

eisodos 2026 (1)



eisodos
Zeitschrift für
Antike, Literatur
und
Theorie

e i s o d o s

Zeitschrift für Antike,
Literatur und Theorie

e i s o d o s – Zeitschrift für Antike, Literatur und Theorie

Herausgegeben von Sophie Emilia Seidler und Benny Kozian

Erscheinungsort: Gießen

ISSN: 2364-4397

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www.eisodos.org

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eisodos ist eine *peer-reviewed, open-access, online*-Zeitschrift und richtet sich an alle Literaturwissenschaftler*innen im B.A.-, M.A.- und Lehramtsstudium sowie Doktorand*innen. Thema von **eisodos** sind Fragen der Interpretation von antiker Literatur, insbesondere der griechisch-römischen Antike, ihres Fortlebens sowie Literaturtheorien und deren Vergleich.

Eine Übersicht der in **eisodos** verwendeten Abkürzungen griechischer und lateinischer Autor*innennamen und Werktitel findet sich unter folgendem Link:

http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_der_Abkürzungen_antiker_Autoren_und_Werktitel

Das **eisodos**-Titelbild zeigt eine Gartenszene aus der Villa der Livia Drusilla in Rom:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1a/Wall_painting_-_garden_%28viridarium%29_-_Rome_%28villa_of_Livia_at_Via_Flaminia%29_-_Roma_MNR_PMaT_126276_-_06.jpg?utm_source=commons.wikimedia.org&utm_campaign=index&utm_content=original

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VORWORT DES HERAUSGABETEAMS

Liebe **eisodos**-Leser*innen,

Wenn Persephone aus der Unterwelt zurückkehrt, Demeter aus Freude darüber die Natur wieder sprießen und blühen lässt und eine neue **eisodos**-Ausgabe erscheint, hat der Frühling Einzug gehalten. Das bedeutet freilich nicht, dass alles angenehm, mild, bunt und schön ist – immerhin lassen sich die mittlerweile allgegenwärtigen Schrecken der Unterwelt auch beim lieblichsten Vogelgezwitscher schwer ausblenden, und wer griechisch-römische Mythen kennt, weiß, dass selbst idyllische Blumenwiesen selten ungefährlich sind. Doch im kleinen epikureischen Garten, den die Beschäftigung mit der Antike, mit Literatur, mit Sprachen und Gedanken mitunter bieten kann, gibt es doch auch Gründe zur Freude – und mindestens zwei davon präsentieren wir in dieser Ausgabe.

Erstens freuen wir uns, dass mit Prof. Dr. Jacqueline Klooster der Gräzistik-Lehrstuhl der Universität Freiburg neu besetzt wurde. Unsere redaktionelle Recherche hat ergeben, dass im deutschsprachigen Raum zuvor noch niemand ohne Deutsch als Erstsprache auf eine ordentliche Gräzistik-Professur berufen wurde. Im Interview erzählt sie von ihren aktuellen Forschungsprojekten, von ihrer Tätigkeit als Herausgeberin und von kleinen und größeren Überraschungen, die ihr beim Übergang ins deutsche System begegnet sind.

Zweitens freuen wir uns, dass Noah Rumetshofer das erfolgreiche Theaterprojekt *Ceyx & Alcyone – Tragikomödie frei nach Ovid* vorstellt, das Lehrende und Studierende am Institut für Klassische Philologie, Mittel- und Neulatein der Universität Wien zusammen erarbeitet und nun schon wiederholt aufgeführt haben.

Auch hinter den Kulissen von **eisodos** tut sich einiges. Nachdem unser Online-Einreichsystem in den letzten Monaten vielen einreichenden Autor*innen und auch uns technische Schwierigkeiten bereitet hat, sind wir nun dabei, unsere Webpräsenz neu zu gestalten und hoffen, schon bald in neu programmiertem Glanz zu erstrahlen.

Viel Freude bei der Lektüre der Frühlingsausgabe sowie ein angenehmes Sommersemester wünscht die Redaktion!

Sophie Emilia Seidler, Benny Kozian
und Katharina Leonora Hennen

CLASSICS TODAY

Interview with Jacqueline Klooster

Jacqueline Klooster studied Classics at the University of Amsterdam, where she later also obtained her PhD. Further research projects took her to, among other places, Ghent and—as assistant professor of Ancient Greek Literature—Groningen. In October 2025, she has been appointed as Full Professor of Ancient Greek at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau. Moreover, she was the editor-in-chief of the *Mnemosyne* journal until 2025, and is currently the editor of the *Mnemosyne Supplementa* series and the *Hellenistica Groningana* Series. Her current research interests comprise Hellenistic Literature, Reception Studies, and Narratology.

eisodos It's a great pleasure to talk to you today. Thanks for taking the time! Have you settled in all right yet in Freiburg?

Jacqueline Klooster Yes, I have! I was very lucky: although I had been told it would be difficult to find housing in Freiburg, I managed to find something right away. So, I have a very nice flat—temporary, but in the city center. The first semester is over, so I feel I have reached a hallmark and can enter the next phase now—from getting to know Freiburg to being familiar with how things work here. Of course, there are still hundreds of things about university administration, which I still do not fully understand. But I am more familiar with my colleagues, the students, and the system now. I come from a very different system, and many things were really new for me.

eisodos What surprised you most when you came to the University of Freiburg?

