

Abstract for FIEC 2009

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**b) Panel**

Panel 14. Literature of Knowledge

**c) Title of the paper**

'Much learning does not make your mind know something' (Heracl. DK 22 B 40).  
The ambivalence of πολυμαθία in Antonine intellectual self-fashioning

**d) Length of the paper**

20 minutes

**e) Outline of the content, max. 700 characters**

This paper focuses on the complexities and risks inherent in ‘knowing much’ (πολυμαθία) in Antonine intellectual culture, and on Gellius’ and Apuleius’ strategies of tackling these ambiguities and contradictions through their individual literary self-presentation, negotiating their authority and exemplarity as polymath intellectuals in terms of respectable knowledge, while dissociating themselves from less respectable but popular forms of ‘knowing much’ (πολυπραγμοσύνη, *mirabilia*, magic). His rival’s *doctrina omnigenus* (14,6,1) embodies the kind of knowledge which Gellius associates with incredible fictions (cf. 9,4; 10,12). Both Gellius (cf. 14,6,3) and Apuleius (*Met.* 9,13,5 *multiscius*) use Odysseus’ wanderings to illustrate the connection between useless *multiscentia* and trivial *miracula*.