From the chair

The Classics Faculty Newsletter appears for the second time: it only takes one repetition to establish tradition, as the Romans might have said of the accession of Caligula, and here is our second instalment of news for our wide constituency of former members and present well-wishers. You were enthusiastic about Newsletter One, and full of suggestions - we have tried to adopt some of these in the pages which follow.

The vigour of the Faculty is as abundant as ever, from our venerable macrobioi to our newest recruits. We celebrated George Cawkwell's 90th birthday, and Donald Russell is limbering up for his, later in the year, with the recent publication of a new work on Plutarch on the Divine Guide of Socrates. Meanwhile numbers of applicants for our undergraduate courses continue to rise – well over 400 last December, including a record 292 for Mods and Greats. In between, we have (just before the breaking of the economic storm, to which I'll shortly return) managed to fill several vacancies in the Faculty. Christine Kuhn has joined us as Ancient History tutor at LMH and Luke Pitcher as Languages and Literature tutor at Somerville, while we have new University Lecturers in Classical Reception – Fiona Macintosh, who will be a Fellow of St Hilda's – and Greek Epigraphy – Charles Crowther, who will be a Fellow of Queen's.

Our work is displayed in this Newsletter: Peter Parsons surveying major discoveries in Greek literature over the last forty years, or Armand D'Angour on the continuing joys of verse composition. Angelos Chaniotis describes his pursuit of all the evidence for the changing history of the emotions in ancient Greek societies. You will read about our Greek palaeography summer schools, which have been attracting young scholars from across the globe and have enabled us to make use of the unparalleled manuscript collections of the Bodleian. We are hoping, too, for a renaissance of scholarly links with Oxford's Philosophy Faculty, our sister, born of the partition of the old Faculty of Literae Humaniores as the new millennium dawned: so Terence Irwin, Professor of the History of Philosophy, has kindly contributed an article on the study of ancient philosophy at Oxford.

The harvest is copious and the scholarly granaries are full. But the times are hard, and we are facing a run – probably a long run – of years of grave financial dearth. All the Humanities subjects in all UK Universities are threatened by fierce funding cuts, deepened and made more wounding by explicit governmental preferences for other areas of academic work. Classics is especially threatened, and there will be redundancies and closures across the country on a scale not seen since the 1980's.

The burgeoning numbers of applicants alone demonstrate that young people from the UK (and from a much wider catchment, as we continue to rejoice in international esteem) are intensely attracted by the intellectual demands of our courses and by the huge intrinsic interest of the universe of ideas, history, literature, art and culture which Classicists at Oxford study. We try hard to argue to the public, the media, and the government that this eager curiosity, which you will all clearly recall, and the ways in which we help it to develop into a wide and sophisticated understanding of past and present, make an authentic and important reciprocal contribution to the society which sustains us.
Outreach

In promoting this case, you – the 6000 people we are in touch with who have studied the Greeks and Romans here – are needed as witnesses and advocates, and the Newsletter hopes to help. We would really like to have more contact with you, and to offer more opportunities for you to come to see and hear what we are doing. So we particularly invite you to come to the various named lectures in Trinity Term, to other Faculty events throughout the year, or to visit the Ioannou School for Classical and Byzantine Studies during the alumni weekend in September. But I will not conceal from you that your material contributions to your Colleges for Classical purposes are vital for our future, or that we have a check-list of projects, big and small, for Faculty funding, for which we are constantly seeking support. Of these, scholarships to make it possible for graduate students to come here to study are especially vital – and, in these depressed times, it is as much, or more, potential graduates from the UK who are missing their chance to do research because of shortage of funds. A commitment of as little as four thousand pounds each year for three years, combined by us with one of the Graduate scholarships in which many Colleges are now involved, is enough to make the whole difference to one potential scholar’s career.

Nicholas Purcell
Chair of the Classics Faculty Board

Outreach

Halfway through my first year as Outreach Officer I look back in amazement at what has gone on. I always knew that there would be plenty to keep me occupied and interested, and my hopes have not been frustrated. I offer a brief recap of two particular events, and how they have opened my eyes to the broad remit and value of outreach work.

