

# Full proposal form

## Open Competition SSH 2021

Deadline **Tuesday 15 February 2022, 14:00 hrs CET.**



### Section A. General information

#### 1a. Title

*Experiencing Fragments*

#### 1b. Summary

How can digital technologies help to identify and manage biases about fragmentary texts? This project will develop a digital platform for handling fragmentary texts and their complex receptions.

Fragmentation is a key feature of the postmodern age: they appear in social media (Tiktok, Twitter), in traditions from our cultural heritage and in personal memories from our childhood. Yet, fragments are dangerous: interpreting something fragmentary always requires making decisions about the missing context, and these decisions are frequently based on shaky assumptions or prejudices (biases).

This project focuses on the fragments of Roman Republican tragedy, because they offer the opportunity to explore a group of texts that has survived exclusively in fragments and simultaneously has an illuminating history of interpretation. Scholarship has been dominated by agendas, such as the philhellenic bias, where we can see how scholars, both ancient and modern, have tried to adjust the transmitted content, style, and sound of these fragments to features of their alleged models, Greek tragedy. The scholarly practices and their ways of interacting with fragments will help us to understand the modes and challenges of experiencing fragments, and how this is affected by biases.

Output will include a collaborative online platform; publications (one monograph, one co-edited volume, and five journal articles) on the historical background, methodological challenges, possibilities and didactic potential of dealing with fragments; and a teaching package to train students in the skills of bias awareness and sensemaking using fragments.

**Keywords:** *Fragments, Roman Republican Tragedy, Digital Humanities, Teaching Practice, Bias Management* (250w.)

#### 1c. Public summary

##### Nederlandse projecttitel

###### De wereld van fragmenten

Fragmenten zijn fascinerend en gevaarlijk: zij vragen om reconstructie. Maar vrijwel elke reconstructie zal afhangen van stilzwijgende vooronderstellingen: 'biases'. Neem de fragmenten van de Romeinse tragedie. Bij de reconstructie en interpretatie daarvan is vaak uitgegaan van de gedachte dat ze wel op Griekse voorbeelden geënt moesten zijn. Dat heeft grote gevolgen gehad voor ons beeld van de Romeinse literatuur. Wij creëren een online platform waarmee we de receptie van deze fragmenten onderzoeken. Dit voorbeeld van omgang met fragmenten zetten wij in binnen het hedendaagse onderwijs om studenten en leerlingen bewust te maken van hun stilzwijgende vooronderstellingen. (100 w.)

##### English project title

###### Experiencing Fragments

Fragments are fascinating, because they invite re-construction. Yet, for the same reason they are dangerous: it seems impossible to start a reconstruction without applying certain biases. Understanding how humans interpret fragments requires a multi-pronged approach, that incorporates insights on the historical, aesthetic, experiential and technical fronts.

This project will create an online platform for the fragments of early Roman tragedy, and develop digital tools for researching and experimenting with this textually fragmented material. We shall explore how fragments have been experienced in the past and show how these experiences can support students by training them in bias awareness.

### 1d. Domain

*Choose SSH/SGW; in case of an application with a cross-domain component, choose one other domain.*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH/SGW) | <input type="checkbox"/> Science (ENW) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Applied and Engineering Sciences (AES/TTW)          | <input type="checkbox"/> ZonMw         |

## B1. Scientific quality

### INTRODUCTION

How can digital technologies help to **identify and manage biases about fragmentary texts**? This project will develop a digital platform with an interface customised for research on fragmentary texts, research tools for investigating the complex receptions and experiences of the fragmentary, and teaching tools for bringing fragments and their challenges and potential into the classroom. The platform will be based on a pilot, started by the team in 2020, the OpenSourceClassicsCommentary (<https://oscc.lucdh.nl>).

Fragmentation has been highlighted as a key feature of the postmodern age: they appear in social media (Tiktok, Twitter), in traditions from our cultural heritage and in personal memories from our childhood. Yet, fragments are dangerous: interpreting something fragmentary always requires making decisions about the missing context, and these decisions are frequently based on shaky assumptions or prejudices (biases). Like riddles and unsolved criminal cases, their attractiveness results from a “verheißungsvolle Andeutung einer verlorenen Totalität” (Steiner 1984, 25): the tension between *deficient* and (former, future) *complete* information (Tronzo 2009, 2). By providing *some* information and simultaneously exhibiting the gaps, they stimulate their recipients’ activity in the human desire to re-construct their context and to conceptualise the ‘whole’.

This project focuses on the fragments of Roman Republican tragedy, because Roman Republican tragedy offers the unique opportunity to explore a group of texts that has survived exclusively in fragments and simultaneously has an illuminating history of interpretation. Scholarship has clearly been dominated by agendas, such as the ‘philhellenic’ bias, where we can see how scholars, both ancient and modern, have tried to adjust the transmitted content, style, and sound (metre, rhythm) of these fragments to the features of their alleged models, Greek tragedy, instead of acknowledging their specific ‘Romanness’ (Wessels 2018, 2021, Payne 2022).

An example: in a fragment from Naevius’ tragedy *Lycurgus*, we read:

*ut in venatu vitulantis ex suis / locis nos mittant poenis decoratas feris* (TrRF 20)

“they, rejoicing in the hunt, intend to send us from their lands smarting from their savage beating”

Most modern editors have changed the transmitted text *decoratus* (masculine singular) to *decoratas* (feminine plural) in order to make the fragment meet their expectation that it fits the plot of Euripides’ *Bacchae*, the famous Greek tragedy featuring a female chorus of Bacchantes.

There are still areas needing research on the fragments of Roman Republic tragedy and the history of their receptions, which this project will address. And the ways scholars have interacted with these fragments are the perfect case study to understand the modes and challenges of experiencing fragments, and how this is affected by biases.