Jacqueline Klooster That's a good question—there were many surprises! Many things didn't work quite the way I would have expected or was used to. For instance, the fact that you can study Greek and Latin separately, which means that there are many more students in Latin than in Greek. Maybe that was not a real surprise, but it's definitely different from the Netherlands. The fact that in Freiburg, most students of Greek are male, whereas in the Netherlands, most students of Classics are female, was surprising as well. And the fact that there is such a strong emphasis on translation from German

to Greek! That was really something I had not expected. It is probably useful, in a way, to really get into Greek grammar, but I have to say it takes up a lot of the curriculum—three, sometimes even four courses! That was perhaps the biggest surprise to me.

eisodos Is prose composition, translation from modern languages to Greek or Latin, not done at all at Dutch universities?

Jacqueline Klooster Well, there used to be prose composition in my time, but only for Latin. When I was teaching Greek, I did sometimes give the students little assignments, but nothing nearly as systematic as it is in Germany. And I think this might be because the German language also has a case system, conjunctive/subjunctive and other grammatical features, which are more aligned with Latin and Greek. It makes more sense when coming from a language like German, but it is still a new experience for me to see how strong that is. And I think in the Netherlands, most programs are more focused on contextualizing and integrating other disciplines like Ancient History, Ancient Philosophy, or Archaeology. This emphasis on language acquisition is a good thing, but it is a bit different from the system I come from.

eisodos There are critical voices here, as well, about how serious prose composition is taken and how much space it occupies in many Classics curricula in the German-speaking countries, but also because there used to be a lot of grammar-shaming in these courses especially, thus making Classics a subject accessible only for the toughest and brightest students.

Jacqueline Klooster Grammar-shaming is always a bad thing! And there is, of course, something unnatural about translating into a dead language when most students are interested in ancient literature and culture. On the other hand, being able to pinpoint to the smallest nuances is a good practice, and it can be useful, especially for those students who train to become teachers. But I am not sure prose composition in Latin and Greek is the only way of learning to do that. Reading lots and lots of texts also makes one a very good reader of Greek or Latin.

eisodos Are students studying the ancient languages to become teachers and those who do not in the same programs in the Netherlands? Or are there different paths and curricula?

Jacqueline Klooster In general, it is quite similar to Germany, I would say. There are, of course, also some modules for didactics or pedagogy and practice modules—where candidates have to teach at schools under supervision. Basically, the program is the same

during your Bachelor's, at least, and then during your Master's, you can specialize differently. But there is nothing whatsoever like prose composition in the Dutch educational system. I assume, teaching candidates are supposed to pick it up along the way.

eisodos Do you also have to teach such classes now?

Jacqueline Klooster Fortunately, I have escaped that so far (laughs). It would be quite difficult because I am still learning German. Maybe it would be a jump-start to learning German as well, but I think it would be painstaking for me *and* for the students because I would have to ask them about certain German constructions. I think it's better for now that someone else does that.

eisodos Do you teach in English or in German or both?

Jacqueline Klooster Last semester I taught most of my classes in German. I only taught the *Vorlesung* in English because talking for one and a half hours straight in German is still a bit difficult and I thought it would be tiring for me as well as for the students. But the seminars I did teach in German. It is a good way of forcing myself to improve my language skills. Interestingly, last semester's evaluations have shown that many people were happy about the *Vorlesung* being held in English. If that is the case, I would be happy to continue to teach some classes in English even after my German will have improved significantly. It might also be good for students to study in English—in the Netherlands, the Master's programs are mostly in English. Scholars whose only language is Dutch would not get very far in academia, so it makes sense to prepare students for that. But there has been some pushback because there was this feeling that many international students come to the Netherlands just for their studies and leave again immediately after graduating. So, I think opinions are divided. I have always felt it was fine to teach in English, although I know that I will never reach the level of native speakers. Of course, I sometimes feel self-conscious about that, but having an academic *Lingua franca* is not a bad thing. Yet it has to be considered that some people are disadvantaged by that; in many places in the world, the general level of English is worse than in others, so the entrance barriers might be unfairly difficult if higher education was only in English. Then again, thanks to computers and AI, access to other languages is much easier nowadays than it used to; there are many tools for translation and language-acquisition.

eisodos Offering classes in English is also a great means to internationalize programs. Students from other countries might feel more welcome if they have more options in English. But the pushback you mention exists in the German-speaking world as well; some

scholars, especially in the Humanities, want to defend German as an academic language and refuse to publish in English, for example, whereas others seem more relaxed about that, especially among the younger generations.

Jacqueline Klooster Yes, it is an interesting question! One should never risk losing one's native language. My daughter has been assigned to a school in Amsterdam—in Amsterdam, schools cannot be chosen freely, it is rather like a lottery—where all the education in the first three years was solely in English. The result is that pupils who are not native speakers of English are taught by teachers who are not native speakers of English either from an early age onwards. That might lead to a certain level of proficiency and fluency, but students risk losing their Dutch grammar and writing skills. And my daughter—and probably her entire generation—uses a lot of anglicisms. That is not the school's fault, of course, but inevitable with all the digital cultures. It has advantages, but I think it is good to have education in one's native language in addition to education in other languages.

eisodos We see your point here. By the way, has your family moved to Freiburg with you? Or are you dividing your time between Freiburg and Amsterdam now?