When I started there were vague notes about a War & Memory sixth form study day due to happen just twelve weeks later, and so I met my first challenge. I now know that it is possible to put together an event for 90 people from 20 institutions at very short notice. The success of the day is a testament to the goodwill and keen interest of all participants. With speakers from Liverpool, Manchester, Oxford and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, it was always going to be a lively day. It also coincided with the reopening of the Ashmolean, and I was delighted to herd students in there at lunchtime. Lecturers, teachers and students worked well together throughout the day, and each session included some lively debate. We finished the day with a session on weaponry by the armourer Magnus Sigurdsson, when squeamishness was not an option, and the students flocked to try on items. Teachers had a chance to discuss strategies for moving forward with groups. Students met on a social and intellectual basis. For some of them it was the first time they had come across so many Classicists in one place; for others it was a chance to rekindle Bryanston friendships. We discussed applying to Oxford, helping students channel their motivation into better paperwork. Our CWGC speaker was also a trainee lawyer, which demonstrated great intellectual versatility and offered the students a further interesting person to cross-examine about a different possible education and career path. One of the great things about bringing such diverse groups together is the strange dialogue which occurs over coffee, beyond the content of the talks. Next year I am planning four days of events to mark the 2,500th anniversary of the Battle of Marathon, and I hope that schools, universities and other organisations will be similarly supportive and the exchange of ideas and experiences can continue.

War at a different level came in to one of my other greatest challenges. Would I go and teach a group of 15


6–11 year olds in a small village in Kent about Alexander the Great? Obviously I said yes, after taking several deep breaths. I belted down there with a bag of Gordian knots and pretend poison bottles for the children to examine. It turned out that they were fanatical about Alexander, and had spent so many lunchtimes reading Robin Lane Fox’s book that it had fallen to bits. Intimidating? Never. We reconstructed the Battle of Issus using Lego, and they each came up with a new theory as to why Alexander died, which they wrote up as travelling historians, largely using the Greek alphabet. Their enthusiasm and attention to detail was extraordinary. Don’t tell a child that age something you don’t want them to remember. Having never taught Year 2 before, let alone in the same class as Year 6 for over two hours, I can heartily recommend the experience. Children are honest, and their praise artless and true. Their positive and genuine excitement and interest were infectious and I left rejoicing, while they claimed to have had fun and learned loads even though it had been hard. They reminded me why we are doing this. Just two days earlier I had listened to David Cameron arguing over educational reform and the need for better qualified teachers, particularly in primary schools. My experience in Kent only reinforced this as it became overwhelmingly evident that the children respected their teachers and looked to them as sources of knowledge, guidance and inspiration. As a university member, I felt privileged to have the opportunity to work with such a group. Academics should spend more time working with children. It’s invigorating for us, and we can help to supply that knowledge and training for teachers. We can challenge children, raise their awareness and expectations, demystify higher education, and receive a welcome jolt back into reality and the joy of our own work.

Other projects have included: getting over 40 applications from students at local state schools to learn Latin with us on a Saturday morning; editing the articles for an issue of Journal of Classics Teaching; visiting schools as far as Preston, and hosting visits from schools as far away as Athens; becoming the Press Officer for an international schools Classics competition (CICERO); running INSET and revision days to cater for students and teachers alike; collaborating with the newly refurbished Ashmolean museum to establish a suite of Classics options for schools there.

Outreach is alive and well. It no doubt looks very different to a year ago, but change can be healthy, and I remain excited about the possibilities which lie ahead.

Cressida Ryan

The Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama

Back in the Autumn of 1999, a few dozen boxes of theatrical memorabilia were moved from the European Humanities Research Centre in Golden Cross off Cornmarket to the new Classics Centre building at 67 St Giles’ which has now become the magnificent Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies at 66 St Giles’. This modest collection – the boxes along with a couple of computers and a few reference works – formed the basis of the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (AGPRD), which was founded by Edith Hall (then at Somerville) and Oliver Taplin (Magdalen) in 1996 with the help of the Leverhulme Trust in order to document the history of the performances of the ancient plays from the Renaissance to the present day. Now housed permanently in the Ioannou Centre, the Archive boasts a sizeable and significant collection of books relating to classical reception and performance history in particular, CDs and DVDs, production files containing programmes, photos and reviews, as well as original manuscripts, rehearsal scripts and set designs, in addition to an online database with details of over 9000 productions.