### URGENCY AND INNOVATIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

**Diversity:** Fragments are everywhere. Former cultures mostly survive through fragments and fragmentary information. Something similar goes for our contemporary world: we are faced with fragments from other cultures and are challenged to fill in the lack of information *without* applying exclusively our own values and expectations (for example a ‘Western’ canon to ‘Eastern’ cultures). Working with fragments helps to improve the skills of bias awareness and sensemaking and contributes to one of the major tasks of academic teaching: training students to become aware of the role that prejudice and bias play in interpreting incomplete information and to sharpen their awareness of divergence and diversity in a globalised world.

**Biases:** Roman Republican Tragedy, here, serves as a case study and a training tool. The material is specifically appropriate to analyse and research the experience of fragments and the effect of biases. One specific and significant bias with the fragments of Roman Republican tragedy is that they have

widely been interpreted with Greek texts (models) in mind, whereas in reality Roman tragedy was in many aspects quite different from Greek tragedy. The 'philhellenic' bias and the idea of reading Greek 'models' into Roman fragments has been dominant in Classics. The acknowledgment of Roman divergence is a rather recent development in Classical scholarship, which requires new methodological approaches, which can be supported by the Digital Humanities.

**Digital Humanities:** Our kind of platform will provide an innovative research instrument: a **multidirectional playground** where users can combine analysis and creativity and experiment with possible reconstructions. Digital Humanities, here, will be employed as a **transformative methodology**, which allows for creativity, experimentation, and reconsideration of previous scholarly assumptions, such as assumptions about the textual and metrical features, the arrangement of the fragments, and the relation between fragments and the scattered (possible) contextual material.

## THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

### 1. What is a Fragment?

In a broader sense, any textual or visual expression could be considered to be a fragment, since the reception of any text requires contextual information and the recipients' engagement with its blanks ("Leerstellen", Iser 1976). As a consequence the definition of a fragment has been a matter of debate. Focussing on the fragments of originally complete Roman tragedies, which have been transmitted by later readers and exclusively survived as brief citations, i.e. through recontextualisations in later texts such as speeches, lexicæ or grammatical writings (and in this they differ from papyri fragments), our project *starts from* the following working definition: A fragment (etymologically: something that has been broken off) is something **that once belonged to something whole and complete and now invites reconstructions which can either be right or wrong**. Yet, since later readers are so important to tracing the traditions of the Roman Republican fragments, we shall further develop our theoretical framework by including

- theorists who would consider any text as fragmentary (such as the representatives of reader-response theory do, cf. Ingarden, Jauss, Iser, Fish) and who provide insights into the readers' activity and engagement during the process of reception.
- literary approaches that deliberately highlight and address the productive aspects of the fragmentary (cf. Dällenbach & Hart Nibbrig 1984, 11), and apply techniques of fragmentary writing as a tool for thinking or "as the only appropriate vehicle for expressing revolutionary insights that went beyond established forms and insights" (Most 2009, 16).
- theories on non-textual fragments, such as fragments in visual and architectural culture, fragments in memory, news, and social media, whose approaches will help to include the fragmentary and its (modern) reception in general.

### 2. The Fragmentariness of the Recipient

Fragmentariness is not limited to the objects we receive; the individual expectations of the receiving subject are fragmented as well. To recognise fragmentariness in our own contemporary environment, such as social media posts, and to understand how every individual's perspective is invariably limited and fragmented, grounded in their own assumptions and world-view, representing a single part of a wide diversity of positions, is one of the future core tasks of society.

Working with real (physical) fragments and testing the experience of dealing with them, will help awareness of the fragmentariness of the individual recipients and their context.

### 3. Digital Humanities and Fragments

Fragmentary texts offer specific **presentational and methodological challenges**:

Current online text databases are designed for complete texts. Research on fragments, however, requires a specific instrument which allows for working with 'gaps' and to experiment with earlier editorial decisions and plenty of scattered pieces of (possible) contextual information. Since contextual information inevitably shapes interpretation of the fragment, previous editorial and analytical work must be presented in a way that (a) allows to quickly, clearly and efficiently grasp the material, including the texts of previous editions and the issues involved in their interpretation, (b) prevents users from predisposing their own judgements, and (c) allows to develop and experiment with possible fresh reconstructions.

### 4. Developing Creativity as an Exploratory Technique in Research

Creative engagement is an essential hermeneutic tool as long as it is paired with analytic reflection. We are convinced that the common division into two allegedly separate fields - the field of analytical thinking and research (scholars), on the one hand, and the field of creative thinking and 'valorisation' (the 'broad public'), on the other hand - does not fit with every research project. For our project, we

want to hold onto the idea that involving non-specialists does not always mean to present something complex in a simple manner, but that their participation can be an essential part of research and that we need to listen to people who are not working in our field, in order to help us to think out of the box. For this reason we shall interweave our ‘valorisation activities’ and our ‘research activities’. For example, the proposed (see Impact section, B3) Twitter bot, will contribute to our understanding of how people engage with (Classical) fragmentary material in the modern world.

