ABSTRACTS

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIETY IN PLATO:

Plato on becoming a perfect society - Vilius Bartninkas (University of Cambridge)
One of the most conspicuous aspects of Platonic statecraft in the Republic is its apparent silence on legislation and the ways to establish a virtuous society in the realm of coming-to-be. When Plato returns to this issue, he begins with a question of whether ‘a god or some men’ are the cause of communities (Laws, 624a1-2). Plato asserts the divine cause without clarifying, however, the meaning of his position. How the gods can initiate a society? What is the value of divine participation in political origins? And why Platonic political philosophy should be concerned with theology in the first place? To resolve these questions I will turn to a rather unappreciated Plato’s attempt to bridge the gap between the Republic and the Laws as found in the Timaeus-Critias. On the next day after the events of the Republic, Socrates expresses a desire to see his perfect city ‘in motion’, interacting and competing with other communities (Tim., 19b8-c4). Critias proposes to tell a story about ancient Athens and Atlantis, two cities that were created by the gods, reached perfection, confronted each other and eventually vanished. Critias goes beyond Socrates’ wishes by positioning the requested motions within the context of politogony, where the gods play a crucial role. A majority of authors has considered the Timaeus-Critias to be ‘uncritical’ engagement with political theory, if not a mere ‘pastiche’ (e.g. Broadie 2012: 171; also Gill 1980 and Vidal-Naquet 2007). My paper will reevaluate the status of Plato’s project (a1) by analysing the patterns of political origins and (a2) examining these societies in the light of Plato’s criteria for being a virtuous community. My paper will also attempt to show (b1) why the gods are needed for becoming a perfect society and (b2) what kind of political role is left for human beings in the Timaeus-Critias.

Recreating Platonic agora: The unity of Meno and socialized conception of episteme - Ni Yu (University of Edinburgh)
The fact that Plato uniquely employs the form of dramatic dialogue where various characters participate in philosophical discussion is intriguing although it seems to have increased the difficulty in reconstructing the philosopher’s thoughts. The recently trending attempt to transfer Platonic dialogues completely into sets of propositions remains unsatisfactory because it overlooks the mutual relation of society and conception, and also the complex relation between Plato’s textual presentation and thoughts. It is hard to deny that the statements of the characters including Socrates are not only decided by Plato’s philosophical convictions but also by considerations of the conversations from historical, literary, didactical or social aspects. The form of dramatic dialogue also implies that additionally Plato’s thoughts are also determined by the arrangements of the dialogue as a whole. Unlike live philosophical conversations, it is possibly all up to the author to decide whether the oeuvre can eventually reach a positive answer to the thematic questions, or to arrange the specific interlocutors for different scenes. One difficulty is concerning the relation of Plato and his intended readers in one society. I cast doubt upon the general view that we often treat the character Socrates as main speaker to act as Plato’s mouthpiece. This view ignores the significance of social circumstances of Platonic dialogues. Taking Meno as a good example, I argue that the key conception of episteme in
the dialogue is not only in accordance with social usages of ancient Greek society but also correspondent to contemporary construction of understanding in epistemology. Defending the unity of Meno without merely focusing on arguments from one well-known character is a method that I name as recreating agora. It can demonstrate the socialisation of Plato's epistemological conception and philosophical value of unity of a philosophical drama.

**CHARACTERISATION IN PLATO:**

What can be learnt about society’s understanding of depression from Plato’s presentation of Apollodorus? - Natalie Enright (University of Leeds)

Apollodorus appears only in Phaedo and Symposium and has traditionally been branded by scholars crazy, emotionally volatile and a poor philosopher. It has even been suggested that Symposium cannot be expected to contain the deepest insights of Platonic thought simply because it is narrated by Apollodorus. I will suggest that this is a simplistic view of Plato’s character and that Apollodorus’ interactions with others may provide useful insight into societal treatment of people displaying symptoms of depression. I will begin by examining the opening of Symposium. While Apollodorus makes reference to his nickname, ‘the maniac’, an examination of Symposium 173a-e shows that the traits displayed are more akin to depression than mania. The irritability and low self-esteem, evident throughout this exchange, are typical symptomatic markers of depression and not associated with manic conditions. From this very short exchange, it becomes clear that Apollodorus is accustomed to his comments being dismissed by his peers, which could give insight into how people displaying these symptoms may have been treated in ancient society. I will then turn to Phaedo and Apollodorus’ inconsolable grief. I will explore what is thought to have constituted excessive displays of grief in ancient Athens and whether or not Plato’s depiction is supposed to suggest that Apollodorus is grieving excessively. In doing so, I aim to show that his distress at the death of Socrates could reveal that he is a more able philosopher than he has previously been given credit for, but, once again, he is met with rolled eyes from his companions. Overall, I will suggest that Plato could have been presenting Apollodorus as having philosophic potential, but due to his particular quirks of character, he is dismissed and labeled crazy by his contemporaries; a response that appears to have pervaded from ancient society into existing scholarship.

