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Interview with Chiara Maria Mauro, Diego Chapinal-Heras, and Miriam Valdés Guía on the Occasion of the Edited Volume, People on the Move across the Greek World (Sevilla: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2022)

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A Short Profile of the Editors



From left to right, the editors of the volume: Chiara Maria Mauro, Diego Chapinal-Heras, and Miriam Valdés Guía. Courtesy of the editors.

Chiara Maria Mauro (CMM)

After a BA and a MA in Classical Archaeology (University of Pisa, Italy) and a PhD in Studies on the Ancient World (Complutense University of Madrid, Spain), Chiara Maria Mauro has worked, first, as Postdoctoral Researcher at the University College Dublin (Ireland) and, then, at the Haifa Center for Mediterranean History (Israel). She is currently an Assistant Professor of Ancient History at the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain). Her main scientific interests are related to the maritime sphere, which she has widely published. Particularly, she draws her attention to harbour areas in the Greek world and their evolution between the Archaic and the Classical periods.

Diego Chapinal-Heras (DCH)

Ramón y Cajal Postdoctoral Researcher at Autonomía University of Madrid. His current project focuses on the Macedonian sanctuary of Dion and its evolution, which is linked to the historical development of the kingdom of Macedonia and, more specifically, the territory of Pieria. Previously, he was a Postdoctoral Researcher at Complutense University (2020-2022) and at Harvard University through Real Colegio Complutense (2018-2020). His PhD (with FPU Grant, 2013-2017) was entitled “*Epirus and Dodona: Paths and Communications around the Sanctuary*”. His main line of research is the analysis of politics and religion, primarily in cult spaces. A secondary line of study is Digital Humanities and its use in research and teaching.

Miriam A. Valdés Guía (MVG)

Professor of Ancient History since 2021 (Senior Lecturer since 2009). Miriam received her PhD from the Complutense University of Madrid (1999), enjoyed a pre-doctoral fellowship (1995–1998) and two postdoctoral fellowships in France and Italy (2000–2002), as well as a “Ramón y Cajal Contract” (2003-2005) at the UCM. She has directed several research projects and is currently leading a project titled “*Poverty, Marginalization and Citizenship in Classical Athens*” (PID2020-112790GB-I00). Since 2013, Miriam is Director of the Research Group “*Eschatia. Delimitación territorial y fronteras: el papel de la religión en los conflictos entre poleis*” (GI: 930100). Her research began with studying the relationship between politics and religion in Archaic Greece from the social and cultural history perspective. She has also researched women and religion in the ancient Greek world.

The Interview

Are you yourself a traveller like the topics in the volume?

DCH | Indeed. I have travelled a lot during my entire life. Everything began when I started to study at the university; it was then that I travelled more broadly, with trips to different countries. Interrail or hiking in the mountains are two of my favourite travel methods. Most of my trips have been focused on leisure, although I have done it too as a researcher.

CMM | I guess, for me, it is the same. I have always enjoyed travelling. When I was younger, I travelled mostly for leisure. Still, then, when I decided to follow the academic path, travel became an intellectual and professional necessity: I travelled to visit sites, attend conferences, and learn new things. Although I travel quite frequently nowadays, I must confess that I have not yet lost the excitement that I had during my first experiences: I always pack my small cabin luggage with few clothes and a good dose of genuine curiosity.

MVG | As for me, I am not a traveller right now, at least not regularly, but I was one, especially during my doctoral and postdoctoral studies in France and Italy.

How did you come up with the idea for this volume? Was it part of a research project and a natural outcome of it? Was it a case of shared interests aligning to make this volume happen?

CMM | The idea arose in 2019 when I landed as a postdoctoral researcher at the Complutense University of Madrid. At that time, I had just finished working on the revised version of my PhD thesis (*“Archaic and Classical Harbours of the Greek World”*, published by Archaeopress), and I was eager to begin a new project. When I joined the Research Group *Eschatia*,¹ based at Complutense University, I started to cherish the thought of a collective project capable of putting together the scientific interests of the different members of the group. Since both Diego Chapinal-Heras, who at that time was working at Harvard, and Miriam Valdés work on religion-related topics, we thought that “mobility” could be an interesting field of discussion and debate. Starting from there, we involved other members of *Eschatia* in this project –Domingo Plácido Suárez, M^a Cruz Cardete del Olmo and Aida Fernández Prieto–, sure that they would have contributed to fostering the discussion around movements and mobility in the ancient Greek world. Soon we realised that the topic was extremely multifaceted, so we shared a call for proposals to bring together different specialists. The idea was to provide the readers with a fresh and heterogeneous approach to the various facets of “movements”.

