

Poverty and Vulnerability in Classical Antiquity: Gendered and Life-Cycle Approaches
Manchester Metropolitan University, April 27th & 28th 2023 (two-day conference)

We invite proposals for papers to this conference, hosted by Manchester Metropolitan University's History Research Centre, and the interdisciplinary Manchester Centre for Youth Studies. The conference aims to examine, and propose fresh perspectives on, aged and gendered experiences of poverty and vulnerability, linked to the life-cycle of households and families, across the Greek and Roman worlds.

Keynote speakers: Dr Violaine Sebillotte-Cuchet (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) and Dr Claire Holleran (Exeter University, U.K.)

The prospect of falling into, coping with, or escaping poverty in classical Antiquity was in huge part determined by the dynamics of age and gender, and changing household circumstances. We can draw clear observations about living conditions and the degree of vulnerability to the effects of poverty, on the one hand, and people's place in their individual or familial life cycle, on the other. A recent study published by the European Parliamentary Research Service has shown children to be the most vulnerable and at risk of poverty group across Europe today, while young people, in general, represent 10% of those at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion. Women, single parents, and large families are more exposed to poverty or social exclusion than other individuals in their age groups, while older people, especially women, rank among the most vulnerable groups in the population.

The nature of ancient economies would have made these groups even more vulnerable and exposed to economic and social insecurity and risk; an appreciation of such aged and gendered experiences of vulnerability is, therefore, crucial to a nuanced understanding of poverty in the Greek and Roman worlds. Research in this area has grown considerably in recent years, as evidenced by ground-breaking publications, though there remains work to be done on many aspects of this phenomenon, particularly around demography, youth, family, gender and the life cycle.

Our conference themes include, but are not restricted to:

- 'Adverse' childhood experiences of orphanhood, abandonment, trauma, pledging/sale, prostitution;
- Vulnerabilities inherent and experienced in forming or maintaining a household, early marriages;
- Widowhood at different ages, single motherhood; unanticipated caring responsibilities;
- Ill health, chronic ill health, and disability;
- Ageing, ageing without children or marriage, family conflicts, gendered situational differences.

This conference is part of the Marie-Sklodowska-Curie project "[Poverty, Vulnerability and Family in Ancient Greece](#)" and is supported by the Marie Curie grant, the [History Research Centre](#) at ManMet, and [MCYS](#).

Submission Guidelines:

Proposals, in English, to childrenandyouth@mmu.ac.uk by Friday 23rd September 2022. Please include a title and abstract (maximum 400 words) for a 30-minute presentation, with the author's full name, email address, and institutional affiliation. Please also state whether you plan to attend in person or remotely. A small fee of 65GBP will be payable, to help cover conference support costs (35 GBP for graduate students and those on precarious contracts or unaffiliated). All speakers will be asked to provide a c.5000-word draft in advance of the conference, for circulation among respondents and chairs.

Conference Organisers: [Dr Aida Fernández Prieto](#), MSC Fellow, ManMet and MCYS and [Dr April Pudsey](#), Reader in Roman History, ManMet & Head of History & Archaeology of Childhood, MCYS.

Conference website: <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/mcys/news/ancient-vulnerability/>

- (i) Lecerf, M. (2017). *Pauvreté, genre et cycle de vie. Figures de la pauvreté dans l'Union européenne*. EPRS.
- (ii) Brown, P. (2001). *Poverty and leadership in the late Roman Empire*. London-Hanover; Atkins, M., Osborne, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Poverty in the Roman world*. Cambridge; Galbois, E., Rougier-Blanc, S. (Eds.). (2014). *La pauvreté en Grèce ancienne. Formes, représentations, enjeux*. Bordeaux; Cecchet, L. (2015). *Poverty in Athenian public discourse. From the eve of the Peloponnesian War to the rise of Macedonia*. Stuttgart; Taylor, C. (2017). *Poverty, wealth and well-being. Experiencing penia in democratic Athens*. Oxford; Fernández Prieto, A. (2020). *Realidades e imágenes de la pobreza en la Atenas clásica*. PhD Thesis, UCM; Giammellaro, P. (2020). *Il mendicante nella Grecia antica: teoria e modelli*. Brescia; Helmer, É. (Dir.). (2020). *Mendiants et mendicité en Grèce ancienne*. Paris; Courrier, C. & J.C. Magalhães de Oliveira (2022). (Eds.), *Ancient History from Below*. Routledge.