Vicious and Idle: Plato’s Use of Public Opinion in his Characterisation of the Philosopher - Trinidad Silva (University College London)

Often enough, Plato’s own characterisation of the philosopher emerges as a way to respond to popular conceptions and representations of the intellectual in Athenian society. This is clear in the Apology, where Socrates defends himself against the old accusations that depict him as a reputed sophos. Particularly in book 6 of the Republic Plato articulates his greatest defence of the philosopher against two major charges: being vicious and being idle. Voicing what seems to be a common view among Athenians, this representation of the philosopher is raised by Adeimantus' as an objection to Socrates' proposal of a philosopher-king. Surprisingly enough, instead of dismissing the allegations as false, Socrates admits ‘that what they say is true’ (Rep. 487d10) and incorporates these two strands of criticism into his argument. In this paper I propose that the popular depiction of the philosopher as
being vicious and idle plays a significant role for Plato's own characterisation of the philosopher. Plato is allowed to diagnose the philosopher's alienation from public affairs and to define and legitimate his own ideas on philosophy by means of comparison with other intellectual and educational models.

The presentation of society in Xenophon:

Socrates, scientists and society in Xenophon's Memorabilia - Matthew Shelton (University of St. Andrews)

In this paper I explain how Socrates uses psychological simile to characterise his philosophical opponents in Xenophon’s Memorabilia. The apotreptic function of this characterisation in the apologia (1.1-3) is clarified by Socrates’ elaboration and amplification of its psychological terms in other parts of the work, most notably in the discussion of madness in book three (3.9.6-7) where he deliberately allows popular beliefs about common knowledge to constrain his vocabulary. Socrates’ deprecation of his rivals culminates in his description of Anaxagoras as a mad scientist towards the end the work (4.7.6-7). Near the beginning of the Memorabilia (1.1.13-15), Xenophon identifies the natural philosophers as behaving like madmen (μαινομένοις ὁ μοίως) towards one another (providing a description of mad people in comparison). This characterisation depends both on the radical differences between their views as well as the distinction between divine and human knowledge. The controversial opinions of the scientists have to do with objects of uncommon knowledge in which human consensus is impossible while mad people exhibit extreme behaviour within a common social context. In book 3, Socrates provides what looks like a definition of madness (3.9.6-7). On my interpretation of the passage, the Socratic conception of madness is contrasted with the popular description. The crowd recognise what madness looks like and describe it as making a mistake in areas of common knowledge. Socrates, however, is reluctant to commit to a positive account of mania and instead provides an approximation (madness is opposed to wisdom and ‘nearest’ to special forms of ignorance). In the same way, Socrates is usually reluctant to use madness to characterise his opponents directly. However, his use of approximation implies that his view is compatible with the popular view and, near the end of the work (4.7.6-7), he targets Anaxagoras who ignores common facts when he identifies e.g. the sun as fire, and perhaps it is this fact, above all, which, for Socrates, identifies him not as mad-like, but actually mad.

‘A law with eyes for men’: Xenophon’s Cyropaedia and the tyrant’s role in the foundation of society - Alex Ferron (Swansea University)

