

Alongside the study of primary visual sources, the fellowship allowed me to undertake bibliographic research to develop the interpretive framework of my project. I consider key features of the Italian landscape and their representation in light of Fascist discourses of regionalism, nationalism and environmental determinism, which associated people with place in the service of racial politics. Aerial perspectives on the landscape are read as markers of the cultural fascination with aviation, as well as its increased military uses. The politicization of the mountains is considered through the creation of national parks and the promotion of alpine sports. Fascism's privileging of productive nature is studied through the championing of both traditional and modern forms of cultivation. The association of water with cleansing and control is examined in structural and social engineering projects, from the building of aqueducts to the holding of children's summer camps by rivers and lakes. Coastal landscapes are seen as spaces where new concepts of leisure merged with ideas of imperial expansionism modelled on the ancient Roman past. Framing the project as a whole is the overarching discourse of reclamation, which came to define the regime's attitudes to nature, culture and race.

The research undertaken during my tenure as Balsdon Fellow has revealed the extent to which representations of the Italian landscape appeared in the visual media of the Fascist era. It has also established the importance of art and visual culture in mediating the regime's discourses of people and place. These findings have both confirmed the original aims of my project and demonstrated the need for further research to realize its full potential. I have been awarded a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship to complete the research for this project and the writing of the monograph that will result from it. My time at the BSR has been instrumental in advancing this project and will continue to shape my research for years to come.

LARA PUCCI

(Department of Cultural, Media and Visual Studies, University of Nottingham)

lara.pucci@nottingham.ac.uk

HUGH LAST FELLOWSHIP

doi: 10.1017/S006824622300020X

The Roman imperial sententia and the transmission of thought from antiquity to the Renaissance

The practice of declamation in the first century AD was defined by its epigrammatic style: a reliance (some would say over-reliance) on pointed, punchy one-liner conclusions to every expression of an idea. These were called *sententiae* and they shaped rhetorical expression from declamation and oratory to historiography and epic. Earlier scholarship has seized on the negative comments from ancient sources and has seen in the *sententia* a symptom of decline, where speakers strive for extremes of style and distort the sense of what they say. But more recently scholars have reevaluated declamation as a form of speaking which mediates important issues of power, authority, identity and justice. In this light, the *sententia* deserves reassessment as a way of packaging and disseminating thought.

In early imperial Rome, *sententiae* were valued as attractive, glittering expressions which encouraged the audience of declamation to gather them in personal collections of

quotations. *Sententiae* therefore make a significant transition from performed speech to book culture. I set out to investigate a number of questions: can we retrieve the aesthetic qualities of the *sententia* which make it a desirable object; how might we connect its aesthetic qualities to the knowledge or insight that it conveys; what does the *sententia* and its excerption tell us about the dissemination of thought in imperial Rome and beyond?

For my visit to the BSR, I wanted to begin addressing these questions in relation to the elder Seneca, who collected excerpts from the declaimers of the first half of the first century AD. In thinking about the aesthetics of the *sententia* I started by considering its role as part of speech performance. This enabled me to connect the excerpted speeches with Seneca's descriptions of the declaimers' voices and physiques in the prefaces to each book of excerpts. I will develop this connection further in future research, to consider how the performed and written *sententiae* work cognitively, so that the aesthetic encounter facilitates the expression, reception and processing of thought.

In thinking about the excerption and collection of quotations I used my time at Rome to make an initial foray into the early modern books at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, to see what the presentation of the elder Seneca's texts might tell us about how his collection was received in the age of florilegia and proverb-books. This question is complicated by the entanglement in early modern understanding of the elder Seneca, his philosopher son the younger Seneca and a number of pseudo-Senecan texts. That very entanglement is in itself interesting, as it attests to a generative impulse in the extraction, collection, ordering and even invention of ancient soundbites. In future research I shall return to the reception of the elder Seneca after the 1580s, when he is established as an individual author, but will continue also to explore the way in which the elder Seneca's reception has been shaped by his assimilation to his son's texts, whose *sententiae* have a more prominent status as generalized truths.

The productive research atmosphere of the BSR, which fosters conversations between scholars and artists, helped me to generate these questions and begin to pursue them. I am immensely grateful for all I have learned here.

ELLEN O'GORMAN

(Department of Classics and Ancient History, University of Bristol)

E.C.Ogorman@bristol.ac.uk

doi: 10.1017/S0068246223000211

Trimalchio and the monuments: material culture, self-fashioning, and social aesthetics in Petronius' Satyricon

Petronius' *Satyricon*, a comic fictional story of imperial date, features the most remarkable character in Latin literature, Trimalchio, a wealthy, manipulative and intimidating ex-slave from the East, who succeeded in creating a new social and cultural identity for himself. In his narrative of Trimalchio's dinner party, Petronius shows how visual and material culture associated with the Roman upper classes is appropriated by Trimalchio to ensure a superior position in the community he inhabits and to project to his dinner guests a refashioned identity and an image of power that bears traces of his cultural