#### ADDRESSEES: BOTH SPECIALISTS AND NON-SPECIALISTS, INTERACTING

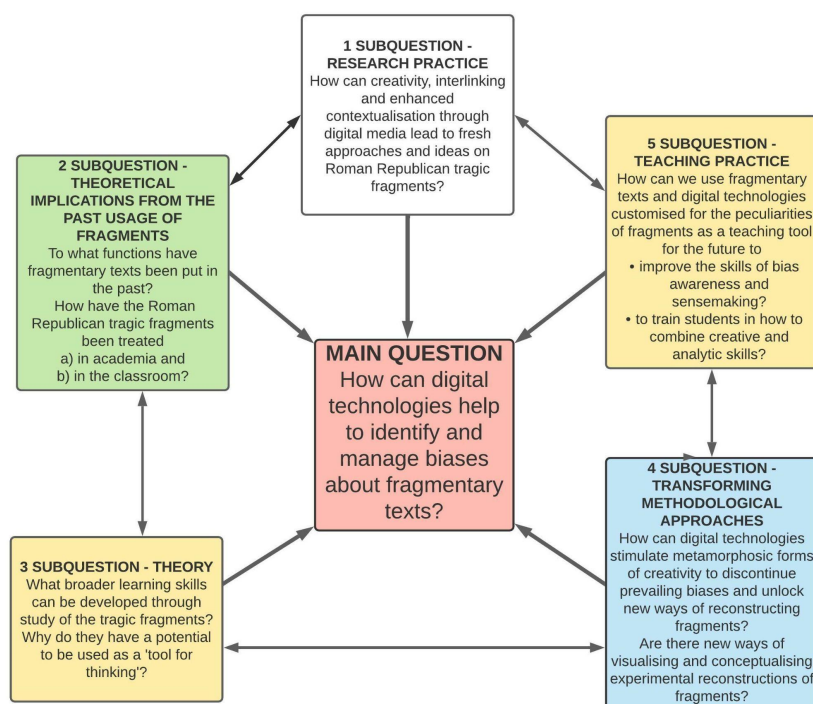
By designing a database and front-end customised for fragmentary texts, our pilot project has already demonstrated the strengths of a specialised fragment platform. This project aims at improving engagement with fragmentary texts, scaling up the platform and transforming it into a research instrument that simultaneously will respond to the requirements of **three sets of addressees**. The platform will:

- (a) provide a research tool for **scholars who work on fragments of Roman Republican tragedy** and develop an interface which allows for community collaboration,
- (b) make these fragments and their complex contexts more accessible to academic **non-specialists** (e.g. historians) and scholars who work on the methodological challenges of other groups of fragments (rhetoric, lyric, philosophy),
- (c) develop a teaching tool, which allows to bring fragmentary texts and the reflection upon their challenges and perspectives into the **classroom**.

The three proposed sets of addressees will mutually benefit from each other:

- (a) as a research tool, the platform allows visualisation and experimentation with the material (= groups b & c).
- (b) making the material more accessible to scholars from other fields will have an impact on the quantity and quality of research of this important set of texts (group a) and support its integration into teaching (group c)
- (c) as a teaching tool, the platform will stimulate the combined training of creative and analytical skills and improve the skills of bias awareness and sensemaking. It will encourage and motivate students and scholars from other fields to use and contribute to the platform’s material from a fresh perspective (= group b). And it will stimulate future research directions on the fragments of Roman Republican Tragedy (= group a).

#### RESEARCH QUESTION



186 words

The main research question of our project is: **How can digital technologies help to identify and manage biases about fragmentary texts?** In order to approach this question, we shall start from five sub-questions (see 1-5 in the diagram, and below). Each of these **five sub-questions** will directly help to investigate the main question and contribute to the other subquestions. The collaborative development of the platform and the proposed interaction with the three user groups is an essential part of our research (see above, 'Theoretical Assumptions' 4, and B3 'Impact').

**1 RESEARCH PRACTICE** How can creativity, interlinking and enhanced contextualisation through digital media lead to fresh approaches and ideas on Roman Republican tragic fragments? (AW, MP, LN)

**Aim:** The project will explore new ways of visualising and conceptualising experimental reconstructions of fragments.

**Method:** (1) An interlinked database structure will be incorporated into our current pilot, the OpenSourceClassicsCommentary platform (OSCC). In the current state, fragments can already be linked together in a simple fashion. Our project will improve the structure by allowing multidirectionality and linking to the scattered contextual content and other relevant sources, such as full texts and images. (2) The OSCC includes side-by-side comparison of different editions and a playground function which allows users to rearrange and play with the existing material and to experiment with possible reconstructions. This playground will be further improved so that users/researchers will be able to include external sources in the process of reconstructing and to visualise their proposed reconstructions.

**Material:** Relevant editions of the texts of the Roman tragic fragments from Scaliger to TRF; external sources, such as testimonia, parallel texts; textual and visual receptions of relevant myths.

**Output:** (a) OSCC: Playground function, dashboard and role-system in order to allow cooperation and editing (LN/PB); (b) testing and evaluation of these two functions in the classroom (2023/2024, AW, MP); (c) a journal article which critically reflects on the creation of the playground and how it can lead to unexpected, but substantiated reconstructions. (MP, LN)

**2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS FROM THE PAST USAGE OF FRAGMENTS** To what functions have fragmentary texts been put in the past? How have the Roman Republican tragic fragments been treated in the academic classroom? (KG, MP)

**Aim:** The project aims to figure out to what extent the Roman Republican tragic fragments were present within university curricula and research programmes (focusing on the Netherlands in the early modern period and Germany in the late 18th and 19th centuries), to understand what relationships were established between canonical and fragmentary texts in these settings, and to define the functions which fragmentary texts were given within these contexts.

**Method:** Surveying lecture topics as well as editions and commentaries on Roman Republican tragedy prepared by university lecturers in order to reconstruct the academic culture along with the implied theoretical assumptions; exploring its relation with contemporary (literary) approaches to the fragmentary (see 3, "Theory", below).

**Material:** Lecture programmes, handbooks, scholarly publications on fragments by university members in both the Netherlands in the early modern period and 19th century Germany.

**Output:** Monograph (Dissertation, ch. 1: Dutch scholarship, early modern period & ch. 2: German scholarship 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> cent.) (KG); one journal article on networks of early modern scholars of fragments (MP).

**3 THEORY** What broader learning skills can be developed through the study of the tragic fragments? Why do they have a potential to be used as a 'tool for thinking'? (AW, MP, KG)

**Aim:** The project aims to understand the implications and processes of engaging with *lacunae* and to investigate why fragmentary texts possess features which stimulate creativity.