Xenophon’s Cyropaedia is increasingly being taken more seriously amongst a scholarly audience who are beginning to acknowledge Xenophon’s contribution to the political discourse of the 4th century. However, there remains little agreement over the purpose of the work; is Xenophon’s Cyrus intended to serve as a paradigm of the ideal ruler, or, is he a model of a flawed despot intended to be avoided rather than emulated? Scholars who offer darker interpretations of the text base their readings on both Cyrus’ ‘Machiavellian’ reforms to the Persian constitution, which effectively placed the king above the law, and the controversial epilogue of the Cyropaedia in which Cyrus’ empire becomes corrupt following his death. This paper will argue against the ironic readings of the Cyropaedia which
have dominated the scholarship on the work following Strauss’ reading of the text in the mid-20th century by offering a comparative reading of the Cyropaedia and Plato’s Politicus and Nomoi. In both Platonic works and the Cyropaedia there are remarkable similarities in thought, particularly concerning the relationship between the ideal king and the laws of his society. All of these works play with the notion that the ideal statesman may consider himself free from conventional notions of just conduct in his pursuit of the perfect constitution. The presentation of this concept in both the Politicus and the Nomoi is complementary to Xenophon’s engagement with the idea in the Cyropaedia and can help us to understand Cyrus’ seemingly contradictory conduct in the late narrative of the text. Furthermore, it will be argued that reading the Cyropaedia’s concluding chapters in light of these ideas serves to demonstrate that the ‘benevolent despot’ Xenophon presents is consistent with Platonic thought regarding the development of society and the true statesman, therefore, reinforcing Cyrus’ status as a paradigm of ideal leadership.

**PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS**

**A Trojan Horse for Philosophy: The Case of Menemachus** - Theofanis Tsiampokalos (University of Athens, Greece and at the University of Zurich, Switzerland)

Plutarch appears to believe that philosophers are in some way excluded from the developments in the society of his time, as he notes that most people are not willing to follow their philosophical precepts. At the same time, Plutarch notices that some public speakers, known otherwise as sophists, are becoming increasingly popular, because they give people pleasure, although they do not say anything useful. However, according to Plutarch, only philosophers can say something useful and, in this way, benefit society. Given that philosophy was conceived by him as an activity with a political end, the social exclusion of philosophers is in fact a crucial obstacle, which, for the sake of society, needs to be overcome. In other words, Plutarch has to find a way to give philosophy its lost popularity. This effort seems to be hidden behind his words in the Political Precepts. This compilation of advices is addressed to Menemachus, an upper-class young man wishing to follow a public career in his hometown politics. Nonetheless, Menemachus had until then received neither philosophical nor political training. It is Plutarch’s chance to help a promising man not only to be successfully integrated in philosophy, but also to become aware of the need and the way this philosophy will be integrated to politics.

**Aristotle on Socrates’ Trial** - João Diogo Loureiro (Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal)

The strained relationship between politics & philosophy is a recurring theme in Plato’s dialogues and one of the most important for a sound understanding of his overall project. Socrates’ trial and death, the episode that best exemplifies that tension, is discussed in many parts of the corpus. There is an acknowledgment, notably in the so-called late dialogues, that the Athenians had legitimate political reasons for indicting Socrates. This awareness makes it all the more urgent for Plato to establish the proper place for philosophy in the city. Leo Strauss and his students have done an important job in recovering Plato’s teaching on this subject, but comparatively they haven’t paid as much attention to what Aristotle has to say on the matter. This paper aims at being a humble contribution to Aristotelian scholarship on the issue under discussion. Aristotle never mentions Socrates’ trial in his work, but if
he did, what would he say about it? I will try to figure what his opinion would be based primarily on what he tells us about the good citizen. Do philosophers have a place in political society or does their allegiance to truth irremediably severs them from community, making it impossible for them to endorse a constitution they know is imperfect? Chapter III.4 of the Politics is here of utmost importance. I will end by briefly considering the mysterious absence of philosophy from the curricula in the best city presented in Books VII-VIII. The relevance of the subject of our inquiry for this question should be obvious: if the philosopher is a troublemaker, the city will not encourage philosophical thinking — but on the other hand, it cannot dispense with it. Book VIII cuts off abruptly, but, based on it and the preceding one, I’ll try to sketch an answer.

**EPICUREAN PHILOSOPHY:**

Inclusion and Exclusion in Epicurus’ views on Society - Jonathan Griffiths (University of Heidelberg, Germany)

