwriting-of-an-emperor-theodosius-ii-and-a-petition-from-aswan/%5D>

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Nero's Afterlife Part I: The Imposters and "Never Say Nero Again"



Confronted with rebellions by Vindex in Gaul and Galba in Spain and rumours of the allegiance of Verginius Rufus' army in Germania, the emperor Nero panicked. Rather than face up to what was perhaps far less dangerous an opposition than it first looks, Nero looked to flee the capital, reach Ostia and make for the eastern provinces, which had been the most supportive of him during his reign. This plan was reputedly interrupted when some of the Guards he ordered to flee with him refused.

Returning to the imperial palace, Nero mulled over his options, which he narrowed to throwing himself on the mercy of Galba, appealing to the people in the hope that they would allow him to take up residence in Egypt or fleeing to Parthia. With no firm decision made, the emperor drifted off into what must have been a fitful sleep. News of his proposed flight and various prevarications seems to have stripped away the loyalty of those in the palace, Guards and servants alike for upon waking Nero found virtually no one to help him; not even someone to kill him (Suetonius, *Nero* 47).



Having considered throwing himself into the Tiber, Nero instead escaped in disguise to the villa of his freedman, Phaon, about 4 miles outside Rome, with just four followers. Upon hearing the news that the Senate had declared him a public enemy, Nero finally decided on committing suicide, although even as agents of the Senate could be heard approaching, he still needed his private secretary, Epaphroditus, to carry out this 'suicide' on 9 June 68 (Suetonius, *Nero* 49).



Despite his body being seen by Galba's freedman Icelus, cremated and then buried in the Mausoleum of the Domitii Ahenobarbi (pointedly not the Mausoleum of Augustus), what is now the Villa Borghese, on the Pincian Hill in Rome (Suetonius, *Nero* 50), there were several contributing factors which led to questions around whether or not Nero had actually died in 68. Both his death and burial had not been colossal public spectacles, which could have raised dissatisfaction and suspicion (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.8). There was also shock and fear of losing not just a young emperor at only 31 years old, but also the last in the line of the long-lived Julio-Claudian dynasty that had brought about a century of stability to the Roman Empire. His various plans to go east and to ensure his survival suggested that he had the potential to escape and had not lost his will to live. Nero was also still popular with certain sections of the population, such as the lowest classes, who loved the circus and theatre and grasped at every rumour (Tacitus, *Hist.* I.4.3; his tomb was covered in flowers and his statues draped in togas), which in itself not only saw people wanting him to have survived but also questioning the official suicide story because he still had support in large parts of the empire. His being an artist may also have spawned a dramatic 'afterlife', particularly in Greece and the Hellenised East due to his 'liberation' of Greece.

Some of these factors combined to make it that "there were people who... even continued to circulate his edicts, pretending he was still alive and would soon return to confound his enemies" (Suetonius, *Nero* 57). Could the idea that people were continuing to 'circulate

Neronian edicts' not only mean that they were following the edicts of Nero himself but that people were issuing false edicts in his name?

This unwillingness to accept the demise of the last Julio-Claudian emperor and lingering loyalty and suspicion to both the dynasty and Nero himself enabled the appearance of three separate men claiming to be the deceased emperor.

The Original False Nero (AD69)

Using similar language to when his report of the presence of a False Drusus in the Cyclades in AD31 (Tacitus, *Ann.* V.10), Tacitus records that "Achaëa and Asia were alarmed by a false report of Nero's return" (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.8). Indeed, there are several repeated aspects in the Tacitean stories of the False Drusus and the first False Nero – both recall the panic of 'Achaëa and Asia'; both are set in the Cyclades, involvement of "an ignorant following" of slaves, freedmen and adventurers and both impostors looking to get to Egypt/Syria (The False Drusus was not even the first impostor in the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The slave Clemens claimed to Agrippa Postumus, grandson of Augustus in AD16, only to be captured and executed by Tiberius (Dio 57.16)).



Could this reflect something in Tacitus' claim of a "Greek taste for novelties and marvels," (Tacitus, *Ann.* V.10; a more charming way of saying 'gullible and stupid'?) with their repeated willingness to accept the word of the impostors? Or is Tacitus recycling information he had from one impostor and superimposing it onto another because he had no other information as well as following the literary tropes surrounding rebels/revolts/usurpers in being only able to attract the dregs of society to their cause?



The timing of this first impostor's appearance may reflect not just the continuing connection some had with Nero and the Julio-Claudian dynasty but also the continuing hot-potatoing of the imperial position. Nero's immediate successor, Galba, was already dead; as was the man who ousted him, Nero's former courtier, Otho. And now, in late 68/early 69, the empire was in the run-up to the Second Battle of Bedriacum between the forces of Vitellius and Vespasian on 27 October

69.

This first (unnamed) Neronian pretender was either a slave from Pontus or a freedman from Italy. The basis for his impersonation was that he not only looked like Nero, but he could play the cithara and was a trained singer. That the impostor (and Tacitus?) felt that this was important evidence of his being Nero demonstrates what the deceased emperor was most famous for in Greece – Nero had visited Greece in 66-67 to participate at the Panhellenic Games and declared the 'liberation' of the Greeks.



He was able to attract runaway slaves, adventurers and "some army deserters who had been roaming about in destitution until he bribed them to follow him by lavish promises" (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.8) They took ship in the Aegean, looking to reach either Egypt or Syria, not because 'Nero' had made any contact with those regions, but because they had been supportive of the emperor and had resources and soldiers.



En route, bad weather forced them to land on Cythnus, where ‘Nero’ met some soldiers returning from the east on leave. He was able to recruit some of them to his cause, but those who refused were executed as the impostor could not yet afford to have his fledgling plot come to the attention of the authorities. However, ‘Nero’ still needed followers and resources, even if getting them risked drawing attention, so he engaged in some low-level piracy, robbed several local businessmen and armed a number of their slaves, likely gaining their support on the promise of their freedom.

Into the midst of this island-borne conspiracy arrived a centurion from one of the Syrian legions called Sisenna. He was passing through the Aegean seemingly on his way to Rome to present the praetorians with a silver or bronze ornament of clasping hands, “a traditional token of mutual hospitality” (Tacitus, *Hist.* I.54). Putting in at Cythnus, Sisenna found himself a target of various entreaties from ‘Nero’ and his followers, who will have viewed the centurion as a useful tool in extending their support into the Syrian legions. However, rightly fearing for his life, Sisenna managed to slip away and spread word of this impostor.

This seems like a complete disaster for ‘Nero’, who had already murdered many to prevent word of his plot spreading; however, while “this caused a wave of panic... many restless or discontented creatures rallied with eagerness to a famous name.” (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.8) It is likely that it was this initial burst of support that caused the alarm in ‘Achaea and Asia.’

As it turned out, the plot of this first False Nero failed at its first real interaction with forces of the central government. Again showing that Cythnus was on a much-travelled route for military and political personnel, the newly appointed governor of Galatia and Pamphylia, Calpurnius Asprenas, arrived on the island, escorted by two triremes from the Ravennate fleet.

“Agents of the self-styled Nero” (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.9) approached the captains of the two triremes. They agreed to meet the ‘emperor’ who, “assuming a pathetic air,” (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.9) tried to appeal to the loyalty of these men to ‘him’, hoping to get them to take the impostor and his supporters to Syria or Egypt. Either half-convinced or tricking ‘Nero’, the captains said that they would have to talk to their crews. Rather than try to bring their crews over to the impostor, the captains went straight to Asprenas. The governor immediately organised the storming of ‘Nero’s’ ship with the Ravennate sailors. The impostor was quickly overpowered and captured, with Asprenas seeing to his rapid execution. “His body, which arrested attention by the eyes, hair and savage expression, was taken to Asia and then to Rome.” (Tacitus, *Hist.* II.9) Asprenas would go on to have a successful career. After his governorship of Galatia and Pamphylia, he served as suffect consul in 78 and governor of Africa, perhaps in 82/83.

The Second False Nero (79-81)

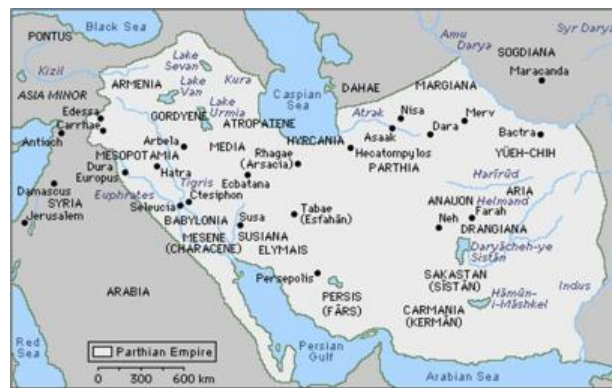
The second False Nero appeared during the reign of the emperor Titus (79-81). This impostor was an Asian called Terentius Maximus, who based his claim on similar grounds of physical appearance and musical ability. This ‘Nero’ claimed that he “had escaped from the soldiers who had been sent against him and that he had been living in concealment somewhere up to this time” (John of Antioch fr.104). He found support from the more ‘disreputable’ classes, much as the first impostor had done, and “it would not be rash to assume that he too found a following in the Roman provinces of the east” (Griffin (1984), 215).



