



Faculty of Humanities

Proposal for a research group in the Faculty of Humanities

1. Name of the research group

Classical Receptions. An Interdisciplinary Research Group

2. Coordinator

Prof. dr. Wyger Velema

3. Members of the research group

drs. E.M. Mulders

dr. F.R.E. Blom

dr. J. Bos

dr. L.A. Dirven

dr. T.A.M. Smidt van Gelder - Fontaine

dr. P.S. Gerbrandy

prof.dr. J.W. van Henten

R.G.R. Hunsucker MA

Lisa Kattenberg

prof.dr. B. Kempers

dr. M.M. Lok

dr. D.K.W. van Miert

dr. J. Oddens

E.J. de la Porte MA

dr. D. Rijser

dr. J.A.T. Rock

J. Rotmans MA

dr. M. Rutjes

prof.dr. W.R.E. Velema

dr. M.A. Weststeijn

dr. A.A. Witte

External Members:

A. Weststeijn (KNIR)

I. Nijenhuis (Huygens ING)



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4. Description of the research programme of the research group (max. 400 words)

The research group here proposed aims to study the reception of classical, that is Greek and Roman, antiquity in Europe from the Renaissance until the present. The relationship between the classics and later European culture has traditionally been studied in terms of the transmission of ‘the classical tradition’. For a long time, scholarship has primarily focused on the direct ways in which the literatures, histories, and cultures of the ancient Greek and Roman Mediterranean have been taken up by individuals, groups, and institutions from the Renaissance to the present. More recently, however, scholarly interest has shifted away from the transmission of the classical tradition to the study of classical reception or succession: it has become more interested in the ways subsequent ages have appropriated and imagined ancient Greece and Rome in their own image and have struggled to reinvent the classical past, caught between those who rushed to embrace this past and those who disowned it altogether. This new approach to the classics has in recent years become institutionalized in important book series such as *Classical Presences* (Oxford UP) and *Classics after Antiquity* (Cambridge UP) and in prestigious scholarly journals such as the *Classical Receptions Journal* (Oxford UP). The research group here proposed intends to follow this international development and will bring together scholars interested in studying the relationship between the classics and later times from the perspective of reception rather than tradition. It aims to study the complicated but centrally important process of classical reception in Europe from the Renaissance to the present from a broad and interdisciplinary perspective, combining the expertise of historians, art historians, neo-Latinists, philosophers and historians of literature. The members of this research group will meet on a regular basis in a research seminar. They will also organize a biannual conference. The first of these international conferences, entitled ‘Imagining the Ancients: Republics and the Classical Past, 1500-1800’, will take place on November 14 and 15, 2013, at the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome, an institution with which the research group will closely co-operate in the future. The second international conference, on the theme of ‘Ancients and Moderns’, will be organized in the Fall of 2015. The proceedings of these conferences will be published. The research group will also generate a steady stream of books and articles on the theme of classical reception by individual group members, as well as a number of PhD theses. Once firmly established, it will apply for outside money from both NWO and the ERC.

5. Envisaged results (max. 100 words)

This research group will stimulate interdisciplinary interaction by organizing a seminar and a series of biannual conferences. The results of the conferences will be published. The members of the group will publish both articles and monographs in the field of classical reception. In the somewhat longer run, applications for outside money (NWO, ERC) are envisaged.

6. Work plan and time schedule (max. 100 words)



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The research seminar will start as soon as the research group is formally recognized. The first international conference is already planned for November, 2013. The second international conference will be held in the Fall of 2015. As soon as the group is recognized, a detailed inventory of the individual publishing plans of the group members in the field of classical reception will be drawn up. Once this initial phase is over, members of the group will start applying for outside money (academic year 2014-2015)

7. Societal relevance

The success of exhibitions on aspects of the classical world, the bestselling status of historical novels set in the ancient Greek and Roman Mediterranean and the production of blockbuster movies on ancient themes all testify to the fact that the classics generate a substantial interest among the general public. Yet this public interest has so far largely existed in isolation from the august scholarship on the classical tradition. By choosing the theme of classical receptions as its focus, this research group hopes to contribute to the integration of public interest in and scholarship on the fate of the classics in post-classical times. By demonstrating how successive generations, from the Renaissance until the present day, have used the heritage of antiquity to address their own problems and needs, this research group will show that the classical past has remained an active and living presence in the modern world.
