

Presidential Panel
San Diego, California

**Traditional Specialties
at the Turn of the 21st Century:
A Janus View**

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It seems appropriate to mark the occasion of the APA's first meeting in the new millennium with a Presidential Panel considering both past accomplishments and new directions in several fields of classical scholarship. This panel is concerned with twentieth-century developments in four fields: linguistics, Roman history, papyrology, and Roman poetry. The speakers are Eleanor Dickey (Columbia University), David Potter (University of Michigan), Ann Hanson (Yale University), and Michael Putnam (Brown University). They have been invited to look back over the last hundred years or so and ahead as far as the eye can see, and to consider some of the following questions: What was happening in your subject around 1900? What questions interested people? How and why did new ones enter in? What's important now, and where are we going? They have been asked, not to present an overview or objective summary, but to speak from the perspective of their own interests and research.

Why these specialties? I had several ideas in mind as I began to make plans for the panel. First, I wanted to feature fields with a long history in the APA. My original idea, in fact, was to find fields treated at the first APA meeting in 1869 or in the first volume of *TAPA* (1870). It also seemed important to consider fields that had changed greatly over time and were both influenced by and productive of new theoretical perspectives. I wanted a mix of Greek and Roman, technical and more general subjects and a mix of senior and junior scholars to address them.

Linguistics was an obvious first choice by almost every criterion, and especially considering its roots in the APA. The Association was founded to promote linguistic science, and the first volume of *TAPA* contains only linguistics papers (dealing with topics from Greek accent to the German Vernacular of Pennsylvania to Creole grammar and Mistaken Notions of Algonkin Grammar). Papyrology, another technical specialty, is a field that came into its own only in the twentieth century. As far as I can tell, the first papyrological paper at an APA meeting was read only in 1892 (it was J. H. Wright's Notes on the Papyrus of the Ἀθηναίων πολιτεία). Roman History and Roman Poetry are subjects of long-standing interest in the Association, although it is only fair to note that Greek History and Poetry appear first (*TAPA* 1873 has a paper on the life of Thucydides, and *TAPA* 1874 has two papers on Homer; the first papers on Roman History and Poetry appear only in *TAPA* 1880).

The panel is intended to be historical, to be sure, but I expect it to point out not so much past triumphs (or failures) as future directions and possibilities. Not everyone will agree with the panelists' assessments if they provoke some debate, so much the better.