

The *Polymnia* network, on the *Mythographical Tradition in Europe from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, was set up in 1999 by Jacqueline Fabre-Serris (Professor of Latin at the Université de Lille 3) and Françoise Graziani (Lecturer in Comparative Literature at the Université de Paris 8).

Research Aims

The POLYMNIA research programme is an international body which brings together researchers in various disciplines (ancient literature and philosophy, philology, comparative literature, history of religion, literary history, art history and theory, history of science, history of ideas, anthropology, etc.). Its aim is to study and publish ancient and modern mythographical texts. Following in the research tradition established by Jean Seznec, it sets out to reconstitute the history of the European mythographical tradition as a continuum, from Antiquity to the seventeenth century, by allying the publishing and dissemination of texts (treatises, handbooks, glosses, commentaries) with the contextualisation of the various hermeneutic principles on which they shed light.

The comparative study of the mythographical tradition focuses equally on the modes of transmission, representation, and interpretation of myths throughout history, on the forms of this transmission, the ideological directions, and the shifts in perspective which determined its historical development.

The POLYMNIA programme aims to initiate dialogue between disciplines, periods, and geographical areas in order record the functions and uses of mythography, its effectiveness and the extent of its fields of application. Polemically inspired, the tradition was founded, from Antiquity to the Renaissance, on the interrelationship between the arts and the sciences, and was sustained by a wide variety of interpretations which is not at odds with its relative homogeneity across the centuries. Only at the end of the seventeenth century are the ancient modes of thought, analogical and symbolic, called into question by the scientific revolution and relegated to an obscurity which nowadays makes them virtually inaccessible to us. Hence the need to have recourse to a kind of archaeology of ideas, by recontextualising the multiplicity of representations and interpretations whose successive layers have structured European culture.

As part of the POLYMNIA programme there is an annual meeting to bring together classicists, philosophers, historians, literary experts, poetry and semiotics specialists, and art historians, organised by one of the partner institutions on one of the themes of the programme, in collaboration with the other associate institutions. The organising institution takes care of the board and lodging of the participants, the associated costs being absorbed by the research bodies of the organisations concerned. The other institutions pay for the travel costs of their own members.

Partner universities and organisations

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (J. Pamiàs-Massana), the Université Libre de Bruxelles (L. Couloubaritsis), the University of Cambridge (P. Ford), the Centre Louis Gernet/EHESS (Claude Calame), the Universidad de Granada (M. Alganza Roldan), the Université de Lausanne (D. Bouvier), the Université de Laval (A. Baudou), the Université de Lille 3 (J. Fabre-Serris), the Universidad de Murcia (C. Alvarez), the Université de Nice (A. Zucker), the Université de Paris 8 (F. Graziani), the Université de Lyon2/ ENS Lyon (G.Besson), the Université de Paris 10 (E. Wolff), the Università di Siena (M. Bettini), the Università di Trieste (E. Pellizer), the Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance (F. La Brasca).