

Paper Abstracts for the Workshop
Recent Trends in Seleukid Studies

Nipissing University
Friday, June 17th, 2016



- 9:30-9:50 Richard Wenghofer (Nipissing) & Altay Coskun (Waterloo): *Welcome & Introduction***
The Introduction will start with a brief outline of the extension and history of the Seleukid Empire, before showcasing some of the previous collaborative work conducted by the international *Seleukid Study Group* since 2010.
- 9:50-10:30 Paul Monaghan (Nipissing): *Theatres, Theatre, and Theatricality in the Hellenistic East***
The longevity and reception of Greek tragedy and comedy in the west, from the Roman Republic to contemporary times, has been extensively researched. More recently, however, Classical Reception Studies scholars have begun to research more fully both the continuation of Greek theatre in the fourth century BCE and beyond, re-evaluating the previous conviction that Greek theatre died with Euripides at the end of the Fifth Century BCE, and the impact of Greek theatre on the Hellenistic East. This presentation canvases a range of issues stemming from my recent entry into this relatively new field. Beginning with some brief comments on the engagement with Greek theatre by the Macedonian Kings Archelaus, Phillip II, and Alexander the Great, this presentation will outline the building of actual Greek theatres in the Hellenistic East from Ionia to Bactria to Alexandria, the evidence for the performance of Greek tragedy and Comedy in those theatres, as well the use of the theatres for political events, and the rise of “theatrical” politics in the Hellenistic East apparently under the influence of Greek tragedy.
- 10:30-11:10 Mark Wachowiak & Richard Wenghofer (Nipissing): *Mapping the Ancient World – A New Digital Mapping Project and Its Benefits for Seleukid Studies***
New digital technologies are becoming an increasingly significant part of how classicists and ancient historians conduct their research and teach their students. There are now many online tools dedicated to textual research, epigraphy, genealogy, prosopography, material culture, and a variety of digital interactive maps of the ancient world, not to mention a growing number of open access scholarly publications. These developments have been salutary for the study of ancient history and culture, however, many challenges still remain. The data contained on these sites remain scattered across the internet on seemingly innumerable sites which do not interface with each other. Mark Wachowiak and Richard

Wenghofer are therefore developing an interactive web-based geospatial tool that is effectively a hybridized digital map and data archive, which they have called *Ancient History GeoVisage (AHGV)*, and which they believe has great potential as a tool for the archiving and dissemination of historical knowledge of Seleukid history in particular, and indeed the study of history more generally. AHGV utilizes NASA satellite technology to not only create a visual image of spatial relations for sites that are significant to Seleukid history, but also to integrate primary source evidence and current scholarship into an archive that arranges knowledge of the Seleukid world into a geo-spatial and temporal format. Wachowiak and Wenghofer not only believe that AHGV will integrate the primary source evidence and current scholarship in a more coherent way in a single location, they also believe that it can serve as a platform for interdisciplinary research collaboration, with the results of that collaboration published on AHGV itself, thus giving a fuller, more holistic understanding of the Seleukid world.

11:10-11:30 Tea & Coffee Break

11:30-12:10 Altay Coskun (Waterloo): *Polygamy and Seleukid Queenship under Antiochos II – Implications of the Basilissa Title (or the Lack thereof)*

Scholars of the ancient world have been aware for a long time that ‘queenship’ – or perhaps rather the role of the ‘royal consort’ – gained a particular prominence in the Hellenistic age. The *basilissa* title was of course not entirely new, but had occasionally been attached to mythical and historical figures; it appears nonetheless much more consistently as of the days of the Diadochs. This is most clearly the case for the Ptolemies and Antigonids, among whom the (main) wife of the king enjoyed this title and the status that came with it from early on. The evidence for the first Seleukids, however, is not as clear as has been commonly thought. Many (modern) arguments have been built on the epigraphic and papyrological evidence for the *basilissa* title of Berenike Phernophoros, the second wife of Antiochos II; accordingly, the lack of the same for Laodike I, his first wife, seemed to imply her divorce, a view that has now been rejected on various grounds (A. Coşkun & A. McAuley, eds.: *Seleukid Royal Women*, 2016). While previous interpretations tended to take the title of the official wife for granted, this paper seeks to reverse the argument by suggesting that both the employment and lack of the title can and should be explained consistently within the broader context of Seleukid (and Ptolemaic) royal ideologies.