Jacqueline Klooster My daughter is seventeen years old now and will finish high school this year. We didn't consider it a good idea to change school and school-system at this point. But she is, in fact, thinking of studying in Germany. But it is actually not that easy to apply at German universities when you come from another country! So, we will see. In any case, I am currently still commuting on a regular basis. I started out commuting every weekend, but I soon realized that that would be too tiresome. It takes so much time! But right now, during the semester break, I am in Amsterdam, also because my office in Freiburg is being renovated, and I have most of my books still here.

eisodos What made you apply at Freiburg University?

Jacqueline Klooster That's a very interesting question! I have to admit that the post came quite as a surprise opportunity. My husband had seen the job announcement and noticed that it combined Reception Studies and Narratology, which are the very two things I have specialized in, so he immediately knew it was interesting to me. While I was still doubting whether I should apply, I got an official invitation to apply, which made it even more interesting. At first, I thought that might just be because they need to invite a female candidate or someone from outside, but then, I thought: "well, I'll just take my chance", and I applied. And I have to say, when I was invited to the interview, it really

felt very good. I felt that this could be a great fit. And when I got the *Ruf*,¹ I really was happy about this opportunity. It is very exciting to learn about a new system when you have already been in academia for a longer period. Of course, there are some practical sides, which are not always ideal, but I really like Freiburg. It's a beautiful, open and also very friendly city, and it does have a kind of, I wouldn't say cosmopolitan, but an international atmosphere.

eisodos Yes, as cosmopolitan as Baden-Württemberg could get.

Jacqueline Klooster (laughs) I guess so, probably! I actually think I fit in quite well. I am very happy about it! Initially, I was not completely confident, to be honest; for a long time, the German system was very German-oriented and hard to crack for internationals. Therefore, it was a pleasant surprise to be invited, to be seriously considered, and to be hired. Some people have been telling me that it is still unusual in German academia to hire professors from abroad. Maybe it is changing a bit now; I think there might be more *Neuberufene*² from other countries in Germany now than in the past, but we are still a very small minority, I guess! (laughs) The Dutch academic system is very international, by contrast. But so far, it has really been a nice experience! Everyone has been very kind and welcoming! I was a bit weary before—to see if people were thinking: “why do we need this person from the Netherlands who does not even speak good German?” But fortunately, these worries were completely unnecessary!

eisodos We are glad to hear that! In preparation for this interview, we actually brainstormed about non-German Classics professors at German universities, but we could not think of many... May this change soon!

Jacqueline Klooster It can be good for universities to bring in outside perspectives. Things are different in different places. They are not necessarily better, but just the comparison might be interesting and open up new ideas. I do not only mean those who, like myself, have never worked or studied in Germany before, but also people like Regina Höschele, who was educated in Germany but then spent a long time in Canada before coming back.³ There is some value in that.

eisodos Absolutely! And it is also a wonderful development that Classics departments are becoming rejuvenated and diversified.

1 Editors' note: in the German-speaking world, becoming a chair professor presupposes receiving a *Ruf* (literally 'call') for the professorship, even if the procedure is application-based in the first place.

2 Editors' note: newly appointed professors.

3 Editors' note: Regina Höschele, professor of Greek at LMU Munich, was interviewed in **eisodos** 2025/2.

Jacqueline Klooster I was indeed happy and surprised, because I applied to Freiburg with a talk that centered on mythic retellings from female perspectives. And I thought: “well, it’s a gamble: if they don’t like it, I know I won’t have to try, but if they like it, well, that’s what I’m here for.” I would like to pursue these topics. So, I was happy they were open to it.

eisodos Has feminist myth reception been a long-standing interest of yours or has the interest emerged more recently?

Jacqueline Klooster My interest in feminist rewritings started when all these books by Madeline Miller, Natalie Haynes, and Pat Parker came out; it must have been around 2017 or 2018. Basically, it started when I got these books as birthday presents! There were suddenly so many novels about ancient mythology retold by women, female slaves, or feminized monsters! It felt somewhat unprecedented, because, of course, there were older rewritings of ancient myths—Christa Wolf and others—but the current trend is a new phenomenon. I started to wonder: “why is this happening now? Is there an explanation for that?” I also enjoyed reading these popular retellings, so I decided to work on them. And I have to say that as a phenomenon, although some of them can be a little repetitive, they are very interesting.

eisodos Would you say that these retellings open up new perspectives on ancient texts as well?

Jacqueline Klooster Yes, definitely, that is one of the things Reception Studies have really taught us. Some questions which have been under the radar for a long time can suddenly get into focus because of these modern retellings. And other things, which were deemed central before, fall under the radar now. There are, for instance, many Medea retellings which omit the infanticide. I find this omission extremely interesting. Apparently, there is a kind of moral or ethical taboo against having Medea punish Jason by killing children. People do not like to see a feminist retelling where a woman does something as horrible as that, because of her husband, driven by jealousy, or vengeance, or for any other reason. Another example would be Clytemnestra’s murder of Cassandra, which is also seen as a horrible thing—a woman killing an innocent, subordinate woman. This also gets written out of these new retellings. So that, then, prompts one to ask the question: “why is it so prominent in Aeschylus, for instance? Is it to vilify Clytemnestra?” We could perhaps understand today why she kills Agamemnon—because of Iphigenia. But the fact that she also kills Cassandra really makes it clear that she is a morally bad person. What drives this kind of plot-conception or plot-moderation in these new novels? What does it tell us about the ancient texts, but also about our own time, and about the image or representation of women that is acceptable and accepted—both in antiquity and in our own times?

eisodos Feminist myth rewritings are also very popular among students and a good way to get young people today to engage with myth. Apparently, some Classics departments in the US have also noticed more enrolments in their myth classes since Madeline Miller's books appeared! And at **eisodos**, we also see that more and more of our contributions are on these texts.