Was it synergy or independent work that delivered the volume? How did you work?

Group | We think both. Each scholar worked independently on their research; then, we worked together to shape the volume layout.

What were the pivotal moments in the process?

Group | At the beginning, we must confess that we did not know how to approach the topic of “mobility” satisfactorily. We soon realised that, given the complexity of the subject, we needed to aim for a representative (rather than exhaustive) study of the “movements around the ancient Greek world”. As soon as we realised that we wanted to offer the readers the opportunity to become acquainted with the various activities that prompted ancient Greeks to move from one place to another, the book’s structure spurred quite naturally. In other words, the pivotal moment was when we decided on the volume’s aim and layout.

Were there any surprises you encountered during research or assumptions you had to revise?

Group | We were already acquainted with the idea that movement was quite familiar in Antiquity and that the Greek world was not an exception in this sense. However, after having shared the call for proposals amongst other scholars and reviewed them, we realised how many shapes movement could take. As we tried to explain in the “Introduction” of *People on the Move across the Greek World*, movement was part of daily life and could vary in duration, be done in different ways or for different reasons; it could be individual or communitarian, voluntary or imposed, be recurrent or occur only once.

What is the most important thing you learned?

Group | We learned quite a lot of things. From a scientific perspective, we probably realised through the preparation of this volume that a more dynamic and socially integrated way of looking at mobility in Ancient Greece is needed. With this publication, we hope to have offered food for thought, but we

¹ <https://www.ucm.es/eschatia>.

are aware there is still much work to do. Additionally, regarding the editorial project, we learnt how to sketch, carry out, and bring to light a collective volume. For two of us – Chiara M. Mauro and Diego Chapinal-Heras – this was our first time as editors, so the entire process has been pivotal to realise how much hard work and patience lay behind the preparation of a collective volume.

What is the one thing you will remember the most?

MVG | I have particularly appreciated the teamwork with my fellow editors and the different and varied perspectives and themes from which to approach mobility in ancient Greece.

DCH | When we received the notification from the Press that the book was well received by the Press' reviewers.

CMM | I agree with my colleagues. If I had to choose a moment, I would certainly pick up the instant when we received the acceptance of the manuscript on behalf of the publisher. If I had to select an experience, I would undoubtedly remember the relaxed atmosphere in which we worked and prepared the publication.

The geography of contributors: the contributors are mostly scholars based in the Mediterranean. Was that coincidental? How did it happen? Did it work?

Group | Purely coincidental. We aimed to answer specific research questions so that we focused on the topics rather than on the scholars' workplace. Maybe the reason could be related to the fact that the main network of contacts of the three editors falls in the Mediterranean area, but this would not fully explain the situation. As we have said before, we launched a call for contributors, and the geography of the volume is primarily the result of the selection of the proposals we received. Better use of social media and other resources to disseminate the call for submissions could have probably mitigated this bias.

What would you want to go back and change?

Group | There is nothing in particular that we would like to go back and change. We know that every volume, every publication, is not an ultimate product but the reflection of one's research and consideration when the manuscript is submitted. However, since you drew our attention to it, having the opportunity, we would have tried to involve scholars from all continents.

What is the coolest place you sat and worked on the volume?

CMM | While I enjoy travelling a lot, I prefer writing and doing editorial work at home, where I have time and space to think and organise my thoughts. I have an office with a large desk to spread out all my working documents and notes. The light is perfect all year, and I always have a Moka pot at hand.

MVG | My desk in my summer house by the sea.

DCH | The final review of the last proofs: I did it during my stay at the Hardt Foundation in Geneva. This is an amazing place for scholarly work, one of the best for accomplishing the last step of the publication of a book.

What would you do if you were not a Classicist?

MVG | I do not know; maybe I would be a historian of another period or focus on literary studies (?). However, I do know what I am going to do when I retire: travel.

DCH | Surely a history teacher at a high school, although journalism has always seemed intriguing.

CMM | Tricky question. I have always dreamt of being a Classicist and working in Academia, so I have not considered other options. However, I am a thirsty reader, and I enjoy the writing process, so –even if I am aware that it is another kind of writing– I would have probably ended up being a novelist.