Both the database and the physical collection have been made possible by the enormous support and generosity of a very great number of friends and colleagues around the world, some of whom have donated their own collections built up over many years. To give one outstanding example, some years ago we were extremely lucky to receive a very important collection of material dating from the 1920s–1950s, which belonged to the German Wilhelm Leyhausen, Professor of Music at Humboldt University. Not only does this collection document Leyhausen’s own musical settings for Greek tragic odes, it also provides
Research projects

Posters:
Top right: Médée et Jason, ballet by Jean-Georges Noverre, King’s Theatre, London (1781)
Above: poster for the Delphiad Festival, Verona (1953), Leyhausen-Spiess Collection, APGRD
details of the Delphiad series of performances he spearheaded in the wake of Second World War in order to bring the young people of Europe together. Perhaps even more striking is that the collection documents the wider European avant-garde developments in ‘total’ theatre during the 20s and 30s, for which ancient drama was a major site for exploration and experimentation.

The move to the new Classics Centre building in 1999 seems especially significant with hindsight because it could be said to have anticipated and in turn to have contributed to the wider shift in the position of Classical Reception Studies within the discipline of Classics itself. No longer the poor relation left to seek shelter with distant cousins in Modern Languages, Classical Reception and the APGRD became part of the vibrant research culture within Oxford Classics, whilst still maintaining close links with colleagues in Modern Languages and forging new ones within other Faculties. Indeed, the APGRD regularly hosts events together with colleagues from French, Modern Greek, English and Music; and in the absence of any formal focus for theatre research within the University as a whole, it is often said that the Archive has become a kind of ‘Theatre Department’ by default. The Archive, moreover, has brought theatre history into the study of Classics.

During two five-year AHRC grants, the Archive extended its remit, both back in time to include the performance history of the ancient plays in antiquity, as well as including opera and dance within the orbit of modern performance. The APGRD is now embarking upon a new phase in its development with the assistance of both the Mellon Foundation and the Faculty of Classics. This has made possible my appointment as the new Director and I will be working alongside the Principal Investigator, Dr Felix Budelmann (Magdalen) and the Advisory Board, made up of the previous Directors of the APGRD and three new members (Professor Helene Foley (University of Columbia), Professor Erika Fischer-Lichte (Freie-Universität, Berlin), Dr Ruth Webb (Paris X). We are also very pleased to have appointed Naomi Setchell (Paris X). We are also very pleased to have appointed Naomi Setchell (Paris X). We are also very pleased to have appointed Naomi Setchell (Paris X).

With six edited volumes already published (Medea in Performance, Dionysus Since 69, Agamemnon in Performance, Aristophanes in Performance, New Directions in Ancient Pantomime), as well as a number of monographs published by members of the APGRD team (Hall and Macintosh, Greek Tragedy and the British Theatre 1660–1914 (2005), Taplin, Pots and Plays (2007) and Macintosh Sophocles’ Oedipus Tyrannus (2009)), we currently have four more edited volumes in print (Theorising Performance, The Ancient Dancer in the Modern World, Ancient Drama in Music for the Modern Stage and Pronamos). The reception of the ancient chorus has been central to much of the research we have been pursuing in relation to ancient performance as well as to opera and dance in the modern world. We are therefore planning a major conference on the reception of the ancient chorus to take place on 13 – 14 September 2010 in the Ioannou Centre, at which we hope to consider how ancient choruses have been a source of inspiration for much modern ‘choric’ activity and to examine from a variety of perspectives (proffered by classicists, theatre historians, anthropologists, musicologists, art historians, philosophers as well as contemporary practitioners) the ways in which choruses have interacted with audiences in antiquity and the modern world. Earlier in the summer, we will host the 10th Postgraduate Symposium on the Reception of Ancient Drama, which we run annually with RHUL’s Drama Department (June 21 –22); and in March 2011, we will inaugurate an annual Oxford/Paris graduate colloquium on classical reception, the first of which will be held in Oxford.

