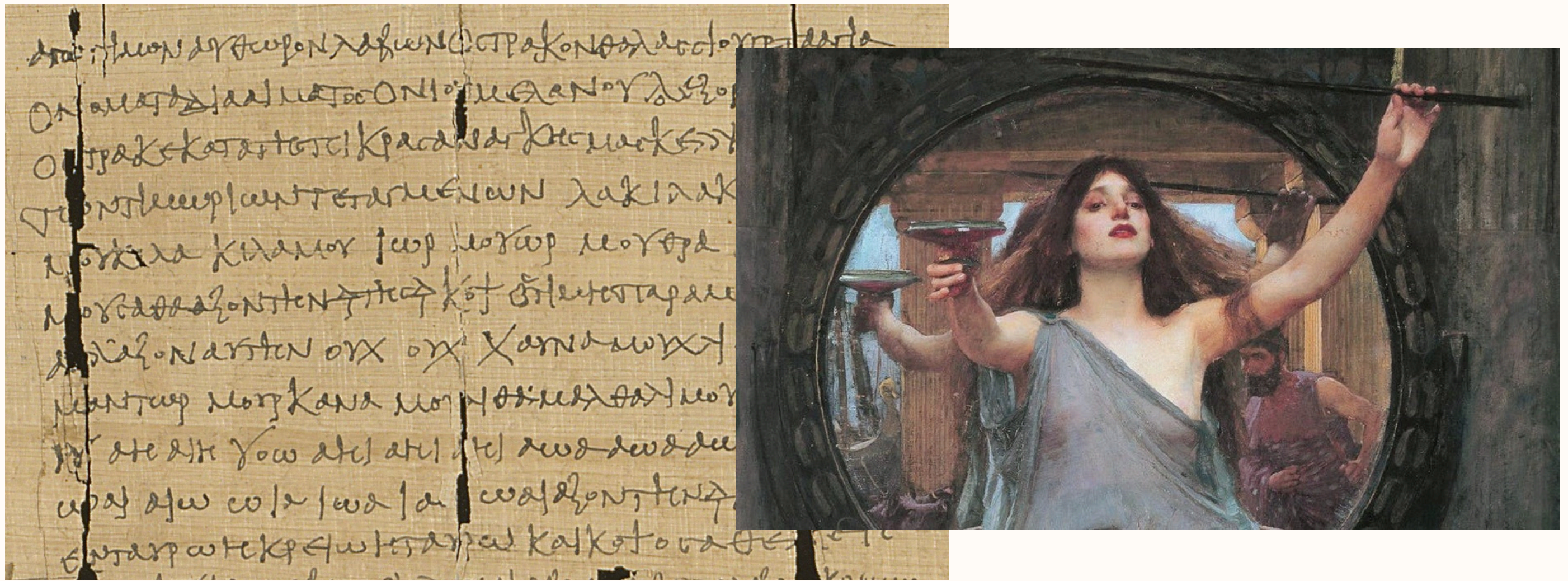


Dr. Matthew Chaldekas
University of Tübingen

Date: Thursday, September 18
Time: 3:30 to 5:00 pm
Place: Ortega Hall 313

Asclepiades of Samos and the Metapoetics of Magic



Asclepiades of Samos was a founding author of Greek literary epigram at the beginning of the Hellenistic period (323–30 BCE). His surviving verses consist mainly of witty love poems, whose influence on later authors has been well documented. This presentation examines Asclepiades' use of magic not just as a realistic element within his erotic scenarios, but also as a metaphor for his own act of poetic creation. Love magic is already documented in the earliest literary text of the Greek canon, Homer's *Iliad*, but its importance and pervasiveness in ancient religion can be thoroughly investigated using inscribed amulets and the spells from the Greek magical papyri. Although the birth of literary epigrams is often traced back to the copying and collection of dedicatory stone inscriptions, the influence of magical inscriptions has not yet been properly considered. This presentation on the metapoetic function of magic in Asclepiades' poetry offers new insights into the material and cultural origins of the epigrammatic genre.



Dr. Matthew Chaldekas is a scholar of Greek literature and philosophy, whose research draws attention to social forces in antiquity and the history of ideas. His published articles cover topics such as gender and ethnicity in antiquity, ancient medicine, and the history of philosophy. He is the editor of a special issue of the journal *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* on Hellenistic aesthetics (2024) and a collected volume on the poetics of *ekphrasis* (with Irmgard Männlein, 2025). His first monograph, a study of social vision in the poetry of Theocritus, is set to appear in early 2026.