This paper is divided into two main sections. Firstly I want to examine the reasons that Epicurus in his philosophy eschewed so radically most aspects of conventional civic society. Secondly I want to argue that Epicurus envisioned his own Athenian Garden as an alternative micro-society, built upon the foundational Epicurean ethics of friendship, and that only through philosophical instruction could social change be conceived and properly implemented. Epicurus is famous for his forthright rejection of political life. His canonical injunction to ‘live unnoticed’ (λάθε βιώσας) was taken by many later critics to endorse a total avoidance of civic responsibility (Roskam 2007). The Epicurean wise man should abstain from social affairs unless there is some external intervention, as Seneca puts it (de otio 3.2), on the grounds that it causes mental anxieties and exposes him to political over-ambitiousness and greed (cf. DRN 2.59-77). The Epicurean is therefore uninterested in social participation, social conformity and social reform in any orthodox sense. Politics and public business are a ‘prison’ from which the Epicurean must ‘liberate’ himself through the study of philosophy (SV 58). However, in a way which is distinct from Platonic, Academic and Stoic schools, Epicurus promotes an alternative community of like-minded thinkers in his own Athenian Garden (Clay 2009). This quasi-society, which included women, children and slaves, constitutes both a retreat from conventional institutions of the city (e.g. the law-courts, the public assembly) and implements a radically different social order in itself, one which is crucially oriented around the discussion and memorization of Epicurus’ key teachings. Although he rejects most mainstream societal practices, Epicurus seems to believe in the ability of philosophy to bring about social change, albeit through an elite philosophical education which is unperturbed by the wishes of the majority (cf. SV 29, DRN 2.1-61).

Who were the sapientes reges? A comparison between Posidonius (F 284 EK = Sen. Epist. 90, 3-6) and Lucretius DRN 5, 1105-12 - Nicoletta Bruno (University of Bari, Italy)

The silence of Seneca about the Posidonian work employed as a source for Epist. 90, 3-6 does not prevent us from conjecturing that Posidonius had rewored the Histories of Polybius, in particular 6, 5, 7-12 and 6, 7, 6-8. Furthermore, it is likely that Posidonius, in turn, inspired the description of the
early history of mankind by Diodorus (1, 8). Seneca revised the Posidonian thought about corruption among men and need for the intervention of sapientes reges (90, 3-5). Posidonius, however, declared that without the wisdom of the sapientes reges, the desire to increase wealth would have been degenerated into corruption and violence, and men would have been stuck in a feral state of decay. The first men suffered the diastrophé ('perversion'), but their violent impulses were repressed by the sapientes reges. In 5, 1105-1112, Lucretius narrates how men, who were “pre-eminent in genius and strong in mind”, improved the quality of life. Kings became the symbols of a natural meritocracy: they founded cities and distributed flocks and lands. No negative consequence emerges from this innovation. This paper aims to provide an answer to these questions: who were the meliores? Moreover, can Posidonius’ theory of monarchy in Epist. 90 be a source for Lucretius? I argue that Seneca must have been aware of DRN in his analysis of Posidonian doctrine, and it is easy to assume that he used Lucretius to translate “in Latin terms” the thought of the Greek philosopher. Therefore, I suppose that Lucretius knew the Posidonian theory, even if he chose to provide his own version, which could be the Epicurean answer in opposition to the Stoic conception of the world. The similarity of content with the texts of Hesiod, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, Dicaearchus is obvious, as it is highly likely that Posidonian theory is a reworked version, with some differences, of the text of Polybius.

Unusual Epicureans: The Acceptance of Philodemus and Siro by Roman Elite Society - John Izzo
(University of Notre-Dame, Indiana, USA)

Despite the discovery of the Villa of Papyri, far too little serious scholarly attention has been aimed at understanding the history of Philodemus, Siro, and their philosophical school. Scholars have historically taken for granted their acceptance amongst the Roman elite as erudite and honorable philosophers – yet this acceptance is an incredible anomaly in the intellectual history of Rome. Despite working under the Romans, a group with long-held distrust and even hatred toward the Epicurean philosophical school, these men were able to succeed where other Epicureans in the Italian peninsula had failed. An analysis of the motives and means by which these Epicureans achieved their coveted position in Roman society is therefore vital to better understanding Epicurean philosophy, Roman intellectual history, and Roman society.

Rather than gaining acceptance by mere chance, evidence from both the Herculanean papyri, as well as literary sources demonstrate that Philodemus and his associates actively manipulated their philosophy both in content and form to become more acceptable to the Roman elites. Avoiding the uncultured and dogmatic practices of the Latin Epicureans, members of this philosophical circle styled themselves as erudite scholars and writers – men able to discuss and teach not only their own school’s tenets, but also introduce their students to the whole of the history of Greek philosophy and literature. Moreover, they actively modelled their approach towards patronage to mirror those relationships found between Hellenistic rulers and their court philosophers. In other words, Italy’s most influential Epicurean school and their teachings must necessarily be understood in the context of their interaction with elite Roman society. Through this interaction, they created a Roman breed of Epicureanism which would have an unparalleled impact on the philosophical and literary works of the Augustan period.
Religious life and intellectual safety in Sextus Empiricus - Máté Veres (Central European University, Hungary)

