

Name: Yanick Maes
Universiteit Gent
Vakgroep Latijn & Grieks
Blandijnberg 2
9000 Gent
BELGIUM
yanick.maes@Ugent.be

Preferred Panel: 6. *Turning Points in the Reception of Classical Antiquity*

Title: *Translating Lucan's Pharsalia at the beginning of the seventeenth-century*

Outline:

The modern reception of Lucan has a strong political-ideological colour. The modern privileging of a political reading above a more aesthetic one seems somehow to be a way to circumvent the strange and manneristic character of the work, or to get rid of the odium of secondariness as expressed by the traditional periodization 'silver Latin'. The roots for this attitude seem for an important part to lie in the seventeenth century. The objective of the proposed contribution is to gain a better insight into the historically defining elements of this coloured reception of Lucan.

The problem will be analysed starting from a presentation of 17th-century translations of Lucan's Pharsalia. During the 17th century the Pharsalia was translated throughout the whole of Europe: into Dutch, Italian, Spanish, German, Polish, English and French. Our paper will present the difficulties that a thorough analysis of this wide field encounters by focussing both on the translations into English (by Marlowe, Gorges and May) and Dutch (by Storm) that were made at the start of the century and the contemporary editions (with their resp. introductions) and commentaries. We will provide an examination of the literary translation strategies used, coupled to succinctly situating these translations and editions within their literary, religious and political context—resp. the discussion about the generic place of historical epic, the conflict between classicism and mannerism, the rise and development of protestantism (and the differences among protestants themselves) and the birth of republicanism. We will argue that the positions taken by the different participants can only be fully understood by looking at them from a European perspective. This way we hope to get a better insight into the different elements that have defined the reception of Lucan in a key moment and thus to falsify some modern insights that are too easily taken for granted.