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### **Towards a More Inclusive Classics**

*e-workshop organised by Dr Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis and Prof. Barbara Goff  
hosted by the Institute of Classical Studies, London  
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## **Democratising Roman Poetry\***

### **Abstract:**

Traditionally, the way in which we study Roman poetry focuses on a canon of a dozen or two Roman authors, mostly writing in Latin, mostly datable to the two first centuries, and almost exclusively with a focus on the city of Rome: an astonishingly narrow and judicious selection for a cultural practice that existed for over 1,000 years in an empire that, in modern terms, spans at least four time zones and three continents, and whose population was diverse, multilingual, and multicultural in its composition. In my presentation, I will offer a brief introduction to the wealth of evidence for the local production of verse in the Roman empire, across time and space, and, based on a small number of significant case studies, demonstrate its potential for a more meaningful approach to poetry and verse as expressions of a shared cultural practice rather than an exclusive pastime of the elite.

### **Video presentation (duration: approx. 30 min.):**

<https://youtu.be/Fbw1xZ53Tr0>

### **Texts (in translation):**

#### **1. *CIL* II 1094 = *CLE* 1195 (Sevilla / Seville, Spain; Hispalis, Baetica)**

Calethyce, aged 22.

Stall your step, please, whoever you are, and rest a little: you shall hear sad verses, subdued in tone.

My unfortunate sister has been buried here, in the flower of her youth . . . wondrous . . . alive . . .

So, as at the age of twice eleven years, I am in envious death's firm possession, . . . an altar to the Spirits of the Departed . . . our death . . . whoever beholds . . . : 'May the earth forever rest lightly on your ashes.' . . . (offer) the wretched these words of consolation also . . . crushing . . . happy frequently, as I am ill-fated . . . behold . . .

May the earth rest lightly on you.

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**2. CIL VI 10971 = CLE 442 = IG XIV 1983 = IGUR III 1147 (Rome; Roma)**

To the Spirits of the Departed.

Having lived for twenty-six turns of the sun, as well as four months, and then an eleventh day, I Sabina, lie in this coffin, with my daughter, who followed me, showing mother-loving affection, by decree of the Moirai.

Here lies, lifeless in her tomb, Aelia Sabina, jointly with her daughter, whom she by birth begot herself. Oh Fate, maliciously you destroyed such trust: the mother holds close whom she begot, in Pluto's homestead.

**3. ILS 9412 = CLE 2102 = ILJug III 1852 (Riječani / Nikšić, Montenegro; Salthua, Dalmatia)**

Epicadus, the son, had this made for Agirrus, son of Epicadus and princeps of Fort Salthua, and for Temeia, daughter of Glavus.

As soon as they had reached the end of their lives in age, and as his father had been buried in this tomb, filial duty at once inscribed the mother's and the father's name, so that everyone would read the begetter's names frequently. It is proper that sons put the remains of their parents to rest, and that filial duty provides their ashes with an abode.

**4. CIL VIII 16159 = ILS 858 = CLE 1554 = ILTun 1599 (El Kef / Le Kef, Tunisia; Sicca Veneria, Africa Proconsularis)**

First among the women of Numidia, of royal descent, I, Plancina, lie here, a good mother, a good wife, buried with many, bitter tears of my family members.

An honourable matron, above and beyond other women, I am buried here, born of royal descent, departed after thrice ten years and thrice three, the envy of good women: Quintus Arruntius Mas[cel?] (sc. had this made for me / her).

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