Jacqueline Klooster Oh yes, I can imagine! I am also interested in the question of what this heightened interest in retellings does to the image of the classical world that people have who perhaps have not been educated in the Classics, the ancient world, and ancient mythology. We are now getting offered this prominent and emphatic idea about what the ancient world 'is like' and it would be interesting to see how that influences cultural memory. The renewed interest in mythology may not be unprecedented, but it is very remarkable. It brings together antiquity and pop culture! At Classics departments, we should probably try to 'profit' from this trend. If we want to keep our business and if we want to survive, we should be interested in what our times are interested in about the classical world. We are the ones who can really say something about it—something critical at that. It's an exciting opportunity!

Therefore, Reception Studies are a very important part of our disciplines, and necessary as a bridge to other fields such as Modern Languages, History, and Literatures. But we should also be careful not to overstress it. We still need more traditional skills, knowledge, and in general academic traditions to build on. If we do not continue those, they will be lost forever. We should not throw away philology. But yes, I think Reception Studies are a good way to draw people in as well as to reflect on our own times.

eisodos We fully agree on this point! This brief glimpse into your research leads us to another question. Have you gotten a lot of research done since you started in Freiburg? Or have teaching and administration taken up most of your time and energy? And in any case, what would you like to pursue next?

Jacqueline Klooster I have to admit that it has been quite time-consuming to get into the system and to understand how everything works, to prepare classes in German and so on. Fortunately, there were a number of projects which were in their final phases and which I could somehow round off and submit, but I have not really been able to start a new research project yet. I would need more time for that, maybe by getting some time off through *Drittmittel*-applications.⁴ I do have ideas, but I have not had the time to fully work on them.

4 Editors' note: *Drittmittel* are funds that universities, departments or researchers acquire from public or private bodies in addition to their regular university budget.

eisodos Are there any ideas you would already be happy to share?

Jacqueline Klooster I would be really interested in Cognitive Classics and Reception. The new retellings could be analyzed through the lens of mind-reading skills because they read the ancient texts and take certain clues from them and elaborate on them in several ways. That's something I haven't seen being studied as such, and I would be interested in taking that further: can we read ancient minds? What does such a retelling bring to that? And how is it conditioned by the point of view of the new author? It is this interaction from a cognitive and affective perspective that I would love to take further.

eisodos Is Hellenistic literature still on your research agenda as well?

Jacqueline Klooster Yes, it is! The *Hellenistic Workshop* is being organized in September in Freiburg; it will deal with inscriptional poetry and Hellenistic poetry, in other words inscriptional poetry from the Hellenistic age and written poetry in terms of the literary record. It will be particularly exciting to see whether and how the Greek texts we can find 'in the wild' as it were can perhaps nuance or shift our ideas of what poetry of the Hellenistic age (also) looked like. And also from a reception-centered perspective, Hellenistic poetry is always on my mind as an early movement of reception of earlier writing.

eisodos You are also still co-editing the *Hellenistica Groningana*, aren't you?

Jacqueline Klooster That's correct. There is a new volume about to appear that results from the *Hellenistic Workshop* in 2023, which took place in Groningen and treated the theme of 'Poetry Beyond Alexandria'. It should come out this year or the next. In addition, there is the *Cambridge Companion to Hellenistic Poetry* that should also come out in the near future—it has already been handed in! That was a very huge commitment (laughs).

eisodos Talking about commitments, you also had different roles at *Mnemosyne*, one of the oldest, largest, and most renowned journals in the field of Classics. How did you experience this responsibility?

Jacqueline Klooster I had been on the editorial board for some time before I became the editor-in-chief of the *Mnemosyne* journal and the book series. It was a good and interesting experience! It gives you a lot of insight into what is happening in the field, who is doing what, what are trends, also geographically speaking. For example, it is fascinating to see that Italian articles are more traditionally philological than articles from the US or

the UK. Seeing these developments gives you a fairly complete picture of what is going on. But it can also be a stressful occupation because there are a lot of submissions—around 150 per year. You have to allocate all of them, find reviewers and second reviewers, sometimes third reviewers. You have to be both patient and impatient: On the one hand, you should not stress people out about these reviews, but on the other hand, you must be firm and say: “well, we really need it by now! And if you cannot deliver, we need to search for someone else.” It is a balancing act, I would say. In the end, I found it a bit too much for something that is not really remunerated. It became a very heavy burden! I think I got two hours per week for it, which was not at all consistent with the amount of work that I put in. But fortunately, Brill has now understood this and reformed the structure of the journal board. So now there are three editors: an editor-in-chief, an editor for Greek, and one for Latin. I myself am still the editor-in-chief of the book series, albeit not for the journal. So, there are now four people doing basically what I did all by myself for years. This new development is good! It is not realistic to expect that people do that kind of work in their free time when they also have to do research, teach and write applications. It takes so much time! But it is also a rewarding experience and a huge learning curve. I absolutely would not discourage anyone from such tasks, but I think it is reasonable to have bigger teams and shared responsibility. Therefore, the structural change is a good thing! Sometimes, things have traditionally been done in one specific way and keep being done that way because nobody dares to complain. Probably, it was a good thing that I told them at some point that it has become too much.

eisodos The sheer number of contributions has probably also increased in the last years. Perhaps it used to be less of an effort some years ago. But 150 submissions seem impossible to deal with on one’s own!