**Method:** We shall investigate the proposed functions and readers' responses to three different kinds of fragments (see below, "*Material*") in order to apply their potential to developing new ways of experiencing fragments. We will also explore any cross-pollination of historical functions into the university context. (see 2 "Theoretical Implications", above)

**Material:** We shall include examples from readers' responses (scholarly and non-scholarly) to three different kinds of fragments: a) fragments that once belonged to a now lost complete text, such as the Roman Republican tragic fragments, b) (full) texts which are considered fragmentary because of their *obscuritas* and their requirement of readerly participation

and/or exegetical frameworks, such as Lycophron's *Alexandra*, the early Talmudic traditions and modern examples of fragmentary and enigmatic writing, such as Maurice Blanchot's *L'écriture du désastre*, and c) fragments which have been created artificially, such as Schlegel's *Athenaeumsfragmente*, Novalis' *Blüthenstaub*, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, and Walter Benjamin's *Passagenwerk*.

**Output:** One journal article (MP) exploring ancient responses to categories (a) and (b); and one journal article (AW) exploring modern responses to categories (b) and (c) and their possible impact on traditions of scholarship.

**4 TRANSFORMING METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES** How can digital technologies stimulate metamorphotic forms of creativity to discontinue prevailing biases and unlock new ways of reconstructing fragments? Are there new ways of visualising and conceptualising experimental reconstructions of fragments? (AW, MP, LN/PB)

**Aim:** To study different approaches in recent years in the digitisation of fragmentary texts, not only in Latin literature but also Ancient Greek literature and beyond.

**Method:** A study of both user interfaces and back-end database structures of different digital platforms, coupled with user *evaluation* (a survey) to assess the extent to which each respective platform a) assisted their research goal and b) contributed towards new ideas or objectives.

**Material:** The results of a survey including the OSCC and projects, completed and ongoing, involving the digitisation of fragmentary texts, such as the ongoing Leipzig OpenSource Fragmentary Texts Series with its sub-projects on the fragmentary Greek historians and Athenaeus, the Papyri.info platform and the completed Proteus project.

**Output:** journal article providing an overview of the projects, the results of the user evaluation and conclusions for future directions for fragmentary text platforms. (MP)

**5a) TEACHING PRACTICE** How can we use fragmentary texts and digital technologies customised for the peculiarities of fragments as a teaching tool for the future – to train students in how to combine creative and analytical skills? (AW, MP, KG, LN)

**Aim:** The project aims to reintegrate fragmentary texts into the classroom. In particular, fragmentary texts shall be used to sharpen creative and analytical skills and to train students to combine both in their hermeneutical practice.

**Method:** The OSCC's playground blends interpretative activity with creative elements. We shall test this in a class on Roman Republican tragic fragments in 2023/24. Classroom activities will include (a) using the OSCC-playground, (b) creative writing and dramatic performance of fragmentary texts (in consultation with Laura Swift, see Advisory Board), and (c) reflective evaluations that encourage students to consider how their creativity and analytical skills have affected their responses and to itemise new ideas that have flowed from it.

**Material:** A creative assignment on Ennius' *Thyestes* was trialled in 2021 as part of a Research Seminar on Roman Republican Tragedy with 30 students and our work on the pilot. In our project, assignments will be broadened to other fragmentary texts added to the database and a framework guiding the creative exercise itself and the reflective exercise. From the trial with university students, resources will be created for secondary schools and teachers advised on potential classroom uses.

**Output:** Monograph (Dissertation, ch. 3) (KG) and teaching materials, including quizzes with explanations, short videos, and prompts for creative writing exercises (KG, MP, AW).

**5b) TEACHING PRACTICE** How can we use fragmentary texts as a teaching tool for the future - to improve the skills of bias awareness and sensemaking? (AW, MP, KG, LN)

**Aim:** to enable university and high-school students to recognise fragmentariness in their own contemporary environment, such as social media posts and news headlines, and to understand how every individual's perspective is invariably limited and fragmented, grounded in their own assumptions and world-view, representing a single part of a wide diversity of positions.

**Method:** We shall continue testing the experience of fragments by integrating experiments and creative assignments in our teaching, such as the creative production of fragments and a live-evaluation of their reception within the classroom and by providing teaching material for other groups of students (history, modern literature). AW and MP have carried out pilots of this teaching practice in 2019: Research Master Seminar *Ennius' Tragedies*, and 2021: Research Master Seminar *Roman Republican Tragedy*. In 2024/25, AW (with MP) will test a

teaching practice about the fragmentariness of social media in the Leiden course on *Rhetoric and Social Media* (which since inception in 2017 has included a wide range of students from different disciplines).

**Material:** social media posts, news headlines, students' creative assignments.

**Output:** We shall publish the best examples of the creative assignments along with brief reflections by other students in a blog which will be accessible on the OSCC-platform, and we shall create teaching resources for high school students about handling fragments in the modern world, particularly in social media (see Impact, Activity 3) (AW, MP).

## MATERIAL/TEXTCORPUS

### 1. Platform

The remains of Roman Republican tragedies include more than 1900 fragmentary lines. At the current stage, the OSCC includes material on the fragments of five tragedies (Livius Andronicus *Aegisthus*, Naevius *Lycurgus*, Ennius *Thyestes*, Pacuvius *Dulorestes*, and Accius *Stasiastae*), which has been contributed to by students of our Research Seminars in 2019/20 (*Thyestes*), 2020/21 (*Aegisthus*), and 2021/22 (*Lycurgus*, *Dulorestes*, *Stasiastae*). Livius Andronicus' *Aegisthus* and Ennius' *Thyestes* have already been edited by MP and AW, the other three tragedies will be edited in the coming year. This project will expand the material, while focussing on a group of fragments which revolve around the Pelopid-myth cycle, one of the most popular subjects in Roman tragedy and its receptions, and start to incorporate the external sources, which are relevant for the development of the multidirectional playground.