However, Terentius Maximus 'Nero' seemed to have gained the much more important support of a Parthian king. Since the death of Vologaesus I in 77, three of his sons – Vologaesus II, Pacorus II and Artabanus III – had contended with each other for the Parthian throne, so the identity of the king is uncertain, but it appears to have been Artabanus.

This Parthian support appeared to come in useful for despite having gained some followers in the Asian provinces of the Roman Empire, Terentius Maximus soon felt it necessary to flee across the Euphrates to the court of Artabanus III (Dio 66.19.3b; was he forced to flee by Roman forces loyal to Titus?). The Parthian king gave this Pseudo-Nero refuge and promised military aid in 'restoring' Terentius to the imperial throne, something which the impostor expected due to 'his' having ceded Armenia to the Parthians during 'his' time in power.

However, seemingly once his true identity was uncovered and perhaps when Artabanus recognised that this impostor was of little use to him and provided an obstacle to Roman support/neutrality in his quest to be sole Parthian king, he had Terentius Maximus executed (Dio 66.19.3c; John of Antioch fr.104; Zonaras XI.18).



Terentius Maximus does seem to have gotten one thing right in his plotting – the expectation that the Parthians were receptive to a False Nero due to their past good relations with him. Nero's willingness to compromise over Armenia may have been the reason behind Vologaesus I (51-78) requesting that the Senate honour the deceased emperor's memory (Suetonius, *Nero* 57).

At the very least, if he was not initially duped into believing that Terentius was Nero, Artabanus was happy to accept the fiction for his own political ends, both as a challenge to Titus and as 'imperial' backing in his challenge to his brother Pacorus II for the Parthian throne.

Parthian willingness to support Neronian pretenders may have sprouted not just from the good relations Nero had fostered with them over Armenia but also the apparent frostiness with the Flavian dynasty. Despite Vologaesus I giving Vespasian a large corps of archers for his war with Vitellius, Vespasian had refused the Parthian king's request for a joint expedition throughout the Caucasus passes against the Alans in 75. The Parthians were so put out by this rebuff that they threatened to invade Syria in 76.

The presence of 'Nero' at their court will have been a boon to Parthian attempts to firmly establish their control over Armenia and perhaps disrupt the Roman defence should the Parthians make inroads into the eastern provinces by tapping into any latent loyalty to Nero and/or the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

However, while Armenia and Flavian frostiness might explain Parthia goodwill towards Neronian impostors, could this Parthian ‘love’ of Nero instead reflect a lasting regard for him in the Roman literary circles that Suetonius was connected to? Is Suetonius positing Parthian respect for Nero when it is instead lasting literary regard for the musical emperor?

The Third False Nero (c.88)



This Parthian goodwill towards the memory of Nero, their less favourable relations with the Flavians and the potential political benefits saw them back “the mysterious individual [who] came forward claiming to be Nero” (Suetonius, *Nero* 57) some twenty years after his death – c.88 during the reign of Domitian, who the Parthians may have known was unpopular with the Roman senatorial classes (by this point, Pacorus II had overcome his brothers and was sole Parthian king).

Suetonius perhaps plays into any accusations that he was allowing pro-Nero literary influences to seep into his work by claiming that “so magical was the sound of his name in the Parthians’ ears that they supported him to the best of their ability, and only handed him over with great reluctance” (Suetonius, *Nero* 57).



While Suetonius is dialling up the drama, Tacitus reports that there is a hint of truth in the Suetonian depiction of the Parthian reaction to this third impostor, as “thanks to the activities of a charlatan masquerading as Nero, even Parthia was on the brink of declaring war” (Tacitus, *Hist.* I.2). However, despite Vologaesus’ annoyance at Vespasian and Parthian support for two Neronian impostors, Romano-Parthian relations remained peaceful throughout the remainder of the first century and on into the early second century, before the massive Parthian campaign of the emperor Trajan (Gallivan (1973), 364-365 on the chronology of the False Neros).

As already seen with Clemens and the False Drusus, imperial impostors were not created through the mystery surrounding Nero’s death. The attempted use of Pseudo-Neros by the Parthians would not be the last such attempt by Rome’s enemies. There was a Pseudo-Theodosius, supposedly son of the emperor Mauricius, who the Persians used in their war against the Romans in 602-628, while in the late eleventh century, the Norman conqueror, Robert Guiscard, invaded Roman possessions in the Balkans with a monk called Raiktor who claimed to be the deposed and executed emperor Michael VII Doukas (Anna Komnena, *Alexiad* I.12).

The False Neros has endured as a story, becoming the focus of some historical fiction with Lion Feuchtwanger’s *Der Falsche Nero* (1936) using the story of the second Neronian impostor, Terentius Maximus, while Lindsey Davis looked at the last of these Pseudo-Neros in the 2017 book *The Third Nero: Never Say Nero Again*.

We may laugh at the ancients who were taken in by these False Neros, but what of the number of people who believe that Hitler did not commit suicide in his bunker in 1945? And how many people claim to have seen Elvis in the decades since his death?

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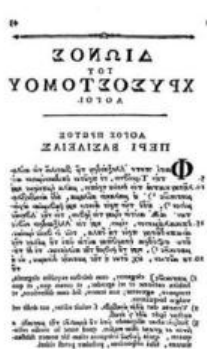
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Nero's Afterlife Part II: Nero Redivivus



The appearance of three False Neros in the two decades after the emperor's death in 68 was not the only 'afterlife' that Nero had. He became increasingly associated with a legend that he was not dead, no matter how long-lived that made him, and was waiting to return to reclaim his throne. This legend that saw him connected to some of the more prominent beliefs in the burgeoning faith of Christianity.

Similarly, it is not at all clear how much influence the three False Neros might have had on the development of that legend – did they influence its creation? Were they influenced by it? Or do both the impostors and the legend share the same influence? Might it be possible to see the evolution of this legend through a variety of sources?



The first/second century Greek philosopher and historian Dio Chrysostom also wrote on the phenomenon of people believing that Nero was still alive long after his death.

“...for so far as the rest of his subjects were concerned, there was nothing to prevent his continuing to be Emperor for all time, seeing that even now everybody wishes he were still alive. And the great majority do believe that he is, although in a certain sense he has died not once but often along with those who had been firmly convinced that he was still alive” (Dio Chrysostom, *On Beauty* 21.10).

There is not much information in this discourse of Dio with which to associate this comment with any specific False Nero. Could he be linking this yearning for the rule of Nero to the growing dislike of Domitian in some circles, which would limit it to the third impostor in 88/89? (Jones (1978), 135 dates it to 88 rather than the previous date of Trajan's reign) Dio may



instead be commenting generally on the atmosphere that spawned these impostors, which could encompass one, two or all three of them.

The pervasion of this atmosphere cannot be easily dismissed, and whether it bore or was born by the repeated 're-appearances' of Nero in the second half of the first century, it seems to have had a significant impact on various religious texts, specifically in Nero's seeming incorporation into eschatological literature and association with Judaeo-Christian portents of renewal and doom through the *Nero Redivivus* legend.



Several variations of the legend exist, playing on both hope and fear of Nero's return. Suetonius would have it that Nero's connection to such religious texts happened even before his death with astrologers predicting Nero's downfall but also promising him "the rule of the East, when he was cast off, a few expressly naming the sovereignty of Jerusalem" (Suetonius, *Nero* 40.2).

The earliest written version The Jewish *Sibylline Oracles* saw Nero in exile, a great criminal king who had fled to the Parthians only to soon return at the head of a vast army to destroy Rome and the world (*Sibylline Oracles* IV.119-124, 138-139, V.137-152, 362f.; Collins (1974), 80-87) It also refers to Nero as a "purple dragon" (I.88) and a "great beast" (V.157).

By the time certain parts of the *Sibylline Oracles* were written, Nero would have been well over 100 years old so while they do not speak of him being reborn or revived, the leap is not far to make.



Aspects of that leap may be seen in sections of the Bible. It could be that the False Neros influenced the mentioning of false Christs and false prophets in Mark 13:21-22, but it is in the Book of Revelation where the real inferences towards Nero may appear.

The idea that Nero might return to reclaim his throne at the head of an army from across the Euphrates, possibly used by or taken from the False Neros, may have inspired the author of the Book of Revelation, who writes of the Beast being wounded in a similar fashion to Nero's fatal injury, only for that wound to heal miraculously, which would also been similar to Nero if he had indeed survived the somewhat self-inflicted wound (Revelation 13:3; Minear (1953), 93-101).



Attempts to portray Nero in such Beastly fashion are also seen in the seeming encoding of his name as a cryptogram in the 'Number of the Beast.' As it might be expected, it does require some literary gymnastics and assigning numbers to certain Greco-Hebrew letters and sounds, such as n=50, r=200, w=6, q=100 and s=60, but 'Nero Caesar' renders the number 666... (Sanders (1918), 95-99; Klauck (2001), 690)

Perhaps then some in the late first century thought that Nero was to be Christ's antagonist? Or could the author be using Nero as something of a cipher for Domitian? Such veiled criticism

of Nero as the Beast or a harbinger of doom may well have been to protect the author and anyone found reading it.