Jacqueline Klooster Yes, especially since with every contribution you have to imagine there are about fifty emails to be written: to the reviewers, often several times, to the contributors, to other board members, to the copy editors. It is much healthier to share such a huge job among several people.

eisodos Perhaps now on a completely different topic, but returning to something we have already touched upon before when we talked about encouraging people to turn to the study of Classics: what drew you personally into academia more generally, or particularly into Classics?

Jacqueline Klooster It is always good to ask oneself: “why did I start doing what I do?” (laughs) First of all, I really loved languages, literature, and stories when I was in school, and I especially loved Greek and Latin, also because—I have to stress this—

my teachers were very good. They might not have followed a strict didactics checklist, but their enthusiasm was palpable. That really showed me that reading ancient texts was worthwhile. They *lived* a passion for the Classics. This passion and enthusiasm for difficult languages impressed me. I like cognitive challenges! But I also felt that this is something I probably could not master entirely on my own. If one wants to learn about antiquity, one really needs to work and study hard, yet it is good to have someone guide you along the way as well. When I was doing my studies, I realized that research could be something for me. I liked writing papers; I could see myself pursuing research projects. At first, I was not that enthusiastic about the idea of teaching. I did teach though after finishing my studies, at a secondary school. I was in my early twenties, so I did not feel ready for the role of a strict teacher, I felt too close in age to the students, or at least some of the students. Nevertheless, I enjoyed it! But I also realized that teaching at a secondary school is different from academic pursuit; there is much more focus on pedagogy. This can be nice, especially if you can teach them something about great stories and fascinating cultures and languages. But I wanted to explore the academic side of teaching too. Now I know: academic teaching is wonderful and I love it! You are in contact with people, you hear their ideas and see their reactions to these ancient texts, so you can also deepen your own ideas about them and do research on top of that. For me, that is an ideal situation.

Yet I need to stress that an academic career is not easy. It can be really tough and challenging. You have to be very patient, very resilient, there are rejections and disappointments. I am really happy that I am where I am now. But it didn't always look like it might end like this. I have had numerous temporary jobs, which creates a lot of stress because one always has to be on the lookout for the next project and the next job. One needs to build up a lot of resilience and a kind of toughness. On the one hand, academia is often being presented as a meritocratic system, and on the other hand, everybody knows that you need lucky breaks, right? It is not always the case that the one who is absolutely the most deserving gets the best position. Sometimes, people succeed because they happen to be in the right place at the right time. It is very nice when that happens to you, but it often does not.

eisodos Would you choose the path again?

Jaqueline Klooster Of course, there have been times when I thought: "okay, if this doesn't work out, then I'll really start something new." When I was ten years into my academic career after the PhD, I still did not have a permanent position. I knew I could not continue like this forever. But then I was lucky. And I am happy it has worked out! It could have been really different, and it is good to be aware of that.

eisodos Are there things you would like to change for students or younger researchers? Are there things you want to change while you are a professor?

Jaqueline Klooster Certainly! Of course, it would be great to give more people the opportunity to stay in the academic system; at the same time, it is important to be honest about how difficult that is. If it doesn't work out, that does not mean that one is not cut out for it. As I said, it is often about luck. I might not know the German system well enough yet to be able to pinpoint to certain things which need to be changed. In general, I would say that there are more funding opportunities in Germany than in the Netherlands, so there are better chances of getting projects funded. On the other hand, I also see that it is possible, and quite usual, in the German system that people pursue PhDs without any funding. That is very unusual in the Netherlands. But in Germany, it is very common, although it puts a lot of pressure on people. That is something I am a bit worried about. I still have to find out if there are ways to make it easier for those students.

eisodos Do you have any recommendations for PhD students or younger researchers?

Jaqueline Klooster I think it is very important for people to be aware that there is a life outside of academia. It is nothing to be ashamed of. With a PhD, you can do many interesting things! Again: it is not always the best who get the best positions, that should be acknowledged; there is an element of luck. I was invited to give a talk once about how I got where I got. I made two sets of slides for this presentation and said: "this is the successful path: I got this fellowship, and then I got this acceptance letter, and this led to that etc." And then I presented a resume of rejections to show that it could have looked very differently! "I got rejected there, I was not accepted for that, my promotion did not go through for certain reasons, I almost did not get my book published and so on and so forth." Telling the latter story as well is important to make people aware that almost nobody climbs the "Olympus" effortlessly.

eisodos Thank you for sharing this, that is indeed important to emphasize! What plans, visions, or strategic aims do you have for the department in Freiburg now?

Jaqueline Klooster Securing research grants to attract young researchers is very high on my agenda, also collaborations with other disciplines. I find it important to show the faculty or the university more widely that we are there, that we are doing interesting things, that we ask questions which are of interest not just to our own field. Universities benefit a lot from such cooperations and open dialogues across departments. As a next step, I would like to establish contact with schools. I will actually come to Tübingen soon

and talk to students who are taking their *Abitur* exams this year.⁵ Something similar here in Freiburg would be good as well. I also try to grasp any opportunities to speak with the wider public. For instance, I am happy that I have just been invited to speak about Iphigenia at the Theater Freiburg in the context of their production of the opera *Iphigénie en Tauride*. This is an amazing chance to show how relevant antiquity still is!

eisodos That sounds wonderful! Maybe Freiburg turns into a progressive, public-facing place for ancient studies! For a long time, Classics departments in Germany, and especially southern Germany, have been very traditional, conservative, and sometimes outright elitist places. We are very much looking forward to this being changed now that you are in Freiburg, Regina Höschele in Munich, Irmgard Männlein in Tübingen and other newly appointed professors (female and male) in different places.