### 2. Publications (books, articles)

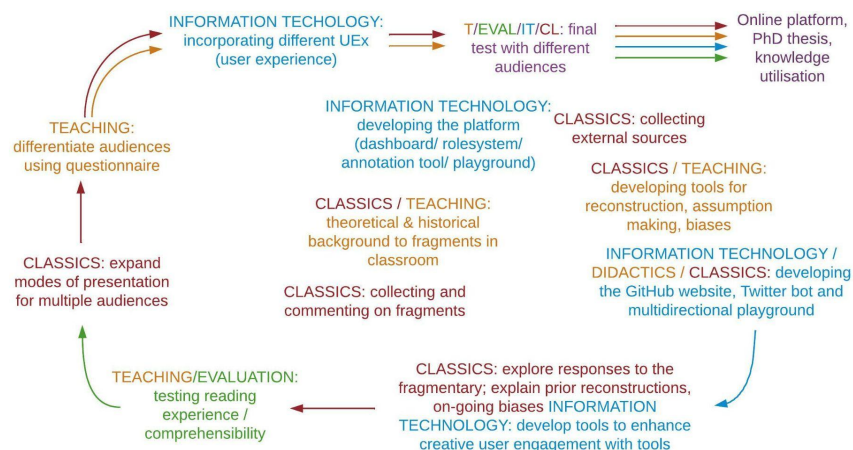
Our research on the fragmentary and bias-awareness will be based on

- (a) research literature on editions and commentaries on Roman Republican tragedy; early Dutch and 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century German scholarship on Roman tragic fragments, university curricula from these periods, and responses to fragmentary writing (see above, 'Theoretical assumptions'), as well as
- (b) empirical studies, including responses, questionnaires and creative assignments from voluntary participation by students (where expectations and thought-processes can be traced back to an individual's background and perspective), anonymous surveys solicited from scholars using the Github site, and non-scholarly (anonymised) responses to the material posted by the Twitterbot (see further B3: Impact, Activities 1 & 2).

## METHOD

We shall approach our main research question from the five perspectives described above (see research question: subquestions 1-5). While each subquestion will be investigated by applying a method appropriate with its specific aim and our general theoretical assumptions (see the descriptions above), our **method of collaboration** within the project is based on the assumption that our work on the OSCC-platform and the preliminary results of each field of research - Classics, Teaching and Information Technology (IT) - will mutually benefit from each other. As a consequence, collaboration is set up as a **growing circuit**:





115 words

## B2. Embedding, organisation, and budget

### 2a. Project team composition

#### Main applicant

Title, first name, surname	Affiliation	Role
Prof. Dr. A.B. Wessels	Leiden University, FGW, LUCAS, Classics	Project Leader; promotor

#### Other team members

Title, first name, surname	Affiliation	Role
Dr. M.F. Payne	Leiden University/ Ghent University	post-doc
Kees Geluk, MA		PhD
Luuk Nolden	Leiden University	OSS
Philippe Bors	Leiden University	OSS

### 2b. Selected output Main and Co-applicants

Wessels, A. (2021). *Inventing Origins? Aetiological Thinking in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, edd. A.

Wessels, J. Klooster. Leiden, Boston (= Euhormos, vol. 2).

Wessels, A. (2020). *The Values of Nighttime in Classical Antiquity. Between Dusk and Dawn*, edd. J. Ker, A. Wessels. Leiden, Boston (Mnemosyne Supplements, vol. 434).

Wessels, A. (2015). *Der Neue Poseidipp. Text – Übersetzung – Kommentar*. edd. B. Seidensticker, A. Stähli, A. Wessels. Darmstadt (= Texte zur Forschung, vol. 108).

Wessels, A. (2014). *Ästhetisierung und ästhetische Erfahrung von Gewalt. Eine Untersuchung zu Senecas Tragödien*. Heidelberg (= Bibliothek der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaften, vol. 137).

Wessels, A. (2003). *Ursprungszauber. Zur Rezeption von Hermann Useners Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung*. Berlin, New York (= Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, vol. 51).

### 2c. Motivation of embedding, organisation and budget

The **team** was awarded two small grants (2020, 2021) in order to work on the pilot platform and develop further crucial features including an automated scansion tool, by LUCAS and LUCDH, respectively. The support of LUCAS and LUCDH (the latter hosting the OSCC) and the extensive activity and cooperation in the Digital Humanities between LUCAS and LUCDH make Leiden University the ideal institution for the embedding of this project.

**Antje Wessels** has published editions of fragments (Greek Satyrplay; the New Poseidippus) and monographs on Roman Drama and Aesthetic Experience and on the History of Scholarship in the 19th century (*Ursprungszauber*). Publications on Roman Republican Drama include articles on Early Comedy and Tragedy. She had early experience with a digital interactive platform and community collaboration through her Receptions of Antiquity project ([www.receptions-of-antiquity.com](http://www.receptions-of-antiquity.com)). **Matthew Payne** has published on the treatment of the Roman Republican fragments by ancient and modern authors (Payne 2022) and is preparing a monograph with a fuller treatment of the subject. His PhD dissertation on Senecan tragedy already explored the relationship of Roman Republican tragedy with Seneca's work (Payne 2018). Together they have been working on and teaching Research Seminars on the Fragments of Roman Republican Tragedy and the theoretical implications of publishing editions of these fragments. In January 2020, they organised an interdisciplinary symposium on the theory of fragments, which included experts from Psychology, Network Theory, Classics and Art&Architecture ("The World in Pieces: Fragments and the Fragmentary"). In 2019, together with Computer Scientists (**Luuk Nolden**: Comp.Sci. & Classics; **Philippe Bors**: Comp.Sci.), they started to develop an online platform which has been used and tested in the classroom. **Kees Geluk** (ResMA, Classics), who participated in the 2019 research seminar, has experience in creating digital learning tools. His interest in the interface between research and teaching makes him a good fit to implement the classroom research in the PhD position.