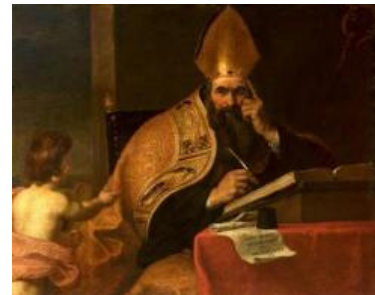
These criticisms were also the next step in joining the *Nero Redivivus* legend to the Antichrist. While this connection does not seem to appear directly in these early religious texts, it was established by the third century. He was certainly connected to the Beast in the *Ascension of Isaiah*, an anonymous work comprised of sections from various points in the first to third century and perhaps compiled later again. *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:2-14 presents Nero as “a lawless king, the slayer of his mother,” a Christian persecutor, and the personification of Beliar, the Hebrew Devil, to ultimately be slain by Christ in the final battle.



The mid-third century Christian poet, Commodianus, presents the revived Nero as something of a lieutenant of the Antichrist to “be raised up from hell” to rule part of the world (Commodianus, *Instructions* 41).

Not all Christians shared the popular belief that Nero was the Antichrist, his precursor or lieutenant. In his *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, the early fourth century convert, Lactantius, belittles the idea that Nero would return (Lactantius, *DMP* II.7), although in the process of doing so, he acknowledges that such a belief was still around at the time when the Roman Empire was on the cusp of Christianisation.

Even a century later, when the empire had been Christianised, St. Augustine felt the need to address *Nero Redivivus* in the section of the *City of God* which dealt with II Thessalonians 2:7. And as with Lactantius, Augustine ridicules the inferences others have made regarding Nero’s proposed reviving (as well as the attempts to have ‘Nero as the Antichrist’ appear in the writings of St. Paul), but demonstrating that these ideas were still prominent enough to need to be debunked at the turn of the fifth century (Augustine, *City of God* 19.3.2).



This is further seen in the early fifth century writings of Sulpicius Severus, who calls Nero, “the basest of all men, and even of wild beasts...who will yet appear immediately before the coming of Antichrist” (Sulpicius Severus, *Sacred History*, II.28-29), following Revelation in that Nero’s ‘fatal’ wound will have healed for him to be able to be a precursor to the Antichrist (Sulpicius Severus, *Sacred History*, II.29).

It is possible to see the development of the *Nero Redivivus* myth through Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio, *Sibylline Oracles*, Revelation and later sources, although the links are not always clear or strong and there is also considerable opposition to *Nero Redivivus*’ influence on Revelation (Klauck (2001), 690 nn.28-29 lists many dissenting voices).

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The Old Kingdom



THE ONE WITH THE PYRAMIDS

The Middle Kingdom



THE BORING ONE

The New Kingdom



THE ONE WITH THE COOL STUFF

Ptolemaic Kingdom



THE ONE WITH CLEOPATRA

When you're talking about a volcanic eruption from 535 AD and your friend keeps asking what this has to do with the rise of Islam



We get there when we get there!

#SeeOvidI9

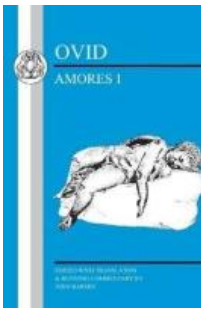


Those of you interested in the Classics may already have come across some Ovidian play on COVID-19. For this blog, I have taken ‘COVID-19’ as a reference – ‘See Ovid I.9’ Unfortunately, it does not list which work of Ovid to read, so let’s look at them all!

Not sure if these lines provide deep or meaningful, but then I am no poet and as a political historian of Late Antiquity, I barely class as a classicist... I am also not 100% sure of the translations... but hopefully it gets people wanting to read more Ovid.

Heroides I.9 [Penelope to Ulysses]

*nec mihi quaerenti spatiosam fallere noctem
nor my hand, bereft, exhaust me, working all night long*

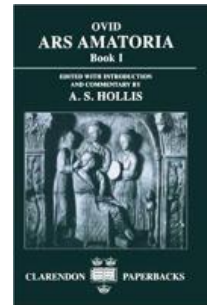


Amores I.9

*quis probet in silvis Cererem regnare iugosis,
Who’d approve of Ceres ruling the wooded hills,*

Ars Amatoria I.9

*Ille quidem ferus est et qui mihi saepe repugnet:
It’s true Love’s wild, and one who often flouts me:*



Metamorphoses I.9

*non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum.
Of things at strife among themselves, for want of order due.*



Fasti I.9

*invenies illic et festa domestica vobis;
And here you'll find the festivals of your House,*



Tristia I.9

*felices ornent haec instrumenta libellos:
Happier books are decorated with these things:*



Epistulae ex Ponto I.9 [To Brutus]

*Non tamen accedunt, sed, ut aspicias ipse, latere
They still will not go, but as you see they think*



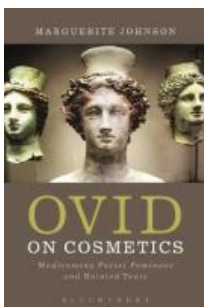
Remedia Amoris I.9

*Quin etiam docui, qua posses arte parari,
Indeed I've taught, as well, by what art you can be won,*



Ibis I.9

*Quisquis is est (nam nomen adhuc utcumque tacebo),
Whoever it is (for I'll be silent still as yet about his name)*



Medicamina Faciei Femineae I.9

*vellera saepe eadem Tyrio medicantur aëno;
The fleeces are dyed many times in the brazen cauldrons with Tyrian purple*



Ancient and Mythological Street Names in Belfast



The area occupied by modern Belfast has seen some form of human occupation since the Bronze Age. The Giant's Ring is an almost 5,000-year-old henge while the hills around the city host the remains of Iron Age forts. That said, it was but a minor settlement throughout much of its history, with some castles built to secure control for various hegemonies in the regions, such as John de Courcy and the O'Neill clan. It was not until the 17th century that Belfast was incorporated as a town, before growing as an industrial and trading centre throughout the 18th and 19th centuries to challenge Dublin as Ireland's biggest city.

This growth was reflected in the significant expansion of its street map and in the course of researching a paper on 'Patterns in the Street-Names of Belfast,' Dr Paul Tempan noticed that some of those new streets had names taken from ancient history and mythology, a small cluster of which are on the south side of the Donegall Road and built by 1893 (*Irish Historic Towns Atlas xvii*). Of course, these names with mythical connections are but a small percentage of the total, with many more derived from landowners, traders and commemorating politicians etc., but for CANI, it is the potential ancient and mythical inspiration that draws the attention.



Thalia Street is named after the Greek Muse of comedy and poetry, Θάλεια. Thalia's name means 'joyous' or 'flourishing,' reflecting her own continued skill in comic and poetic songs. She is often portrayed as an ivy-crowned young woman, holding a comic mask, a bugle or trumpet and something resembling a shepherd's staff. Euterpe Street is named after another Greek Muse: Εὐτέρπη, who presided over music and lyric poetry. Her name means 'rejoicing well' or 'delight,' probably reflecting the reception of her own



compositions. Ancient poets referred to her as the 'giver of delight.' She is often depicted holding a flute, and is sometimes presented as the inventor of some ancient musical instruments.



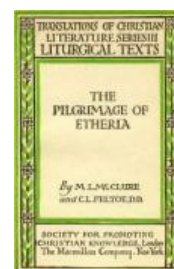
Pandora Street is named after the first mortal woman according to Greek myth, created by Hephaestus on the instructions of Zeus. Her name, Πανδώρα, derives from the Greek πᾶν, pān, meaning 'all' and δῶρον, dōron, meaning 'gift.' This could mean either 'all-gifted,' reflecting the many gifts given to her by the gods or 'all-giving' in something of an (sarcastic?) inversion of the myth, with her opening of a box – more accurately a jar, a change made by a textual mistake in the 16th century – 'gifting' many ills upon the world. Only 'hope' remained in the Pandoran box/jar, either in its genuine form or a more 'deceptive expectation.' (Hesiod, *Work and Days* 60-105).

Daphne Street shares a name with Δάφνη, meaning 'laurel', a mythological Greek naiad, a variety of nymph associated with fountains, wells, springs, streams, brooks and other bodies of freshwater. Her parentage is disputed in the mythological texts, but mostly share the idea that she was the daughter of a river god. Daphne's myth is similarly mixed, but the general narrative has her receiving the unwanted attention of Apollo, who has been cured by Cupid. Rather than succumb to these forced advances, Daphne asked for her father's help, and he turned her into a laurel tree to escape Apollo.



