

Preface

We are very pleased and honoured to publish the Proceedings of the 29th International Congress of Papyrology in the Series “I Quaderni della Scuola Superiore ISUFI” of the University of Salento. They will be published in Open Access and in a limited number of printed volumes.

The Congress took place from 28 July to 3 August 2019 in the city of Lecce, with sessions held at the University’s new complex Studium 2000, and the welcome ceremony and plenary session at the Teatro Apollo, which was kindly put at our disposal by the Comune di Lecce. Over 400 people attended the Congress, including scholars, students and accompanying persons, and we can certainly say that it was more than a pleasant gathering of colleagues, friends and young scholars. The enthusiasm of scholars who came from all over the world to the birthland of Ennius, the Father of Latin Literature, was and remains for us a source of great satisfaction and fond memories.

In the summer 2016 we asked the Board of the Association Internationale de Papyrologues, meeting in Barcelona, to host the Congress in the Salentine city, considering this event as a recognition for the commitment made by the Centro since its foundation (in 1992) to research in Papyrology and Egyptology. Our thanks go to the members of the Board, who accepted our request and trusted us.

The Congress would not have been possible without the support of many colleagues, volunteers, and friends. We are extremely grateful, first and foremost, to the University of Salento, that from the beginning supported our decision to host the Congress, and to the Comune di Lecce. We are particularly grateful to the colleagues of the Scientific Committee, with whom we had fruitful exchanges during the preparation of the Congress, which led, among other things, to the decision to hold only four sessions a day. A special grateful mention goes to the Organizing Committee and the Congress’ Staff, whose youthful and enthusiastic efficiency was highly appreciated by the participants. We furthermore thank the ISUFI (Istituto Superiore Universitario di Formazione Interdisciplinare) of the University of Salento, which made the printing of the Proceedings possible, the Centro Internazionale per lo Studio dei Papiri Ercolanesi “Marcello Gigante”, for generously sponsoring the opening day reception, which celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, as well as the Associazione Italiana di Cultura Classica, and Luca Trombi, valued supporter of the Soknopaiou Nesos Project (our Centro’s archaeological mission in Egypt), for their financial contribution to the organization of the event.

The opening ceremony was a perfect occasion for the newly elected Rector of the University, Professor Fabio Pollice, to introduce himself and officially welcome our scholarly community, assuring the Congress of his presence and support.

During the Congress, the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, awarded the Centro di Studi Papirologici with a medal, to mark his appreciation for the high cultural value of this international and scientific event.

During the week of the Congress three exhibitions were organized in Lecce: *Soknopaiou Nesos black and white (and beyond)*, by Bruno Bazzani and Paola Davoli (in the Museo Papirologico); ... *dove la conoscenza si Mostra: rarità bibliografiche e documentarie dalla biblioteca*, by Gianluca

Lorenzo and Rita Sebaste (in the Biblioteca T. Pellegrino, Rare Book Library); *In nomine Domini... Le Pergamene del Monastero di San Giovanni tra storia e fede* (in the Monastero delle Benedettine). Congress participants were also welcomed by Maestro Giuseppe Manisco at the Museo delle Macchine di Leonardo Da Vinci in Galatone.

Two other exhibitions were organized by colleagues in Naples and Florence: *Mostra dei Papiri Ercolanesi con Visita alle sezioni Manoscritti e Rari* by Fabrizio Diozzi (in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli); *Tesori letterari nei papiri della Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, by Rosario Pintaudi (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence).

Organization of the papers

In the Congress week the papers were presented in thematic sessions, which were accompanied by workshops, panels and posters. A single plenary session was dedicated to the discussion of the *Future of Editing Papyri: Aspects and Problems*. A total of 285 papers and posters were presented, of which 93 are published here.

The editors of the Proceedings decided to order the papers alphabetically by the name of the author (or of the first co-author) so as to facilitate the search within the volumes. The published papers have been previously submitted to anonymous reviewers.

The works presented at the Congress covered all aspects of Papyrology. Seventeen sessions were devoted to documentary papyri, five to literary papyri, five to Herculaneum papyri, two to juridical papyri, one to archaeology and papyri, two to Palaeography, two to Christian papyri, three to unpublished collections, one to the history of papyrology, one to Islamic documentary papyri, two to magic papyri, two to experimental sciences, two to conservation and restoration, one to Latin papyri, one to new technologies, two to Coptic papyri; two to *ostraka* and other supports; one to Arabic Papyrology; two to linguistics of the papyri; two to paraliterary papyri. The most relevant innovations came from the sessions devoted to unpublished collections, to new technologies, and to experimental sciences. There is still a lot to do with papyri preserved in various institutions, while the importance of new technologies for the improvement of our research on the materiality of papyri was further confirmed. The plenary session *Future of Editing Papyri: Aspects and Problems* allowed for profitable discussions about the systems of publishing papyri (including Demotic, Arabic and Coptic ones), the access to collections and, more generally, the future of Papyrology.

To conclude, we are thankful to all the scholars, the real protagonists of the Congress, who made the event possible through their participation.

Unfortunately, the terrible pandemic that has afflicted the whole world since 2020 has delayed the printing of these Proceedings: we are glad to finally share them with the scholars of our discipline in the spirit of the *amicitia papyrologorum* that should always guide our work.

Lecce, April 14, 2021

Mario Capasso
Paola Davoli
Natascia Pellé