#### Advisory Board:

- Prof. Glenn W. Most (The University of Chicago, USA: Fragments Theory)
- Prof. Christian Benne (University of Copenhagen, Denmark; president of Friedrich-Schlegel-Gesellschaft: Romantic Fragments)
- PD Dr. Christian Orth (Universität Freiburg, Germany: Fragments Theory)
- Prof. Markus Schauer (Universität Bamberg, Germany: editor TRF)
- Prof. Gesine Manuwald (University College London, UK: editor TRF)
- PD Dr. Petra Schierl (Universität Basel, Switzerland: editor TRF)
- Dr. Monica Berti (Universität Leipzig, Germany; LOFTS)
- Dr. Angus Mol (Leiden Universiteit: LUCDH)
- Dr. Alessandro Vatri (University of Oxford & Alan Turing Institute, UK: Digital Humanities)
- Prof. Adriaan van der Weel (Universiteit Leiden: Book and Digital Media Studies)
- Prof. Sybille Lammes (Universiteit Leiden: Media Platforms)
- Dr. Laura Swift (The Open University, UK: Experiencing and Performing Fragments)
- Dr. Tazuko van Berkel (Universiteit Leiden: Fragments, Digital Humanities)
- Dr. Lauren Fonteyn (Universiteit Leiden: Digital Humanities)

Requested budget: **749.771,10€**

#### **721.771,10€ Personnel:**

1. 1.0 FTE 48 months Postdoc (Matthew Payne, Classics): research on history of scholarship and new methodologies for fragments; conceptualisation of the database; creation, editing and commentary for online editions.
2. 1.0 FTE 48 months PhD (Kees Geluk, Classics): research into the historical dimensions and theoretical didactics of teaching fragments and the role they could play in supporting curricula; empirical research using the created platform in a classroom setting, with support from the team.
3. 1.0 FTE 5 months (= 25 months 0.2fte) replacement (Antje Wessels, Classics): project management and research; redaction; supervision PhD.
4. 0.3 FTE 48 months Other Scientific Staff (Luuk Nolden, Comp.Sci. & Classics; Philippe Bors, Comp.Sci.): programming and developing the online platform and digital tools in collaboration with all team members.

#### **16.000€ Material Costs:**

1. 12.000€: Open Access
2. 3000€: Webdesign OSCC-platform / backend deployment
3. 1.000€ Travel and accommodation; digital copies of early editions which are not available in Leiden

**8.500€ Knowledge Utilisation:** creating a Teaching Package for Schools, including guides and videos for teachers

**3.500€ Internationalisation:** meetings with Advisory Board (London, Bamberg, Chicago); launch event / symposium

## 2d. Justification budget modules (if applicable)

*n.a.*

## 2e. Money follows Cooperation (MfC)

*n.a.*

## B3. Scientific and/or societal impact

This project has significant **scientific and societal** impact.

In terms of scientific impact, the journal articles and monograph produced by the project will not only contribute to underexamined areas of research in Latin literature and the history of Classical scholarship. They will also establish new foundations both theoretically and methodologically for research into fragments in a digital age. The platform itself will make the Roman Republican tragic fragments easier for a wider number of researchers, including outside Classics, to employ in their research.

In societal impact, the platform will make a significant contribution to making the fragments themselves accessible to a wider audience, as well as providing, in addition to specialist commentary, non-specialist commentary as well for interested readers who are not specialists, currently something that is lacking in the contemporary landscape. The teaching resources created by the project will use fragmentary texts as a method to help students at a range of stages and abilities reflect on their interpretative skills and how they construe meaning, and challenge them to identify biases, conscious or not, and hidden assumptions that they can make as part of that process. As such, these teaching resources can be incorporated into a course of wider programmes of educating and challenging students about their cognitive biases. These training resources can then be part of supporting effective strategies for students with, for instance, identifying misinformation and disinformation – recognising when, either accidentally or deliberately, a source provides misleading information. Or with recognising when an incomplete or skewed narrative is presented as part of an agenda.

What follows is three activities for realising the scientific and societal impact of the project.

### **Activity 1: an online network for researchers to connect to the OSCC and with each other**

In order to introduce the platform and encourage researchers to both use and contribute to it, we will organise a series of online seminars showcasing the platform and the kind of research that can be achieved with it. In an online networking space (GitHub) we will allow researchers not only to keep up-to-date with new features added to the platform through wiki pages and readme guides, but also offer the opportunity to provide feedback and request features themselves. Through providing a moderated, up-to-date community space for the platform's users, we can also help specialists working on different topics in this area feel more integrated. Through online guides and the bibliographies hosted at the OSCC, we will also help non-specialist researchers identify and feel confident in introducing material from the Roman Republican tragedies into their own research. And in this online space we will be blogging about developments on our own project and important advances in the wider sphere of text-focused Digital Humanities projects.

### **Activity 2: a Roman Republican tragedy Twitter bot**

The second activity which will bring our fragments to a broader audience is creating a Roman Republican tragedy Twitter bot. This will tweet out periodically from a bank of texts of fragments we have translated as part of the project. Along with the bot's automated activities, which will require some set-up, we will also tweet out some of the context of the Roman Republican tragic fragments and connect Twitter followers to the OSCC platform. Given the success of @sapphobot, whose tweets of the fragments of the Greek poet's Sappho's poetry reach 80,000 followers, we're optimistic that the tragic fragments have the potential to engage a far broader audience than at present. We can use the bot to start conversations about the status of fragmentary texts as peripheral, and encourage users to share their own responses to the fragments as replies to the bot, which we will collect and analyse.

### **Activity 3: teaching resources for bias awareness**

We would create a series of educational modules, including videos, articles and handouts, that will help students consider the potential limitations of individual viewpoints, teach them how to be aware of how information might be missing from their mental picture when they make judgements, and help them to identify the way that assumptions can sometimes lead to mistaken understandings. Preparing

solid resources for combating misinformation (incorrect or incomplete information *unintentionally* presented in a misleading way) and disinformation (falsehoods *intentionally* circulated) are key needs in the modern classroom, but there is a real lack of both resources and methods for educating students about these topics.

Crucially, fragmented and incomplete literary texts present a neutral staging ground for discussing how assumptions and limited information can lead to wildly different interpretations from a few agreed facts, and also how arranging and presenting information in different ways can lead to very different perspectives and outcomes, without starting with modern examples that might alienate or prejudice students.