Jaqueline Klooster Thank you, that is lovely to hear! Indeed, there seems to be a generational shift in Germany. More and more people, for instance, immediately say “Duzen wir uns?”—I had not expected that! But a strong, rigorous tradition is not always bad either. Intellectual rigor should not be cast overboard entirely in favor of ‘progressive’ tendencies. In the Netherlands, one sometimes feels the need to really defend one’s discipline. Here, there seems to be more tolerance for ancient languages, at least to a certain degree.

eisodos We feel this might be changing, however. Greek and Latin are not standard subjects at school anymore in Germany either, and funding for Humanities programs decreases as well.

Jaqueline Klooster Yes, that is true. Well, these are interesting times. In the Netherlands, there are still some schools offering Greek and Latin and they are quite popular, but not always for the right reasons. They are elite schools, and many parents are happy if their children go there because of the social benefits, not because of the subjects taught. The UK might be comparable. Academically, there used to be a very strong linguistic and philological tradition in the Netherlands, which is still there in parts, but the younger generation is encouraged to look towards new, progressive theories, to feminist or sociological studies, a little bit like in the UK and the US. But also in Germany, things are changing. And that is a good thing because it can draw new people to our disciplines. Classics should not feel apart or alien, as if it had nothing to do with the modern world.

5 Editors’ note: i.e. final exams/A-Levels in Germany. There is an annual workshop to prepare high school students for Classics topics, hosted at the University of Tübingen, organized by Wolfgang Polleichtner und Julian Wagner. This year’s edition took place on March 7, which was still in the future at the time of the interview in February.

eisodos The public debates about the relevance of ancient languages to modern times are disconcerting though. Whenever it is suggested that Latin be abandoned from high schools, for instance right now in Austria, the study of Latin and Greek is defended with cringe-worthy arguments like “Greco-Roman antiquity is the cradle of European civilization” or “we cannot have a functioning democracy without Greek and Latin”.

Jaqueline Klooster Oh yes, that is unsavory! Do we really want this kind of ‘help’ to justify our subjects? Actually, in times of AI, the study of Latin is more important than ever: not because it is the cradle of civilization and culture, but because it really forces you to concentrate, to think, to translate on your own, to use your brain. With AI, you can just press a button and have a translation in a couple of seconds; it can be good or terrible. But in any case, it does not require you to do this deep thinking and this deep concentration. Losing this ability would be worrying!

eisodos Perhaps now that we have slightly touched politics: you have done some research and teaching about leadership, and you are teaching a class on leaders and rulers in Plutarch’s *Parallel Biographies* now. What can be learned about leadership, in- or outside academia, from the ancients?

Jaqueline Klooster I started this leadership research project a long time ago, as a postdoc. It is about the way ancient leaders often also express themselves in literary works. Solon wrote poetry, for instance, but there are many more examples. How are these literary expressions of politicians talked about? There is the idea that ‘the style is the man’. And there is an ancient tendency to assimilate the speaker of a text with the historical author. That influences the way people evaluate these works. Stylistic criticism becomes a kind of moral criticism. Stylistic preferences and tastes are very interesting sociological phenomena. Why do people think something is beautiful or beautifully written? In ancient criticism, there is often a moral dimension to it. These are questions I am interested in. It gets very interesting if you start looking at the modern world, too. We can all think of very obvious examples from today’s world. Not being concerned about the truth of what is said is a style now: talking in chunks and not in elegant rhetorical clauses is the outcome. It is also a sociological marker that is aimed at a certain audience and has a kind of moral aura that convinces listeners of the speaker’s authenticity—while it might be lies that are being told. There are interesting parallels. If you look at Suetonius’ *Lives of the Caesars*, there is always a paragraph about how a certain emperor went about writing, talking, speaking, or preparing speeches. What ideas about leadership are reflected in that? That is what I am looking at, but in the end, I think there is something to be gained for our modern world too.

eisodos These are immensely relevant and current thoughts and findings. And it is not as mind-wracking a project as a rhetorical analysis of Trump’s utterances would probably be...

Jaqueline Klooster Oh yes! The vagueness is also part of Trump’s game, right? “I can do whatever I like, I can tell the truth, I can tell lies, you never know what you will get!” He is a bit like the Hesiodic Muse, one could say. (laughs) He probably would not like to be associated with the Muses. He would rather be Zeus, I guess.

eisodos We are approaching the end of the conversation, so we would like to ask a final question: what is the last text, ancient or modern, you delved in?

Jaqueline Klooster Currently, I am working on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in the context of a lecture I will give soon at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. There is a wonderful exhibition about metamorphoses in Fine Arts. I am really looking forward to that! Moreover, I am researching texts about animals in the ancient world, for instance in Pseudo-Oppian’s *Kynegetika*—a very unusual and obscure text, but endlessly fascinating. I will be working on that next semester with the students in my seminar.

eisodos That sounds like a suitable combination of subjects—animals and metamorphoses! Thank you very much for speaking to us today!

Jaqueline Klooster Thank you for this lovely conversation! Let me end by saying that I admire everyone who studies Classics in today’s world. It is a brave choice, and a necessary one!