12:10-12:50 Del John Houle (McMaster): *Military Service & Expressions of Belonging in the 2nd Century BC*

Livy’s account of Antiochos III’s battle against the Romans at Magnesia (Livy 37.38–44, App. Syr. 30–36, 190 BC) provides perhaps the most complete picture of the structure of the Seleukid army at the time, and it is a very different account from that of Polybios regarding Antiochos IV’s military display at Daphne in 166 BC (Polyb. 31.3). The purpose of this paper is to evaluate these accounts as evidence for the recruitment practices of Seleukid units and the impact that these practices had on their depiction in the literary source material mentioned, as well as Appian’s narrative of Magnesia. While the Seleukid force pre-Daphne is broadly rendered as a conglomeration of units separated by ethnicity (as explored by B. Bar-Kochva: *The Seleukid Army*, 1976/2002), it will be argued that Livy’s description of the army reveals an understanding of two distinct sources of manpower for the Seleukid throne: established military units with large and diverse recruiting bases, and more generalized forces drawn from a particular geographic region. This paper will focus on the latter, and it will be argued that the methods used by Livy to describe these individual units can reveal significant differences in his understanding of their composition, which will then be

compared to epigraphic records detailing the military forces of several settlements (with particular attention given to Palaimagnesia: Th. Ihnken: *Magnesia am Sipylos*, IK 8, 1978, no. 1). This comparison will suggest a potential reality of the Seleukid system of military recruitment: that a unit demarcated by an ethnic label may derive its name from the military tradition of its founding group (see G. Cohen 1978, 1996, 2006), despite changes to its body of soldiers. Accordingly, Livy's use of ethnic terms in his descriptions seems to be influenced as much by the traditions of the units serving the Seleukids as the actual composition of the force. This view will be supported with reference to the changes in the structure of the Seleukid army displayed by the reign of Antiochos IV, in which the prevalence of ethnic monikers for military units was strongly diminished.

12:50-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-14:20 Richard Wenghofer (Nipissing): *Some Methodological Considerations for Identifying Resistance to Seleukid Hegemony*

There is been a considerable amount of recent scholarship on the structural organization of Seleukid rule and how Seleukid kings attempted to legitimize their authority over such an immense space populated with myriad cultures and polities. Yet while such scholarship has achieved remarkable results given the thin and patchy evidence for Seleukid history in general, notably lacking are any attempts to assess how Seleukid claims to hegemony were received by those communities over whom the Seleukids are thought to have ruled. The objective of this discussion is therefore to undertake a preliminary reconnaissance of the evidence for this very question of how Seleukid claims to legitimate authority were received. There can be little doubt that the answer to this question will depend on which reign we have under the microscope, as the social, political, and economic challenges confronting the Seleukid house certainly would have changed from one reign to the next and attitudes toward Seleukid claims to royal authority no doubt varied from one community to the next. Yet this fact alone renders the question of how the people over whom the Seleukids exercised suzerainty viewed and reacted to claims of authority all the more important, since the success or failure of the Seleukid Empire depended entirely on the support they were able to generate from individual polities. Therefore, what I would like to do in this discussion is pose questions that challenge the current assumptions regarding how Seleukid claims to authority were received at specific moments in Seleukid history. To this end, I shall examine some of the evidence upon which those assumptions are based and provide alternative interpretations. It will be argued that what is often interpreted as willing participation in Seleukid claims to power can also be read against the grain, namely to suggest resistance to those claims rather than acquiescence.

14:20-15:00 Round Table: *Towards Seleukid Study VI: Seleukid Ideology – Reception and Resistance (Nipissing, Oct. 2017)*

Please direct any questions about the upcoming event to Richard Wenghofer at richardw@nipissingu.ca or Altay Coskun at altay.coskun@uwaterloo.ca, or check the conference website (<http://www.altaycoskun.com/rtss>).