

CALL FOR PAPERS

ΜΟΥΣΑ ΠΑΙΖΕΙ

GREEK AND LATIN *TECHNOPAEGNIA*, RIDDLES, ACROSTICHS,
POETIC PUNS, METRICAL CURIOSITIES, ETC.

May 6th and 7th, 2011

Institute of Classical Studies

University of Warsaw

May 6th and 7th, 2011
International Conference

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What?

The term *technopaegnia* is now commonly applied to ancient Greek pattern poems, but in his 1630 monumental *Encyclopaedia* Johann Heinrich Alsted used it in a wider sense, in reference to various riddling *jeux de mots* (he managed to list sixty types). Alsted's unrestrictive approach is apparently close to the ancient understanding of what the riddle is, as the Peripatetic philosopher Clearchus of Soli discussed in his treatise *On Riddles* (*Peri griphon*) Castorion's *Hymn to Pan*, a metrical experiment, which is not otherwise a riddle.

We invite scholars of ancient literature, as well as those interested in its reception (limited to the classical languages), to engage in a discussion of poetic and para-poetic riddles, acrostichs, anagrams, figure-poems, metrical *tours de force*, literary puns, alliterative artefacts, etc. – the Alstedian *technopaegnia* and Clearchian *griphoi* – that can be traced in Greek and Roman literature. It is our conviction that although such eccentricities lack the depth that one often seeks in ancient literature, serious scholarship must no longer neglect the effect they have had on contemporary and later poetry, or their role as documents of the poets' and grammarians' tastes and ingenuity. We wish to focus primarily on the forms that emerged in antiquity, but we are also interested in what their fates were in the hands of later poets, scribes, editors, and scholars.

We do *not* encourage searching for unnoticed puns, acrostichs, anagrams, and other mirages. Our intention is to provoke an unorthodox, multidimensional reflection on a relatively neglected field of ancient literature. Possible topics include the following:

- ancient and modern theoretical approaches to Greek and Latin riddles, *technopaegnia* etc.;
- *jeux de mots*: tradition and innovation (from the archaic riddling devices and alliteration to the Alexandrian and Roman poetic experiments);
- ancient riddles in the Indo-European context (e.g. ancient *griphoi* vs. Old English riddles);
- riddles and *technopaegnia* in the light of the orality/literacy debate;
- riddles and riddling devices at the symposium;
- the epigraphic and papyrological evidence for ancient *jeux de mots*;
- in and around Book 14 of the *Greek Anthology*;
- the Alexandrianism of the *technopaegnia* of Laevius, Iulius Vestinus, and Optatian Porfyrus;
- the Byzantine, Renaissance, and 17th-century readers and scholars of the Greek *technopaegnia*;
- continuity and change in the history of figure-poems since Simias;
- a matter of taste: critical attitudes toward *jeux des mots* (e.g. the Greek *technopaegnia*).

How?

If you wish to present a paper, please submit a 250–300 word abstract including the title to the email address given below (.pdf, .doc, .docx, or .rtf). If your proposal is accepted, you will be required to provide a full manuscript of a 25-minute paper shortly before the conference, so that copies can be distributed to the participants. At the conference, each presentation will be followed by a 20-minute discussion (that will give a period of 45 minutes for each paper). We plan to record the discussion and include an edited selection of it in the conference proceedings.

We invite papers in English, German, French, Italian, and Spanish, but the working language of the conference will be English.

The registration fee for participants is **150 €**; this includes accommodation (three nights), meals and conference materials.

When?

The conference will be held on May 6th and 7th, 2011.

Please submit abstracts by September 30th, 2010.

Authors will be notified of the result by October 31st, 2010.

Finished papers will have to reach us before March 31th, 2011.

If you wish to respond to one of papers or otherwise participate in the conference, please express your interest by January 31st, 2011.

Where?

The University of Warsaw is located in the heart of the city, surrounded by historical places of interest, parks, walks, cafes, and restaurants. It can be easily reached from the airport, which is just 15 kilometres (9 miles) from the conference site. Further information will be given upon arrival.

For payment details, enquiries and expression of interest please contact (preferably by email) Jan Kwapisz. Email: jan.kwapisz@uw.edu.pl

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