One major new strand of the Archive’s research, the performance of ancient epic, similarly comes out of previous research into opera and dance, for which the Homeric and Virgilian traditions in particular have proved such a rich treasure trove. The second major research strand relates to translation and Archive members are working towards developing a database of all translations of ancient drama, in the first instance in the major European vernaculars. This focus on the history of translation will be complemented by our longstanding involvement with those engaged in contemporary translation. The recent interview in our lecture series with the playwright/translator Frank McGuinness is now available for download via the University’s Open Spires project, and on 17 May Josephine Balmer will be speaking about her experiences of translating the classics. The Onassis Programme, which operates under the umbrella of the APGRD, has very recently co-produced with Northern Broadsides a new version of Medea by Tom Paulin, which premiered at the Oxford Playhouse in February and was accompanied by an exhibition of APGRD materials relating to the 2000 years of Medea’s performance history. Throughout the year, audiences will be able to enjoy regular rehearsed readings by professional actors of new versions of ancient plays organised by the Onassis Programme (for details and podcasts of previous readings, see www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk).

Fiona Macintosh

Forthcoming events

In Trinity Term there will be several named lectures, including the Lewis lecture, the Gaisford Lecture, the Don Fowler lecture on Latin literature, and the Haynes lecture on Etruscan culture. In September there will be series of events to celebrate the anniversary of the battle of Marathon. Details will be advertised nearer the time on the website of the Faculty of Classics, www.classics.ox.ac.uk
A mother in Aphrodisias mourns the death of her son (fig. 1); a generous benefactor in Oinoanda addresses the envy of his countrymen (μῶμον ἀνέντες ὅσοι φθόνον ἔχουσιν); a woman in Knidos curses those whose gossip had caused strife between her and her husband; a cuckold in Kyme beseeches demons to make him hate his treacherous wife and forget the desire for her (εἰς μεῖσος ἐλθεῖν καὶ λήθην λαβεῖν τῶν πόθων); an orator in the assembly in Olbia describes the panic caused by the barbarian threat (ὁ δῆμος διηγωνιακῶς καὶ τὸ κίνδυνον τὸ μέλλοντα); the assembly in Xanthos expresses its pity for the calamities that have befallen Kytenion (τοῖς περὶ τὸν πόλιν γεγενημένοις άκληρήμασιν πάντες Ξάνθιοι συνηχεῖος); Attalos II admits to the priest of Kybele in Pessinous that he was afraid of the envy of the Romans at his success or their Schadenfreude at his failure (μέγαν ἐδόκει κίνδυνον ἔχειν· καὶ γὰρ ἐπιτυχοῦσιν φθόνον καὶ ἀφαίρεσιν καὶ ὑφοψίαν μοχθηράν, ... καὶ ἀποτυχοῦσιν ἄρσιν πρόδηλον. οὐ γὰρ ἐπιστραφήσεσθ' ἐκείνου, ἀλλ’ ἡδέως ὄψεσθαί); a man asks Zeus in Dodona whether he is being poisoned; a soldier in Cyprus writes on a sling bullet: κύε “(get this and) get pregnant!”; the assembled crowd in Aphrodisias cries out: “envy will not prevail over fortune!” (ὁ φθόνος τύχην οὐ νικᾶ); a Roman magistrate orders the population in Messene to show joy during the celebration of an annual festival for Gaius Caesar (διετάξατο ... τὰν ἡμέραν ταύταν ... διάγειν ὅσοι δυνάμεθα λαρώτατα); a decree in Alipheira forbids the citizens to feel anger remembering past disputes (μνασιχολεῖν); full of fear of divine punishment, a sacred slave at Silanos confesses that he had sex with a flutist in the sanctuary (fig. 3).

These references to emotions in epigraphic documents have something in common: they have never been discussed in connection with the history of emotions in antiquity. None of them was found in Athens; none of them belongs to the Classical period. Unlike the overwhelming majority of literary texts, which originate in or refer to a few major urban centres and were composed by an educated minority of men, usually representing the higher strata of society, inscriptions are geographically, socially, culturally, and chronologically far more heterogeneous. It is primarily for this reason that inscriptions are a source of information for the history of emotions. Naturally, they should not be studied instead of the literary sources but in addition to and in comparison to literary sources. And of course their study should be combined with that of papyri and archaeological sources. This is now realised in the project “The social and cultural construction of emotions: the Greek paradigm”, which is funded by the European Research Council with an Advanced Investigation Grant (1.6 mi. Euro) for five years (2009–2013).