EGERIA ST

Egeria Street takes its name either from the nymph of Roman legend or from the eponym that stems from said legend for a female advisor of counsellor. She gained this reputation by acting as the divine consort and counsellor of Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome (c.715-673BC). Through her advice, Numa formulated various laws, rituals and customs vital to the make-up of the early Roman state. There is another 'Egeria' in ancient times much less unlikely

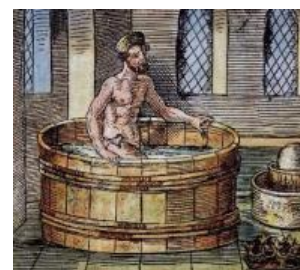


to have drawn the attention of street-naming 'Belfastians.' She is thought to be the late fourth century author of an account of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem known as the *Itinerarium Egeriae*. Unfortunately, while likely the earliest such itinerary, Egeria's work only survives in fragments of a later copy.



Fortuna Street, named after the goddess of fortune, the Roman equivalent of Tyche, and frequently seen as the personification of luck. She is often depicted with a cornucopia (horn of plenty), which associates her with 'good luck,' but really, she was capable of bringing both good and bad luck. Because of that, she is seen wielding a ball, which was described as the *Rota Fortunae* – the 'Wheel of Fortune,' a symbol of the capriciousness of Fate. She can also be seen holding a rudder, highlighting how she steers the 'ship' as something of a guiding force, and yet, she could also be represented as veiled or blind.

There was also Eureka Street, built in 1870 (*Irish Historic Towns Atlas XVII.18*), demolished and then replaced by Eureka Drive. Of course, this was not named after a person, god or place, but instead the famous exclamation – εὕρηκα! "I have found it!" – of the third century BC Syracusan Greek scientist, Archimedes. He reportedly made his exclamation upon stepping into a bath, noticing that the water level rose, and realising that the volume of water displaced must be equal to the volume of the part of his body he had submerged.

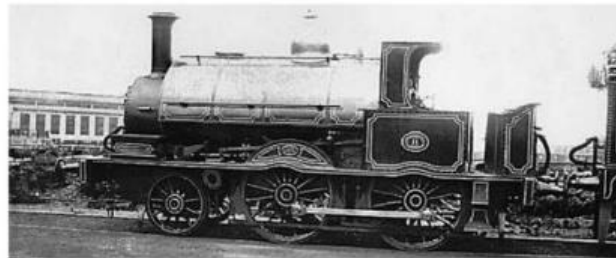


This would allow for more precise measuring of irregular objects. Archimedes was so eager to expound upon his realisation that he leapt out the bath and ran naked through the streets of Syracuse. Had the Belfast street-builders or namers found something in the area to use such a name linked with discovery?



There are also numerous streets in Belfast which take their name from someone or something that has taken its name from something an ancient or myth. In Castlereagh, East Belfast, there is Cicero Gardens, which takes its name from the horse that won the Derby in 1905, which in turn takes its name from the great orator of the late

Roman Republic ('Cicero' means 'chickpea' in Latin). Perhaps rather surprisingly, Cicero the Horse seems to have had no connection to Ireland, with an English owner, and English trainer and an American jockey. Perhaps a local won a lot of money betting on the equine chickpea?



Vulcan Street on the Short Strand may be so named due to local industries (not for a love of the home planet of Star Trek's Mr Spock). That said, there was a Vulcan Foundry in another part of Belfast, while the English company Vulcan Foundry Ltd produced locomotives for the Belfast and County Down Railway in the 1880s. The Roman Vulcan was god of fire, volcanoes, metalworking, deserts and the forge. Due to the latter, he was frequently depicted wielding a blacksmith's hammer.

Apollo Road, off Boucher Road, was probably named after the Apollo space programme that put the first men on the Moon, rather than directly after the Greek god of healing, medicine and archery, and of music and poetry, son of Zeus and Leto and the twin brother of Artemis.



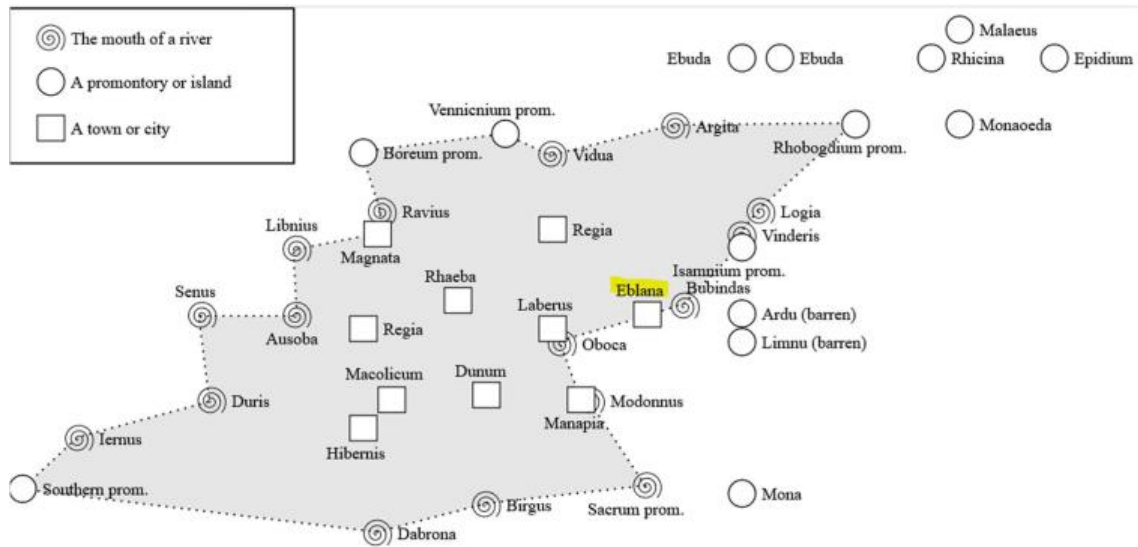
Rosetta Park is likely named after Rosetta Primary School, which in turn was likely named to commemorate (probably an anniversary of) the deciphering of the Rosetta Stone and therefore Egyptian hieroglyphics in 1822 by Jean-François Champollion.

Are there any other ancient or mythical street names you have come across on your travels in Belfast or anywhere else in Ireland? My own hometown has a 'Victoria Street' but given that it is right beside a 'Queen Street' (as well as an 'Edward Street' and 'Henry Street'), it is undoubtedly named after Queen Victoria, rather than any direct use of the Latin for 'victory'. Belfast itself has Great Victoria Street as well.

Paul Tempan and Peter Crawford



Ptolemy's Map of Ireland and Street Names in Belfast



It is not just mythological, divine and actual ancient people that have inspired classical street names in Belfast. There are also some ancient geographical terms that have been used. There is a Hibernia Street in Holywood, which uses the Latin name for Ireland, a name that stems from the Latin for 'winter.'



But perhaps the more intriguing ancient influence comes from the map of 'Hibernia' depicted in the *Geographia* of Claudius Ptolemy, a second century AD, Alexandrian Greek mathematician, astronomer, geographer and astrologer. Off University Street, there is an Eblana Street, named in 1874 (*IHTA XVII.18*) from a town listed on the east coast of Ireland on Ptolemy's map. It is very likely that Belfast's Eblana Street was so named in the belief that Ptolemy's *EBLANA* was the earliest recorded name for the locality of Dublin.



Irish antiquarians such as Sir James Ware and Walter Harris made this *EBLANA*-Dublin connection and believed that the name had somehow evolved from *EBLANA* into Irish *Dubhlinn*, anglicised as Dublin. This identification may have become widely enough accepted for P.W. Joyce to repeat it in the first volume of *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places*, published in 1875, without any examination.



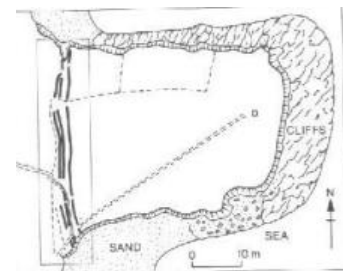
Several businesses and institutions in modern Dublin have used the name Eblana because of this supposed equivalence, e.g. Eblana Motors and the Eblana Theatre, located in the basement of the Busáras, Dublin's main bus station.

However, it is now widely accepted that Ptolemy's *EBLANA* does not refer to Dublin but to place a little to the north of the city. By 1946, T.F. O'Rahilly was making no mention of a connection between *Eblani* or its *Ebdani* inhabitants with the city of Dublin: "Ptolemy places these somewhere about the north of Co. Dublin; but they and their town, *Eblana*, appear to be unknown to Irish tradition. (O'Rahilly (1946), 7).



Unlike Dublin, Ptolemy's *EBLANA* does not stand on a river, but between the mouths of two rivers: the *BUBINDAS* and the *OBOKA*. The former appears to be the River Boyne and because early antiquarians believed that *EBLANA* was Dublin, they identified the *OBOKA* with a river south of the city, specifically that which enters the sea at Arklow in Wicklow, consequently dubbed the Ovoca (now the River Avoca).

It may be Ptolemy's *OBOKA* that is the River Liffey (although there is no etymological connection), with his *MODONNOS* probably representing the Avoca. *EBLANA*, thus, is located somewhere between the mouths of the Boyne and the Liffey. This could see *EBLANA* identified with the promontory fort/trading post of Drumanagh south of present-day Loughshinny, a site which is prominent in arguments over connections between Ireland and the Roman world.