The teaching resources will contain guidance for both educators running the classes and students participating. Students will be asked to engage with the tragic fragments and encouraged to see how very different stories can be made from them by piecing them together in different ways. They will also be encouraged to see how adding another fragment might radically alter how they interpret the fragments. Students will be asked to reflect on their interpretative processes towards facts and how they (like everyone) create narratives that make sense of the facts. Students will then be asked to consider the assumptions that they formed during the exercise, and whether these were well-founded or not. From this basis, the resources will introduce modern instances where misinformation and disinformation appear, and encourage the students to brainstorm how, with their newfound awareness of their interpretative processes, they could critically engage with these information streams. In this stage of the activities, modern examples of fragmented information, such as social media fragments from TikTok and Twitter, would be featured in the resources. The teaching resources would be freely available for download from a dedicated website. These resources will help support in an alternative and creative way existing initiatives around media literacy such as Under Pressure.

#### Chosen impact focus:

- ☐ Scientific impact
- ☐ Societal impact
- ☒ Both scientific and societal impact

#### B4. Word count

**Number of words in section B1 + B2c:** 4431 w.

**Number of words in section B3:** 985 w.

## B5. Reference list

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## B6. Work plan and planned deliverables

### WORK PLAN

year		Antje Wessels	Matthew Payne	Kees Geluk	Luuk Nolden/ Philippe Bors
22/23	<b>OSCC</b>	Adding fragments (in different editions) and their interpretations (apparatus criticus, commentary, summaries of scholarly reconstructions) to the OSCC (Pelopid tragedies)			Improving interface OSCC for collaboration (dashboard, annotation system, and role system: users, teachers, redaction team, administrator); setting up GitHub site (see Impact, Activity 1)
	<b>teaching</b>				
	<b>research/outreach</b>		Journal article on networks of early modern scholars of fragments	Dissertation ch. 1: Dutch scholarship early modern period	
	<b>internationalisation</b>	Organisation of offline launch event (advisory board) in May 2023: Fragments and new directions from the Digital Humanities			
23/24	<b>OSCC</b>	Collecting and adding external sources related to fragments (Pelopid tragedies)			Developing multidirectional playground
	<b>teaching</b>	Testing playground and creative assignments (in the seminar <i>Roman Republican Tragedy</i> )			
	<b>research/outreach</b>	Journal article on modern responses to fragmentary texts	Journal article on ancient responses to fragmentary texts	Ch. 2: German scholarship 18th/19th century	Developing a Twitter bot that can integrate with the OSCC to collect texts and translations of fragments (see Impact, Activity 2)
	<b>internationalisation</b>	Organisation of online meeting with advisory board in May 2024: Fragments as a tool for thinking: Limits and Perspectives			
24/25	<b>OSCC</b>	Implementing and developing didactic environment (scansion tool, see pilot; instruction videos (see Impact, Activity 1), adaptive learning tools; developing an interface that differentiates content between the proposed user groups: researchers, scholars from other fields, university students, school students)			
	<b>teaching</b>	Testing the training of hermeneutical practice (seminar <i>Roman fragmentary texts</i> ; seminar <i>Rhetoric and Social Media</i> )			
	<b>research/outreach</b>	Blogs (OSCC) on creative assignments in the classroom		Ch. 3: perspectives of teaching fragments in the classroom	Journal article written with MP on creating the playground and its effects (and creative assignments)
			Journal article written with LN on creating the playground and its effects (and		

year		Antje Wessels	Matthew Payne	Kees Geluk	Luuk Nolden/ Philippe Bors
			creative assignments)		
	<b>internationalisation</b>	Organisation of online workshop with advisory board and guests in May 2025: Fragments and Diversity (presentation of papers for edited volume on <i>Fragmentariness, Diversity, and Bias Awareness. How can Digital Humanities make a difference?</i> )			
25/26	<b>OSCC</b>	Developing and finalizing teaching package (see Impact, Activity 3)			Offering additional support for teaching package in OSCC
	<b>teaching</b>				
	<b>research/outreach</b>		Journal article on the digital landscape for fragmentary texts, including our own platform	Finalizing dissertation	
	<b>internationalisation:</b>	Organisation online meeting with advisory board in May 2026: Fragments and future opportunities			

#### PLANNED DELIVERABLES

The research output from the project will include:

- the OSCC platform Open Source Classics Commentary, which will be ready to be used as a research tool for research on the fragments of Roman Republican Tragedy (user group: researchers); as a teaching tool in academic teaching (user groups: teachers and students), and as a source tool for any students of ancient texts who come across a fragment of this text corpus and need easily accessible information. (AW, MP, KG, LN/PB)
- a monograph (dissertation) on the history of studying fragments as a tool for thinking and future perspectives on fragmentary texts as a teaching tool (KG)
- co-edited volume on *Fragmentariness, Diversity, and Bias Awareness. How can Digital Humanities make a difference?* (AW, MP)
- publications which probe the methodological challenges and requirements of dealing with fragmentary texts:
  - 1 Journal article, which reflects on creating the playground and its effects (and creative assignments) (MP & LN)
  - 2 Journal articles, which reflect on the theory of fragments and their readers' responses (AW, MP)
  - 1 Journal article, which reflects on what can be learned from networks of early modern scholars of fragmentary texts (MP)
  - 1 Journal article, which reflects on user interfaces and structures of existing digital platforms (MP)
- outreach to the public (scholars from other fields, teachers, and a broader non-academic public):
  - regular blogs on experiments in the classroom (AW, MP)
  - online network for researchers to connect to the OSCC and with each other and which allows for discussions specifically on Digital Humanities and Fragmentary texts (AW, MP, LN)
  - the Roman Republican tragedy Twitter bot (MP, KG)
  - the teaching package (AW, MP, KG)



## Section C. Data management and ethical aspects

### C1. Data management

1. Will data be collected or generated that are suitable for reuse?

Yes.

> Yes: Then answer questions 2-4 below

> No: Then explain why the research will not result in reusable data or in data that cannot be stored or data that for other reasons are not relevant for reuse.