Sextus Empiricus famously advocates a conformist approach to leading one's life. The Sextan sceptic, having suspended on matters of investigation, lives a life based on appearances deriving from various traditions, communities, and professions. On a familiar reading, this position excludes the kind of beliefs that are generally considered to be necessary for the examined life advocated by dogmatic philosophers, but also for a recognisably ordinary life. In this paper, I present a case study concerning the Sextan attitude towards dogmatic theology and religious conventions. I start by looking at two passages where Sextus outlines his overall approach to theology (PH III.2, M IX. 49). These passages represent a consistent agenda: the Pyrrhonean opposes dogmatic theology due to a general opposition to dogmatism, and takes part in religious cult insofar as it is possible without rash assent. What is more, this position is "safer" than that of those who philosophise otherwise. Then I go on to tackle two worries concerning this position. First, one might object that Sextus will turn out to be inescapably disingenuous. Second, one might argue that the emphasis on the "safety" of the Sextan position directly responds to the discomfort arising from a possible charge of insincerity: being aware of the irreligious potential of his arguments, Sextus advocates conformism in order not to give away any sign of disbelief. According to an influential response, this need not have been a worry for Sextus, since religion in the ancient pagan context was understood as focused on orthopraxy. I shall argue that, while this response is unsuccessful, both objections miss their target. Alternatively, it is possible to connect Sextus' appeal to safety with his overall project of suspension and tranquility. I end by showing how this alternative militates against any reading on which Pyrrhonism is essentially conformist.

The Pythagorean Hetaireia - Caterina Pello (University of Cambridge)

The Greek term 'hetaireia' denotes a club, association, comradeship or brotherhood, and is thus primarily attributed a political meaning. The hetairoi are partisans, associates or clubmen, but may also be seen, in a more general and non-political sense, as friends, companions, followers and pupils. Needless to point out that traditionally, given the predominantly political function of these organisations, the ancient hetaireiai are considered men-only clubs. In this paper, I will focus on the Pythagorean hetaireiai, and more specifically on the unusually large role women hold in these communities. The purpose is to detect which characteristics make these organisations so unique as to open their doors to the female gender. First, I will outline the distinguishing features of the Greek, and in particular Athenian, hetaireia. Second, I will turn to Pythagoreanism and see whether, and if so to what extent, these traits may also be detected in this particular type of communities. What will be argued is that in antiquity there are two different kinds of hetaireia: a hetaireia stricto sensu, which is merely political, and a hetaireia lato sensu, which has a wider influence on its members' lives. Athenian clubs belong to the former category, Pythagorean communities to the latter. This may therefore be the reason behind the inclusion of women in the Pythagorean philosophical circles: these associations do not exclusively affect the adherents' public activities, but also their private lives. As a consequence, women are not part of the hetaireia because the latter is a political club (stricto sensu) and they also hold public offices, but rather are part of the hetaireia because the latter embraces all aspects of its
members’ everyday life (lato sensu) – including the private sphere, which is women’s sphere. Overall, this paper aims to explore the distinctive traits of the Pythagorean communities as an invaluable source for the study of the role women in the Greco-Roman society as well as our understanding of the social and intellectual dynamics more generally characterising ancient philosophical sects.

Emperor Julian: A Neoplatonic defence of religious pluralism in 4th Century Rome - Kit Tempest-Walters (Royal Holloway, University of London)
The question of the relationship between society and philosophy is never more vital in ancient philosophy as it is among the Neoplatonists, who believe that excellent institutions can help man to cultivate virtues and eventually enable him to contemplate the divine. Among the Neoplatonists, Emperor Julian was the only one who had the power to translate this philosophical conviction into practice, ruling over the Roman Empire in 4th Century AD. His philosophical ideas were deeply indebted to Iamblichus, as he believed that the divine and transcendent principle of the One could be accessed through symbols found in nature, which included gods, heroes and daemons. Since he believed that each religion presented different symbolic pathways to the same destination (the One), Julian was confident that different religions could co-exist in harmony. Himself a pagan, Julian won favour with the Jewish citizens that he ruled over by realizing his vision of society as a context for the spiritual attainment of every citizen in spite of differences in their religious doctrine. However, Julian’s harmonious state was threatened by the rise of the Christians, who were attempting to become the dominant force in Rome and to stamp out religious pluralism in favour of the worship of Christ. This talk aims to convey how, in the treatise ‘Against the Galileans’, Julian defended his vision for diverse forms of worship in society through both a detailed critique of Christianity and a defence of the Platonic paganism inspired by Iamblichus. This will not only be of historical interest, but will also aim to provoke questions regarding the possibility of philosophical grounds for religious harmony in society, particularly in the light of Julian’s arguments relating to philosophical symbols.