The name 'Eblana' might actually be known to Irish tradition, perpetuated in names of peoples and places recorded in Irish medieval sources, namely *Eibhlinn*, *Sliabh Eibhlinne* (= Slieve Felim) and *Éile* (Ely O'Carroll, Eliogarty/Ely O'Fogarty, *Bri Éile* = Hill of Croghan, where the Old Croghan Man was found; Tempan (2006)).

On the surface, the distance between *EBLANA* and 'Éile' might seem rather large, with some rather hefty sounding letters dropping out, but really this development is rather standard. The 'b' in medieval Irish is prone to disappear, especially when connected to another consonant. The loss of the 'b' would see the initial 'E' lengthened, with the 'n' disappearing probably through variations in declension. This is seen in other Irish names such as *Ériu/Éirinn*, *Áru/Ára/Árainn* (Aran Islands) and *Rechru/Reachrainn* (Rathlin).

These names seemingly derived from *EBLANA* – *Eibhlinn*, *Sliabh Eibhlinne*, *Éile* – are located in the Irish midlands (Offaly and Tipperary), but this is not incompatible with the identification of *EBLANA* with Drumanagh on the east coast. Many centuries had passed between the creation of Ptolemy's *Geographia* and the emergence of these peoples in native Irish sources. There are several other Irish populations named by Ptolemy who are believed to have spread or migrated considerable distances before they emerge in native Irish histories, e.g. *MANAPII* located in the south-east, but connected with *Fir Manach* / Fermanagh.

Another possible etymological trail might be seen in the name of the River Delvin in north Co. Dublin. As Ptolemy often dropped the initial letters of names and a shift from *EBLANA* to 'Delvin' could be possible. The mouth of the Delvin is the location of two substantial groups of chamber tombs, which may have still been visible from the sea at the time of Ptolemy. Looking at the Irish name of the modern Delvin – An Ailbhine – would seem to further any potential *EBLANA* > Delvin. This seems awfully close to the *Eibhlinn* proposed above for *EBLANA*.



However, while *EBLANA* to 'Delvin' is possible etymologically, it is a much more complicated journey than *EBLANA* > *Eibhlinn*, involving not just the not uncommon switching (metathesis) of -bl- to -lb-, but also the much rarer addition of an initial 'D' (prothesis). It could be that An Ailbhine > Delvin is merely a modern Anglicisation, with a touch of knowledge of the 'Delbna', a population group from Westmeath. *EBLANA* > Eblenn > Sliabh Eibhlinne is much simpler and more economical. No complex sound changes required.

Eblana Street may not be the only 'Ptolemaic' Belfast street name. The aforementioned *OBOKA* seems to be the inspiration for the naming of Avoca Street in 1878 (*IHTA* XVII.9), in Oldpark between the Crumlin and Cliftonville Roads. This taking of 'Ptolemaic' towns and rivers to provide more modern names is not just limited to Ireland. A similar thing happened to Morecambe and Morecambe Bay in Lancashire, a name coined in the 18th century by antiquarians based on Ptolemy's *MORIKAMBE*.



If both Eblana Street and Avoca Street got their names from antiquarian (if somewhat erroneous) enthusiasm regarding Ptolemy's *Geographia*, it is a bit surprising that there is no 'Logia Street' somewhere in Belfast. As can be seen from the map above, Ptolemy posited a *LOGIA* river mouth in the area of what is now Belfast. By its geographical position and by its linguistic form, *LOGIA* is taken by consensus to refer to the mouth of the Lagan or what is now called Belfast Lough (or Carrickfergus Bay in the Middle Ages).

However, it may only be coincidental that *LOGIA* resembles the name 'Lagan.' The latter derives from the Irish *lagán*, 'a hollow.' *LOGIA* corresponds to a reconstructed Proto-Celtic word meaning 'calf,' which has come into Modern Irish as *lao*. It is preserved in the Irish name of Belfast Lough, *Loch Lao*, 'sea-inlet of the calf.' There is, incidentally, a street in the Short Strand which has exactly this name, with no addition of 'street' or the like. The official bilingual street sign shows the Irish form *Loch Lao* and the anglicised form *Lough Lea*.



If these two blogs on ancient and mythological street-names in Belfast has piqued your interest in the history of towns in Ireland, you could head over to the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* [HERE](https://www.ria.ie/irish-historic-towns-atlas-online) (<https://www.ria.ie/irish-historic-towns-atlas-online>).

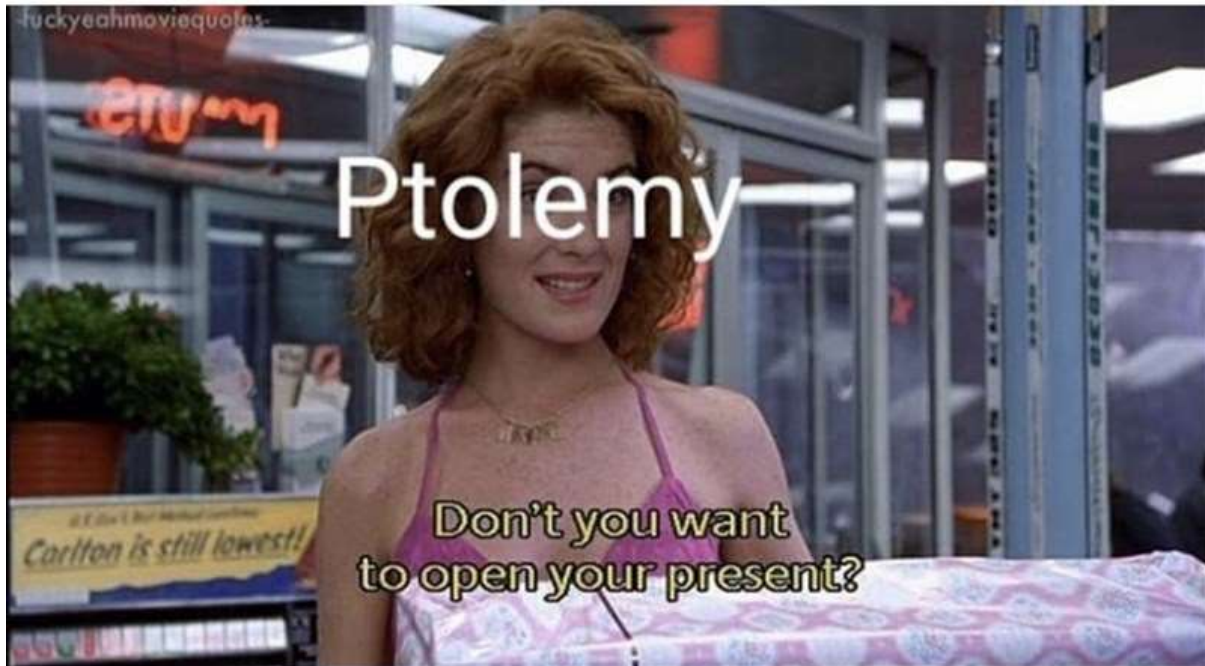
Alternatively, if the unravelling of etymological mysteries surrounding Irish place names has intrigued you, click [HERE](https://qub.academia.edu/PaulTempan) (<https://qub.academia.edu/PaulTempan>) to access a variety of Dr Tempan's blogs and articles on the origins of Irish names and words.

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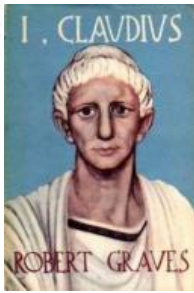
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Cla...Cla...Claudius the Scholar



When faced with the notion of a scholarly Roman emperor, you would be forgiven for immediately thinking of the great philosopher king, Marcus Aurelius or if you are a late antiquarian, perhaps Julian the Apostate or even the 'Byzantine' Constantine VII. Few would immediately think of the bumbling stutterer, Claudius, played so effectively by Derek Jacobi in the tremendous *I, Claudius*. But if you have had the privilege of watching that excellent show recently, you might remember that even in that fictionalised drama of Julio-Claudian Rome, Claudius is depicted as being a writer.

This seems even stranger when his mother, Antonia, is recorded referring to Claudius as *'stultus'* and *'μωρός'* (Suetonius, *Cla.* 3.2). However, rather than meaning 'stupid', both of Antonia's insults translate better as 'foolish.' This would suggest that she was speaking more of Claudius' silly actions, seeing him as an embarrassment rather than suggesting that he was cognitively impaired. Certainly, "it takes intellect to write history, however bad" (Levick (1990), 15), and Claudius' history was good enough in places to be used by Pliny the Elder and Tacitus as a source of information (Pliny, *NH* VII.35; Syme (1958), 703-710; Townsend (1962), who has Aufidius Bassus as an intermediary source; De Vivo (1980), 68 n.196).