2. Where will the data be stored during the research?

All the data of the project will be stored on the servers of the Leiden University Centre for the Digital Humanities, including all data involved in the OSCC.

Any source code for the OSCC, the Twitter bot and any other tools will also be available on Github, along with the guides and readmes and links to videos posted to Youtube created during the course of the project, as well as being stored on the server of the LUCDH.

This project supports open source, open access and open data (user license CC-BY), and will use secure, sustainable, and certified repositories.

It will be possible to add, modify and delete data in the OSCC database through the OSCC website. This functionality is necessary. The role system will make sure that access to data in the OSCC database is clearly defined and controlled. Different roles will have different permissions to add or change data in the OSCC database. For instance, data submitted by 'student roles' will be reviewed by 'teacher roles' before designated sections can be added to or modified in 'in progress' sections of the OSCC database. There will also be a range of researcher and collaborator roles, whose ability to add or modify data will similarly extend only to certain limited 'in progress' sections of the database as specified by the administrator role. These designated 'in-progress' sections will only be added to the main OSCC database and published on the public OSCC platform with administrator approval. Once material is published, any roles besides the administrator will not be able to alter any data, unless an administrator reverts publication and opens up a section of the database for limited modification, e.g. to implement agreed edits. Data will be automatically backed up before this revision process and any revised material will be subject again to administrator approval. Full control over modifying and deleting data will only be possible in administrator roles. As part of the role assignment system, users would be taken through guides explaining how data on the OSCC should be handled, including quizzes that check they have sufficiently understood the guidelines for their particular role.

Multiple backups of the OSCC database, both the main published database and any 'in-progress' sections of the database, will be taken on a regular basis and be stored independently within the LUCDH servers.

The Twitterbot will collect data from the public, but data will be anonymised before it is stored or it is used for any research. The data from the Twitterbot, once it has been scrubbed of any potentially personalising data, will be backed up to the LUCDH server.

Where necessary during the research (e.g. in order to share data within the project team), in addition to the data storage on a secure server provided by LUCDH, data may temporarily be stored on SURFdrive – a secure and GDPR compliant cloud service developed specifically for universities.

3. After the project has been completed, how will the data be stored for the long-term and made available for the use by third parties? To whom will the data be accessible?

The OSCC website and the material published there will be Open Access, i.e. it will be viewable by any Internet user, without any need to register or be assigned a role.

The OSCC will continue to be hosted on secure servers provided by the LUCDH, and the OSCC website maintained by the OSCC developers (LN/PB), or handed over to other responsible parties approved by them & AW & MP. Third parties will still be able to access, add further data and utilise the platform after the project has completed on an indefinite basis. This will still be governed by the role system in order to prevent malicious or accidental loss of data, as well as the continuation of the regular backup scheme as during the research period. The project team is committed to staying in administrator roles with a designated chief administrator, to approving further administrator roles as needed, and to avoiding the platform and all associated data becoming orphaned at any point.

Data from the Twitterbot collected over the course of the project will also continue to be hosted on the LUCDH server as well as archived to a physical hard disk. We will review at the end of the project whether the Twitterbot

itself should be kept active, discontinued, or if there are any interested and trustworthy third parties who might wish to take responsibility for the Twitter account.

The Github site providing source code created during the project will remain accessible and be maintained, including the code related to the OSCC, other tools created over the course of the project, as well as the guides and readmes created over the course of the project. Github is an open source repository.

4. Which facilities (ICT, (secure) archive, refrigerators or legal expertise) do you expect will be needed for the storage of data during the research and after the research? Are these available?\*

We require server space and bandwidth for the activities of the OSCC, but these have already been offered and are being provided by the LUCDH at no additional cost. The code and the content on Github will be small enough to be covered by a free license.

We intend to keep the database running for 10 years. We include with our application a letter of confirmation concerning resources allocated by LUCAS for the ongoing maintenance of the database.

*\*ICT facilities for data storage are considered to be resources such as data storage capacity, bandwidth for data transport and calculating power for data processing.*

## C2. Ethical aspects

	Not applicable	Not yet applied for	Applied for	Received
Approval from a recognised (medical) ethics review committee	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approval from an animal experiments committee	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Permission for research with the population screening Act	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If approval from an ethical committee is applicable, the proof of approval will need to be sent to NWO before the start of your project. Please keep this in mind when submitting the full proposal; you might have to start making arrangements to obtain this approval before the final decision on your full proposal has been made in order to be able to launch your project on the intended start date. Any information you would like to give on the ethical aspects of the content of your proposal you can include in section B1.*

## Section D: Administrative details and statements

### D1. Administrative details

#### Main applicant

Title(s), initial(s), surname	prof. dr. A.B. Wessels
Institution	Leiden University
Birth date	08/01/1967
Date PhD defence	21/06/ 2002
Position	Full professor
Type of appointment	fixed
End of contract date	n/a
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### D2. Statements

- X According to the formal eligibility criteria, the main and any co-applicants are no longer eligible as applicants in the NWO Talent Scheme ('Vernieuwingsimpuls').
- X The main applicant and any co-applicants have a paid appointment at one of the qualifying host institute(s) for the full duration of the application process and the project that is applied for.
- X The main applicant and any co-applicants meet all other conditions for applicants listed in the call for proposals.
- X By submitting this document I declare that I and all other individuals involved in this proposal satisfy the nationally and internationally accepted standards for scientific conduct as stated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice 2018 (Association of Universities in the Netherlands)
- X By submitting this application form, I declare that I have discussed the final version of this proposal with all individuals or parties mentioned in this proposal as team members, collaborators, advisors and in any other role. All such individuals or parties mentioned are aware of and agree with their role and intended contribution to the project, should this be awarded funding.
- X By submitting this document I declare that I follow the NWO policy on data management.
- X I have completed this form truthfully.

Name: Antje Wessels

Place: **Leiden**

Date: **13 feb 2022**

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