PHILOSOPHY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE:

Being a politician in philosophy. Seneca’s self-awareness and civic exhortation to spiritual research. - Carlotta Montagna (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy)
Whereas recent scholarship has focused on Seneca’s divergent and sometimes contradictory trends, with this paper I aim to shed light on Seneca’s self-awareness as a politician in philosophy and civic vocation. As we read in De vita beata, Seneca does not consider himself a wise man. Actually, as I mean to demonstrate, Seneca is not even a philosopher tout-court. Rather, in his Epistulae morales, Seneca represents himself as a politician doing philosophy, who strives for his moral growth coherently and chooses to carry out his commitment to the common good by virtue of his previous philosophical studies in spite of Nero’s despotism. Thus, Seneca fulfills his peculiar need to offer a civic contribution in a universalistic perspective even after his decessus, despite his commitment to otium (62AD). In this regard, Seneca’s sources deserve close attention. I do not cast doubts on Seneca’s closeness to Stoicism. Nevertheless, it is meaningful that in Seneca’s view the seeds of knowledge may
be everywhere. Hence, through his quotations and enstrophic play of interlocutors, in his writing Seneca encourages the creation of a virtual academy of inquirers across the centuries, where nobody is a privileged authority a priori and everyone is called to take part in the social disclosure of the truth with the aim of benefitting others’ moral improvement. Finally, I focus on Seneca’s transcendental approach to his addressee, in that the Epistulae morales are the only classical work explicitly dedicated to posterity. In light of his spiritual concept of aristocracy, Seneca turns to everyone who is willing to take the long and upright route towards the achievement of the light of virtus, thereby actualizing one’s potential good so as to, ultimately, contribute to the common progress. Through his metaphorical images, Seneca shows not only his rhetorical expressivity, but also the importance of persuasive deixis in Stoic pedagogy. Besides, Seneca conveys to us his parenetic lesson. In fact, Seneca persuades us to regard spiritual research as life, conferring sense upon our existence inside human society.

Domitian’s Expulsions of Philosophers. Philosophy and Aristocratic Sociability. - Clément Bady
(Université de Nanterre-Paris 10 and Maison de l’Archéologie et de l’Ethnologie, France)
This paper aims to reinterpret the Domitian’s expulsions of philosophers from Rome that occurred between the years AD 85 and 95, taking into account of the network theory and the notion of sociability and through three examples of relationships between Greek and Roman elites: Plutarch and Arulenus Rusticus, Artemidorus and Pliny the Younger, Apollonius and Lucius Telesinus. As intellectual crisis and major political event commented by many sources and by contemporaries such as Pliny the Younger, Tacitus or Plutarch, these expulsions of Philosopher caused the forced exile of many renowned philosophers. Beyond an expulsion and what might be called persecution, it is not so much the philosophers themselves that Domitian seeks to exclude that the philosophy as principle and mode of sociability between Roman aristocrats and Greek elites. The philosophy being a constitutive element of aristocratic banquet and education, these expulsions contest the aristocratic sociability, as it presented in Rome. The Emperor, by focusing on philosophers, targets the Roman aristocrats who take care to host, protect and patronize Greek intellectuals and elites: the indictment and the conviction of aristocrats, some of whom were philosophers themselves, suspends the network and the sociability resulting from it. An approach in terms of “literary circles” could suggest that the destabilization of the philosophical and intellectual sociability mean its disappearance. But the network theory allows to develop the idea that, in despite of the indictment of members or of their expulsion from Rome or Italy, the group continues to exist through logics of substitution and superposition, as shown by Pliny the Younger helping the philosopher Artemidorus, son-in-law of Musonius Rufus. These Domitian’s repressions of philosophers and, more generally, of the Stoic elite provide us a better understanding of the nature of sociability between Greek philosophers and Roman aristocrats in Rome through its inner organization and structure.