But while Claudius' various health issues do not seem to have affected his cognitive abilities, in the period before his accession that he displayed "a notably intellectual turn of mind hardly mattered" (Holland (2016), 185). His various twitches, limp and poor speech saw him banned from public appearances on the agreement of Augustus, Livia and Tiberius (Levick (1990), 11). While he may have been largely sidelined politically by his family, Claudius did still receive a proper Roman education, becoming a keen student of the *disciplinae liberales* (Suetonius, *Cla.* 30) – literature, rhetoric, music, mathematics and law.

Claudius would show that he was well-versed in Greek and may have visited there in 10-11 (Suetonius, *Cla.* 25.5); he also showed some interest in listening to poetry and could (mis-)quote Homer. He also showed some education in philosophy, but along with poetry and drama, he showed little active interest in it.

His famous speech before the Senate in favour of allowing Gauls to join its ranks, with its long historical introduction, demonstrated a knowledge of Cicero's *Pro Balbo* and the speech of Canuleius in favour of marriage between plebeians and patricians in Livy's Book VI, although the speech does suggest that Claudius had not firmly grasped rhetoric.

This speech may also have suggested that Claudius could overcome his speech impediments to some extent. That said, Seneca (*Apol.* 4.3, 5; followed by Suetonius, *Cla.* 16; Dio LX.17) frequently wrote of Claudius' poor speaking voice, referring to him sounding like a sea creature: "you couldn't even tell what language he was speaking" (Levick (1990), 14, who suggests that his poor speech could have been a side effect of teaching himself to write with his opposite hand due to cerebral palsy. Such 'denying' of the dominant hand could have impaired his speech, with King George VI being perhaps the most famous example of this.)



Being banned from public appearances will have allowed Claudius to focus on his academic endeavours and he took full advantage, writing copiously throughout his life. The historian Livy seems to have been employed as something of a tutor for Claudius. While Livy probably died in AD12/17, he reputedly encouraged Claudius to take up writing history (Suetonius, *Cla.* 41.1). Claudius was also encouraged by the secretary/tutor Sulpicius Flavius, who was "evidently a man well-known in his day" (Levick (1990), 18-19).



In terms of his historical style, he might have had some appreciation for Thucydides and Sallust, not just because of their writing but also perhaps they shared having had a public career only to be excluded before they started on their history.

This interest in history saw Claudius devote his time to several extensive works. Writing in Greek, he composed a 20-book history of the Etruscans – *Tyrrhenica* (Suetonius, *Cla.* 42.2), as well as an Etruscan dictionary, and an 8-book history of Carthaginians – *Carchedonica* – before his accession. Writing an Etruscan history and dictionary may demonstrate some influence from his marriages on chosen subject matter. His first wife had Etruscan connections and his son was betrothed to a daughter of Sejanus, an Etruscan noble from Volsinii. He could also have been bolstering the Etruscan origins of the Claudii in Sabine territory. Furthermore, his Carthaginian history may also reflect how Etruscan families of the early first century AD were developing an interest in Carthage, with the name Hamilcar appearing.

It could also be that Claudius was encouraged to take on other subjects like the Carthaginians and Etruscans due to the subject he initially looked to write about almost having drastic personal consequences: a Roman history in Latin of at least 43 books, which survived down to Suetonius' time, on events from the murder of Julius Caesar to the death of Augustus in AD14. Covering such a period will have seen Claudius confronted with quite a few controversial episodes, about which "no one could ever give an accurate or frank account of what had really happened" (Suetonius, *Cla.* 41.2) without risking significant consequences.



Initially, this does not seem to have perturbed Claudius (Suetonius, *Cla.* 41.1). He probably looked at the immediate aftermath of Caesar's assassination, only for there to be a significant gap after 43BC. This would likely be because Claudius had begun this history at a time when Augustus was still alive and the likes of Livia and Antonia urged him to overlook the events surrounding the Second Triumvirate, which did not present the *princeps* in the best light. Claudius would surely have found it difficult to portray Marcus Antonius in a sufficiently negative light, considering he was his grandfather.

While Claudius wrote throughout his life and worked on this history for years – even “indefinitely” (Levick (1990), 19), it was during Tiberius’ reign that he was at his most prolific; however, at this time, it had become impolitic to comment on Republican Rome. This will have furthered the ‘encouragement’ Claudius received to not include certain aspects of Augustus’ career in his Roman history and to perhaps look at more obscure, antiquarian subjects in order to save him and/or the Julio-Claudian dynasty of some embarrassment (Levick (1990), 19).

Claudius certainly did not hold back when it came to describing his imperial predecessors once he came to the throne – speaking of Tiberius’ “obstinate retirement” on the *Tabula Clesiana*, an inscription from AD46 granting citizenship on the people of the Anauni, Sinduni and Tullianses in the Alps; a bronze plate found near Cles in Trentino, Italy in 1869. In Josephus, *AJ* 19, a Claudian edict speaks of the “madness and lack of understanding” of Caligula. Claudius’ reading of history may have helped to inform some of his decisions, such as sparing Caratacus’ life (Holland (2016), 341).



It was not just more obscure non-Roman histories that Claudius diversified into. Perhaps enhanced by his speech impediment, he also had an interest in language. He wrote a monograph encouraging the expansion of the Latin alphabet with three new letters and changes to general literacy rules.

C F

His new letters were a ‘inverted *digamma*,’ which was to stand in for the ‘w’ sound of v/u between vowels; a western version of the Greek *psi* to be used for b/s and p/s and “a rough breathing half-H or more plausibly a fifth century BC Boeotian vowel character, for *ÿ*, the Greek *upsilon*, as in the name *Nymphius*, in Latin a sound between ‘e’ and ‘i’ has given rise to modern controversy.” (Levick (1990), 19)

Claudius’ linguistic choices show streaks of rationalisation and antiquarianism, with a preference for – *ai* – over – *ae* – as in ‘Caizer’ over ‘Caesar’ and his attempt to revive the old rule of placing dots between words, as Latin at this time was written with no spaces.

Following in the footsteps of his ancestor, Appius Claudius Caecus (who was thought to have used the censorship to introduce the letter ‘r’), Claudius used his role as censor in 47CE to introduce these changes, but while Suetonius and Tacitus saw them in inscriptions, books and official records and the latter may have used some of Claudius’ linguistic research, none of Claudius’ changes outlasted him.



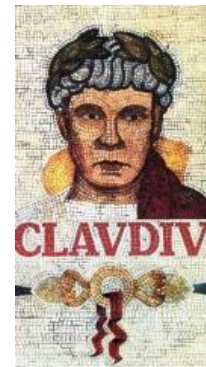
Unfortunately, along with his linguistic changes, none of Claudius' works survive beyond references in other sources. Some are only known from their existence, rather than any of its contents. He is known to have held a Greek comedy in Naples and published a translation of Aratus' *Phaenomena*, but it is unknown if these were his own compositions or his dead brother Germanicus.

Demonstrating his own interest in gambling, he wrote a treatise on dice games. He also brought together a gazetteer on exotic flora and fauna and compiled writings about floods in Mesopotamia. In spite of the potential embarrassment and the impolitic of commenting on the Republic, he wrote and published a defense of Cicero against the charges of Asinius Gallus. Claudius also produced an 8-volume autobiography, which even Suetonius described as lacking taste (Suetonius, *Cla.* 41).

Like Tiberius, Claudius showed some interest in medicine, but unlike Tiberius, he did not fear doctors. He took them with him on his travels not just for his own health but to spread their knowledge for the benefits of others. To that end, he also proposed edicts championing yew as a treatment for snake-bite and the salutary effect of breaking wind. Claudius also carried out correspondence with a Scenite Arab sheikh over the benefits of vulture's liver as a cure for epilepsy: "boiled in its own blood with honey and taken over a period of three weeks... or of the heart of the same, dried and given in water" (Levick (1990), 20; John Lydus, *de mens.* 4.104)

Not only did Claudius write about various subjects, he also befriended other scholars throughout his life and once he was in power, he did not forget their friendship and support. Three such scholars were promoted to high office during his reign (Levick (1990), 19 n.20; Rawson (1984), 93, 303; cf. Syme (1957)).

Whether he was purely an antiquarian or housed some revolutionary ideas in his works (Levick (1978)) and despite little to none of his work surviving, the seemingly bumbling stutterer *Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus* should be remembered as a scholarly emperor.



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CANI Review of 2020



CANI's programme of events for 2020 kicked off on 29 January with Dr Paul Tempan presenting on **'Latin and Romance Loan-words in Early Irish.'** This highlighted Irish's place as an Indo-European language, through the Celtic and Goidelic branches, but also noting that there were aspects of Irish that were not Celtic or even Indo-European. Dr Tempan also looked at how Latin influence on Irish is much later than Latin's influence on other European languages – impact of Christianity rather than

Roman political influence. This was demonstrated in the potential Latin origins of some very Irish looking words, such as *skellig* possibly being *spelunca*, a similar mutation that saw 'Patricius' become 'Coithrige': "different reactions to unacceptable alien sounds."

On 6 February, a busy week for *CANI* was kicked off by special guest Natalie Haynes as she presented "**Troy Story**" on 6 February, a talk full of hilarious anecdotes, somewhat connected tangents and not a little expertise on her classical subject; all delivered in Natalie's machine gun but utterly engaging style.