The interview was conducted in February 2026 by
Katharina Leonora Hennen, Benny Kozian, and Sophie Emilia Seidler.

CEYX UND ALCYONE

*Rückblick auf ein Theaterprojekt der
Klassischen Philologie der Universität Wien
von einem Mitwirkenden*

Noah Rumetshofer
Universität Wien

Projektidee

In den Jahren 2024 und 2025 haben Mitarbeitende und Studierende des Instituts für Klassische Philologie, Mittel- und Neulatein der Universität Wien gemeinsam ein Theaterstück auf die Beine gestellt, das dem Publikum in 75 Minuten die moderne Adaption eines antiken Mythos näherbrachte. Geschrieben wurde das Skript von Univ.-Prof. Dr. Andreas Heil, der sich bei der Genese des Stückes an Ovids *Metamorphosen* orientierte und die tragische Geschichte von Ceyx und seiner Frau Alcyone in eine bühnengerechte Inszenierung transformierte. Dabei handelte es sich nicht um Andreas Heils erstes Theaterprojekt; *Ceyx und Alcyone* steht in der Tradition von zwei weiteren Aufführungen: Während *Die Trojerinnen* (2018) auf der Grundlage von Seneca den Inhalt einer Tragödie rezipieren, widmen sich *Argia & Antigone* (2022) frei nach Statius' *Thebais* genauso wie die jüngste Theaterproduktion einem epischen Stoff.

Ceyx und Alcyone bei Ovid (*met.* 11, 410–748) und die Inszenierung

Ceyx, der Sohn des Morgensterns, wird von Sorgen um das Schicksal seines Bruders Daidalion getrieben und beschließt, ein Orakel aufzusuchen, wofür er eine Schiffsreise unternehmen muss (V. 410–414). Alcyone, die Tochter des Windgottes Aeolus, kennt die Tücken des stürmischen Meeres und fürchtet um das Wohl ihres geliebten Mannes (V. 415–443). Doch ihre Bemühungen, ihn von der Reise abzubringen, bleiben vergebens (V. 444–460) – Ceyx bricht mit dem Schiff auf und findet in einem Sturm den nassen Tod (V. 461–572). Alcyone verbringt die Wochen zuhause in einsamer Erwartung, wobei sie täglich ihr flehentliches Gebet an die Göttin Juno richtet und um die Heimkehr ihres Mannes bittet (V. 573–582). Diese entschließt sich – angewidert von den wiederholten Bittgebeten für einen Toten –, Alcyone über das Ableben ihres Gatten in Kenntnis zu setzen. Dazu schickt sie Iris in das Reich des Schlafgottes Somnus, der den Gott der Träu-

me, Morpheus, beauftragt, Alcyone in einem Traum von Ceyx' Schicksal zu berichten (V. 583–673). Nachdem Alcyone das Traumgespinst ihres verstorbenen Mannes erblickt hat, will sie ohne ihren Gatten nicht weiterleben und begibt sich zum Steg, an dem sie Abschied nahmen, um – so wie er – den Tod im Wasser zu finden (V. 674–711). In den Wellen entdeckt sie plötzlich Ceyx' Leichnam und stürzt sich ins Meer; als ihre Lippen die seinen berühren, verwandeln sich beide in Eisvögel (V. 712–748).



Bild 1: Ceyx (Noah Rumetshofer) verabschiedet sich von Alcyone (Isabella Kofler), Apollo (Eric Kunz) im Hintergrund

So die Geschichte von Ceyx und Alcyone, wie Ovid sie erzählt, doch Andreas Heils Inszenierung unter der Mitarbeit von Ella Wolff bei der Regie und der musikalischen Umsetzung baute noch eine weitere Ebene des Theaterspielens ein. Denn den Erzählrahmen für das Schicksal der Liebenden bildet in der Inszenierung die Welt der Gött*innen, die sich – wie in einem Theater – das Schauspiel der Menschen ansehen. Für sie ist das ganze Menschenleid nur ein Spaß, eine Unterhaltung zum Anlass von Jupiters Hochzeitstag, was besonders an frechen Zwischenbemerkungen und haltlosen Kommentaren deutlich wird. Mars spottet über das verweichlichte Wesen des Ceyx, Bacchus lässt sich keine Gelegenheit zum Trinken entgehen und Apollo liefert persönlich die musikalische Begleitung für die Gesangseinlagen. Dies sorgt nicht nur für eine Auflockerung des bedrückenden Inhalts, sondern verleiht der ganzen Aufführung den Charakter einer Tragikomödie. Doch die Gottheiten machen sich nicht nur über die menschlichen Gefühle lustig, sondern empfinden auch Rührung – so vor allem Venus – und zwei von ihnen greifen sogar aus Mitleid in das Geschehen ein, wodurch sie schlussendlich die Verwandlung der Liebenden in Vögel bewirken. Doch mit der Metamorphose endet das Theaterstück nicht. Den Schluss bildet der Auftritt des Göttervaters, der im vorhergehenden Verlauf des Stückes

abwesend war. In einem Monolog wundert er sich über die Anwesenheit von Alcyones Leiche, die mitten im Raum liegt und deren Geschichte er gänzlich verpasst hat. Doch anstatt am Schicksal der Sterblichen Anteil zu nehmen, sieht er in ihrem Suizid nur einen Akt der Schwäche. Er nimmt ihren Tod zum Anlass, um vor den Gottheiten eine Rede über seinen glanzvollen Erfolgsweg zu halten. Sein von Selbstlob erfüllter Bericht, wie ihm der Aufstieg in den Olymp gelungen ist, endet mit einer Aufforderung an die Gött*innen, das Leben zu genießen – ein weiteres Signal dafür, dass das Ganze für sie nicht mehr ist als ein Spiel.