Interspersed amongst various mythological comments and questions on the Trojan Epic Cycle, 'stupid' Trojans and the downplaying of women in modern translations were a variety of spoilers and tangents including 'Kirk Douglas' son', the Rock, Aquaman, Dunedin, her role in *Midsomer Murders* and 'Bergerac's' eating of muffins, tragic hero in Sophocles - good things taken to a negative degree: Holmes, Tennyson, Morse, Diagnosis Murder and Dick van Dyck, kickboxing, Father Brown, TMNT, snakes and horses in plasticine and swans...

I swear, they all made some sort of sense...



The hectic week initiated by Natalie continued with the ***CANI Schools Classics Conference***, hosted by the Ulster Museum on 7-8 February. The morning of Day 1 saw over 140 primary school children from Stranmillis Primary School, Our Lady's Girls Primary School and St. Joseph's Primary School enjoy



Amber Taylor's interactive presentation on Ancient Greek Theatre, Isabel Bredin's crafting exercise that saw the making of dozens of colourful Ancient Greek theatrical masks and the returning Roman reenactors of Legion Ireland, who again demonstrated their expertise in the Roman army.





In the afternoon, another 100+ secondary school pupils from Belfast High School, Strathearn, RBAI and Belfast Royal Academy as well as members of the public enjoyed not just the continued presence of Legion Ireland, handling sessions and the Museum's collections but also Natalie Haynes' whirlwind 'Reprisal of the *Iliad*,' summarising its 24 books in (around) 24 minutes, and Dr Greer Ramsay's 'Why have we so few Roman objects in the Ulster Museum collections?'

On Day 2, with Legion Ireland still showing off their expertise, nearly 100 members of the public heard CANI Chair Helen McVeigh present on the 'Classical Influences in Harry Potter' Using an array of pictures and videos, Helen looked at several characters



with classical links - Hermione, Argus, Fang and Fluffy and some of the spells and potions which use classical languages - Expecto Patronum, Expelliarmus, polyjuice and veritaserum. The weekend of events was then completed by Dr Ramsay repeating his talk of the day before for the public and the Belfast YAC @QUB.

CANI and the UM could not have been happier with how the event went. The talks programme alone over the course of the two days welcomed well over 300 people while the numbers engaged with Legion Ireland and the handling sessions were too many to keep track of.

On 20 February, for the fourth year running, Dr John Curran and Dr Peter Crawford *CANI4Schools* again travelled to Dalriada School Ballymoney to deliver a series of curriculum-supporting talks AS and A2 Classical Civilisation students. Dr Curran presented on 'The Rome of Augustus and Virgil' and 'What was the *Aeneid* for?', while Dr Crawford summed up the end of the Roman Republic in 'From Rubicon to Actium' and then put Julius Caesar on trial for destroying the Republic (the student jury again decided that there was enough reasonable doubt to acquit).

And then it all kicked off...

The remainder of the 2020 portion of the 2019/20 programme of events looked like being a complete bust when COVID lockdowns kicked off... But while we were unable to salvage our annual Film Night or Public Reading, we were able to reschedule the remainder of the events for various times in the 2020/21 programme...

Before we get to those though, we turn to the real *CANI* success story of the 'Summer of Lockdown'...the ***Belfast Summer School 2020***. While initially cancelled outright, there was enough impetus, initiative and interest to move the Summer School online in a limited capacity... a single week with only a couple the usual levels of Latin and Greek offered.



However, such was the interest in taking up those limited places – UK, Ireland, Belgium, Spain, Mexico, USA and Canada – that the original schedule of Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Latin and Greek, Greek workshops and academic talks were all restored. Where there had been just one week of classes, there is now two, with all slots filled.

In just four short years, the Summer School had gone from less than a dozen to over 100 students! And by all accounts, the students were extremely excited, impressed and thankful for the work put in by Helen McVeigh and her team of fantastic tutors.

The 2020/21 programme began with two rescheduled talks; first on 21 October 2020 was **‘In Conversation with... Michael Hughes’** hosted online. While aspects of his acting career, under his stage name of Michael Colgan, were mentioned, the main focus of the talk was Michael’s novel *Country*, a reworking of the *Iliad* during the Northern Ireland Troubles.

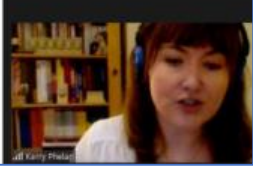
Due not only to its nature, but also the interest generated by the subject, Michael’s talk attracted a variety of questions about the absurdity of everyday life on the backdrop of the violence of the Troubles; the influence of his acting career on his writing; his favourite translation of the *Iliad/Odyssey*; integrating the Greek gods and heroes in a modern setting.



Michael Hughes @michaielehughes · Oct 21, 2020

Thanks so much to @BelfastClassics and @ClassAssocNI for inviting me to speak this evening about COUNTRY. I've always been nervous of how real classical scholars will take the novel, but they've always been its most generous and attentive readers, and tonight was no exception.

The second rescheduled event, which also finished out the year 2020 was Dr Kerry Phelan's 'Alien vs. Citizen: How to Determine Descent in Classical Athens' on 2 December, again hosted online. The focus fell heavily on a court case surrounding the Athenian citizenship of a certain Euxitheos, recounting in the surviving speeches of Demosthenes.

<p>Pericles' Citizenship Law (451/450 BC)</p>	<p>... ἐπὶ Ἀντιδότου διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν Περικλέους εἰπόντος ἔγνωσαν μὴ μετέχειν τῆς πόλεως, ὅς ἂν μὴ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἄστοιῶν ἦ γεγονώς. ([Arist.] <i>Ath. Pol.</i> 26.4)</p>	<p>... in the year of Antidotus, owing to the large number of the citizens an enactment was passed on the proposal of Pericles confining citizenship to persons of citizen birth on both sides. (trans. H. Rackham)</p>	
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Kerry's talk raised so many probing questions that we could probably have chatted for another hour! Was Euxitheos a citizen or not? And the fate and his family faced if not? What were the motivations behind the Periclean Citizenship Law? Could citizenship be used by a weapon against political enemies? How might Athenian adoption work? How common were such debates in Greece?



The CANI Youtube Channel: A Story in Pictures...

One benefit from the pandemic has been the ability (read: necessity) for *CANI* to make more use of its various social media platforms. Thankfully, in the months before COVID struck, *CANI* had been making strides in recording our public talks, so we were at least somewhat prepared to host online presentations (although we had to learn Zoom just like everyone else).

Because of this, we have been able to add a full talk at the rate of about one a month throughout the last year, a rate we hope to maintain as our new programme of events gets up and running again.

On the next page you will see a small pictorial selection (four to be exact) of full talks that are available to view, but there are also various other recordings of previous *CANI* talks, as well as a couple of other talks we have been allowed to host by sister organisations.

There are also numerous short videos on a variety of classical subjects, such as excerpts from our public readings, earlier non-filmed talks, outreach seminars and the work of the Belfast Summer School.

You can find the *CANI* Youtube Channel by searching 'Classical Association in Northern Ireland' in the Youtube search or by clicking the following link...

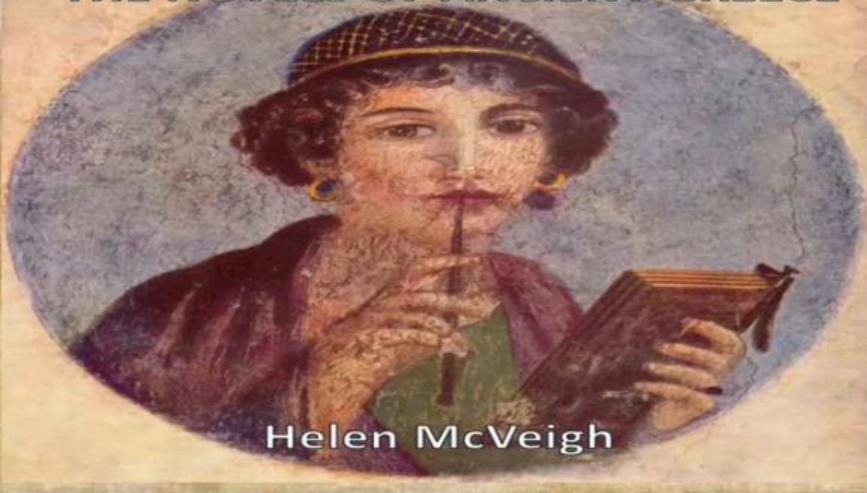
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu_hK8FzOnWopWhBuQ0bd2g

The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for the Classical Association Northern Ireland. The channel has 121 subscribers and a navigation menu with options for HOME, VIDEOS, PLAYLISTS, CHANNELS, and ABOUT. The 'Shorts' section is active, displaying five video thumbnails with titles and view counts. The 'Uploads' section is also active, displaying five video thumbnails with titles, view counts, and upload dates.

Video Title	Views	Upload Date
Dr John Curran on Vergilian Rome at Dalriada School,...	36 views	4 years ago
Professor Theresa Urbainczyk - 'Some...	238 views	4 years ago
Dr John Curran - Achilles is not pleased with...	72 views	4 years ago
Helen McVeigh - the Trojans threaten to overwhelm the...	44 views	4 years ago
Eric Craney - Diomedes tells Agamemnon to forget abo...	44 views	4 years ago
'Aeneas Polytropos' Professor Shadi Bartsch...	44 views	1 week ago
'How Ancient Roman Graffiti Proves people Have Hardly...	117 views	4 weeks ago
'The Afterlives of Euripides' Unstaged Princess'...	63 views	1 month ago
'The Oracle at Dodona: Soundscape and Religious...	137 views	3 months ago
'Freud, the Greeks and the Invention of Personality' Dr...	137 views	4 months ago



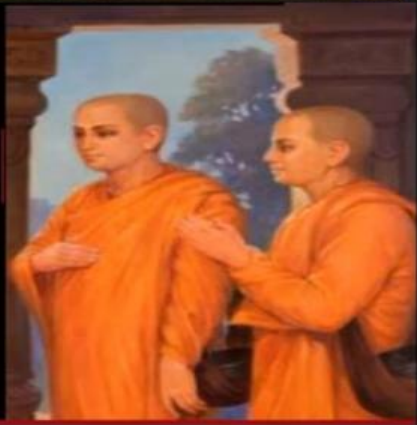
THE NOVELS OF ANCIENT GREECE



Helen McVeigh



Emperor Augustus and the Indian Envoys



Seercraft in Classical Sparta

The Praying Mantis



'Alien vs. Citizen: How to Determine Descent in Classical Athens'

Dr. Kerry Phelan

The Classical Association in Northern Ireland



CANI Outreach Webinar Series



A significant part of our Youtube channel has been given over to what we have called the ‘CANI Outreach Webinar Series.’ Showing the initiative that she will no doubt bring to her new position as CANI Convenor, in September 2020, Amber Taylor sent out the adjoining tweet, which was shared on CANI’s other social media platforms. The idea was to use the CANI website, blog, Youtube channel, programme of events and other media outlets to give a platform to early career academics, postgraduates and undergraduates to present some of their work to a wider non-academic audience. It was our hope that such an opportunity would provide experience in presenting outside of their university bubble, as well

as help the participants make their work more accessible to the wider public and maybe even help them to clarify certain aspects of their argument in their own minds.

The response was fantastic! From all across the globe, we had enquiries from graduates and students about publishing their work with us. Of course, the public talk aspect of the series had to be put on the back burner due to COVID, but the CANI Youtube channel has allowed us to still present several talks. Two of those accepted abstracts – Georgina Homer and Rebecca Samuels – were even invited to present online to the Belfast Summer School in Classics.

As you can see on the next page, that list of ideas and abstracts has so far garnered full academic talks on aspects of Plato, Euripides, revolt against Rome and graffiti. And that only scratches the surface of the significant range of subject matter from under the ‘Classical Studies’ umbrella we have been approached about – there are also proposed pieces on Late Roman Republic *populares*, Bertold Brecht and the *Iliad* war zone, Mirrors in Rome and China, Roman Epigraphy, Homer and Tolkein and Athenian Vase Painting.

Not only do we hope to add more of these already proposed abstracts as published talks or blogs in the coming year, but we will also be putting out another call to undergraduates, postgraduates and graduates for ideas for talks and/or blogs. So keep an eye out for that!

If you would like to watch any of these talks, you can follow the link below to the *CANI Outreach Webinar Series* playlist on the *CANI* Youtube channel.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_2eDjqJzTY&list=PLwL7BhhIBwzKmdGUL21E2th1N7IQMCVLL



Sex and the City: Plato on Philosopher-Queens in the *Republic* and *Laws*



Female-led countries handled coronavirus better, study suggests

Analytic probes to whether the boldness and lower death rates under Blair of Jacinda Ardern and Angela Merkel

Conservative Liberal politics
See all our conservative coverage



RESISTANCE IS FUTILE: TACITUS, JOSEPHUS AND THE INEVITABLE DEFEAT OF PROVINCIAL REVOLTS

Connor Hickey (Maynooth University)

THE AFTERLIVES OF EURIPIDES' UNSTAGED PRINCESS

RECEPTIONS AND ALLUSIONS ON FILM AND TV



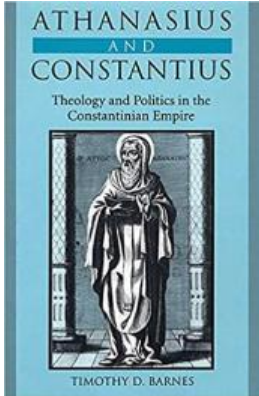
How ancient Roman graffiti proves people have hardly changed in 2000 years

► A TALK BY REBECCA SAMUELS (3RD YEAR UNDERGRADUATE, OPEN UNIVERSITY) FOR BELFAST SUMMER SCHOOL IN LATIN AND CLASSICAL GREEK



Book Reviews

Barnes, T.D. *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (1993)



This is one of these books that I have read all the way through in the course of my research/writing on Constantius II - while it is a tremendous academic work by one of the elite academics, not even a nerd like me would read the likes of this for fun.

Still, it is a thoroughly interesting account of the mess of early Roman Christianity. We think we are bad today with the differences (or lack of) between major religions and denominations but the mid-fourth century was truly dire. The minutiae in the arguments on the relationship between Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit and the number of councils called to discuss it would make your head spin. To make matters worse, the terms used to describe these different parties are horrifically similar - at one stage the difference between the two is a single letter!

As to the main character in this drama, Athanasius, I am not sure that there has ever been a luckier man when it comes to evading the repeated condemnations of an emperor. In his opposition to Arianism - which maintained that because the Son of God had to be created He was therefore inferior to God the Father, who had always existed - civil wars, barbarian raids, Persian invasions, fraternal strife, papal interference, pagan Renaissance, local support all conspired to see Athanasius returned to his bishopric over the course of nearly 50 years.

This might not be the book to choose if you want to find out about fourth century Christianity but that should not diminish Barnes' achievement here. His appendix on the itineraries of the emperors between 337 and 361 has been worth the purchase for me alone.

Murdoch, A. *The Last Roman: Romulus Augustulus and the Decline of the West*. (2006)

This was something of a strange read, as it was always going to be given the lack of depth of information about the title emperor. Really, it is more a biography of the times surrounding Romulus' life - the Hunnic empire of Attila, the brief successes of his father, the collapse of Roman central authority, his own elevation to emperor and then his 'exile' under the barbarian kings, Odoacer and Theoderic, plus then a look at the modern artistic interpretations of the major players of the time. While the latter part is interesting, I would perhaps have rather had it relegated to an appendix and have more time given over to talking about things that were affecting Italy during Romulus' life. There was room for more on the Vandals in Africa, the collapse of Attila's empire, why the east refused to help and perhaps even more on the religious revolution that was overtaking parts of the west in the aftermath of the decline of the Roman administration.



Really though, I just wanted the author to write more in his wonderful prose. Anyone who has watched his series of 2-3min podcasts on the Roman emperors will know that Murdoch has a great way with words that engages even someone like me who was read about much of what he is talking about before. Well worth picking up for anyone.



[The Classical Association in Northern Ireland](#)
[Programme of Events](#)
[2021-22 **](#)



‘A Brief History of Byzantine Mutilation’
Peter Crawford

Wednesday 24th November
 Winter Drinks and CANI Bookshop
 QUB Peter Froggatt Centre 02/018

CANI Film Night Celebrates 2,500th Anniversary of the Battle of Thermopylae with 300 Spartans (1962)
 The Strand Arts Centre, Belfast
Thursday 9th December 2021, 6pm

‘Where are the Names of the Persecutors now? Exploring Christian Responses to Tetrarchic Material Culture’

Rebecca Usherwood
Thursday 27th January 2022
 QUB Peter Froggatt Centre 02/018

CANI 4 Schools: Dalriada School, Ballymoney
 Dr John Curran (QUB) and Dr Peter Crawford
 February 2022

CANI Honorary Patron Inaugural Address
Natalie Haynes
Thursday 10th March 2022
 QUB Peter Froggatt Centre 02/018

Schools’ Classics Conference

Legion Ireland; Handling Sessions; Practical Activities; Natalie Haynes, Amber Taylor and Helen McVeigh
 Ulster Museum, 11 March 2022

CANI Film Night V: *Agora* (2009)

£5 entrance, brief introduction, drinks services available
Saturday 7th May 2022 (venue to be confirmed)

‘The Epithet Megas/Magnus in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds’

Shane Wallace
Wednesday 8th June 2022
 Summer Drinks and CANI Bookshop
 QUB Main Site Tower 03/004

HMI Academy

Belfast Summer School in Classics (online)

Beginners, Lower and Upper Intermediate and Advanced Latin and Greek
 Academic Talks
July/August 2022
 See helenmcveigh.co.uk for details

‘Sparta and Hero-worship’

Nicolette Pavlides
 TBC 2022

****Please check the relevant weekday for individual events****