Bild 2: Vulcanus (Laurenz Enzlberger) bemüht sich um die Gunst von Venus (Andrianna Lessak)

Umsetzung

Das Theaterstück zeichnet sich durch die Kombination von Schauspiel, Gesang und Musik aus. Apollo (Eric Kunz) begleitet den Gesang mit der Gitarre oder leitet die Gottheiten zu Karaoke an, wohingegen ein stimmungsvolles Klavier (Zhikai Wang) für die Hintergrundmusik des dritten Aktes sorgt, der teilweise in Pantomime gespielt wird und Alcyones langes Warten darstellt. Als das Schiff von Ceyx im Sturm versinkt, wird Neptun (Manuel Handsteiner) mit einer Cajón auf die Bühne gerollt und bringt damit das Getöse des Meeres zum Ausdruck, während die Musen mit Effektinstrumenten das

Rauschen des Windes nachstellen. Darüber hinaus stellen Vergilzitate oder lateinische Phrasen, die den Ovid'schen Ausgangstext zitieren, einen Bezug zur antiken Vorlage des Stoffes her. Da das Theaterstück in einem Hörsaal des Universitätscampus aufgeführt wurde, stand nur eine Bühne (und ein Bühnenbild) mit beschränkten Möglichkeiten zur Verfügung. Doch mit Kreativität konnte ein Ortswechsel im Geschehen anhand von Requisiten oder dem Einsatz der vorhandenen Räumlichkeiten gezeigt werden: Ein Teppich wird als Steg mit blauen Tüchern als Wellen ausgerollt und Iris steigt eine beleuchtete Treppe zwischen den Sitzbänken empor, um ins Reich von Somnus zu gelangen.



Bild 3: Iris (Maja Durovic) mit Icelus (links Florentin Fritz) und Morpheus (rechts Manuel Handsteiner)

Dazu kommt die bereits erwähnte Metaebene der Aufführung: Die Gottheiten, die selbst das Geschehen der Menschen beobachten, verschmelzen in den Zuschauer*innenreihen mit dem tatsächlichen Publikum. Die Allmacht der Gottheiten zeigt sich darin, dass sie die Handlung jederzeit unterbrechen und darauf einwirken können. Gleichzeitig entsteht durch das ‚Spiel im Spiel‘ die Notwendigkeit einer Moderation, die das ganze Geschehen anleitet und die penetranten Fragen der Gottheiten beantwortet. Diese Aufgabe kommt Merkur, dem Götterboten, zu, der deshalb eine große Textmenge erhält. Das sorgte dafür, dass die – ursprünglich für eine*n Schauspieler*in gedachte – Rolle des Merkurs aufgeteilt wurde auf drei *Mercurii*. Diese Adaption und etliche weitere Veränderungen im Skript entstanden im Zuge der Proben und durch den Input von Studierenden. Die Teilneh-

mer*innen waren nicht nur dazu bereit, sich in ihrer Freizeit zu Spiel- und Gesangsproben zusammenzufinden, sondern besorgten auch Requisiten und stellten eine Regieassistenten. Bemerkenswert ist auch, wie viele unterschiedliche Gruppen von Studierenden sich an dem Projekt beteiligten: Vertreten waren Lehramts- und Fachstudiengänge vom Bachelor bis zum Doktorat, unterstützt von Mitarbeitenden des Instituts. Die Studierenden kamen nicht nur aus der Klassischen Philologie, sondern auch aus anderen Fachdisziplinen wie der Alten Geschichte, Archäologie und Germanistik. All diese Personen haben zum Funktionieren des Projekts beigetragen.



Bild 4: Der ertrunkene Ceyx (Noah Rumetshofer) erscheint als Traumbild, in Schwarz die drei *Mercurii* (links Hannah Oitzl, rechts Lisa Dietrich, hinten Emma Lipka)

Die Wirkung auf das Publikum war bei den insgesamt vier Aufführungen sehr positiv. Die Vorstellungen waren stets gut besucht und die Rückmeldungen wertschätzend und anerkennend. Während ich die oben bereits erwähnten ersten beiden Inszenierungen von Andreas Heil nur als Zuschauer besucht habe, konnte ich bei *Ceyx und Alcione* selbst als Schauspieler mitwirken. Im Zuge dessen war ich bei den Proben, beim Beschaffen der Requisiten und bei Überlegungen, wie Vorschläge der Schauspieler*innen im Text umgesetzt werden können, beteiligt. Aufgrund dieser Einblicke in das Theatergeschehen erachte ich

es als besonders wertvoll, dass es an der Universität neben Vorlesungen und Prüfungen auch solche Projekte gibt, die eine sozial verbindende Beschäftigung darstellen. Außerdem konnte der Latinist Andreas Heil durch diese Inszenierung ein weiteres Mal zeigen, dass sich der epische *Metamorphosen*-Stoff für eine dramatische Umsetzung eignet und wie antike Literatur in einem modernen Kleid heute noch ein Publikum fesseln kann.

Neben weiteren Fotos und Videos finden sich unter folgendem Link auch die Spielzettel mit einer Liste aller Mitwirkenden:

<https://klassischephilologie.univie.ac.at/news-events/theater/ceyx-und-alcyone/>

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