Until now, the study of emotions in the Greek (and Hellenized) world has focused on the perception of emotions in philosophy and on literary and artistic representations. In the last decade in particular, such studies have offered original and valuable insights. The new Oxford project is not inventing a subject, but is making more – and more diverse – source material available. It explores the history of emotions in the Greek world (Greece, the Greek colonies, the Hellenistic kingdoms, and the Roman East) diachronically – from c. 800 BCE to c. 500 CE – and based on inscriptions, papyri, selected literary sources, and representative archaeological material.

Although emotions are generated by neurobiological processes, they are also defined by society and culture.

Fig. 1. Unpublished grave epigram from Aphrodisias (late 2nd cent. CE). Helena mourns the death of her son Philadelphos: “How did you die? In which places? Whom were you accompanying? Seeking the soul of the deceased child, I will willingly descend to the house of Hades and miserable I will lie with you for ever.”

Fig. 2. Acclamation in Aphrodisias (late 5th cent. CE): “Envy will not prevail over fortune!”
Emotions are subject to scrutiny, appraisal, judgment, normative intervention, and linguistic and artistic expression. These processes of cognition, expression, and control depend on individual proclivities and on a variety of continually changing social and cultural parameters. From simple recommendations prescribing emotions (‘men don’t cry’, ‘rejoice!’) to legal interventions (e.g., amnesty), and from training methods for restraining anger and fear to philosophical and religious teachings concerning desire, hope, or compassion, emotions are subject to conscious social interventions, but also to influences of cultural change beyond the control of social agents. The historian seeks to understand these factors, because they have shaped his source material. The ancient historian cannot study what people have really felt; he can study processes of selection and filtering as well as the factors that have influenced the production of an ancient text or work of art; he cannot study neurobiological and psychological reactions, but he can study the external stimuli that generated them. These stimuli are social and cultural constructs.

Inscriptions exemplify some of the aspects connected with the historical study of emotions. Manifestations of emotions in inscriptions are filtered by cognitive processes, cultural norms, and social conventions. Because of their very nature, inscriptions are part of a process of communication. Which emotions will be communicated, to whom, and through which media of linguistic expression very much depends on complex and continually changing social and cultural parameters, which are reflected by inscriptions (epitaphs, letters, legal texts, confession inscriptions, prayers, dedications, curses, etc.). For instance, how emotional responses to death are manifested, theatrically displayed, re-enacted (through the loud reading of an inscription), or controlled through consolation strategies depends on civic values, gender, education, religious and eschatological beliefs, social status, age, the conditions of death (heroic death in battle, premature death in an accident, murder, illness etc.), life expectancy, trendsetters, the existence of affective family relations, concepts of inheritance and adoption, social expectations, norms limiting the extent and duration of public mourning, perceptions of the condition humaine and so on. Because of the fear of the angry dead (and of social scrutiny) the voice of the deceased individuals was sometimes manipulated, presenting them as speaking from their grave and testifying that they have received the appropriate honours. The perspective of bliss in the afterlife offered consolation; in an epigram in Thyateira, a deceased girl explains that she has appeared in her mother’s dream and urged her not to mourn, for Zeus has brought her immortal soul to heaven (ἦρπας ἥ τις ἀνάνκη; Εἰ γὰρ σοι, θάνατε. Ἐξαπίνης μου τὸ βρέφος θρῆνον λίπε, παῦε γόοιο, ψυχῆς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα, ἥν μοι Ζεὺς τερπικέρ αὐσος τεῦξας θάνατον καὶ ἀγήραον ήματα (Πἀντα ἄρματα ἐκόμισα) ής οὐρανον ἀστερόεντα), but epitaphs can also communicate genuine, deep pain, as for instance the epitaph for a girl in Thessaly called Zoe (Life): now that Zoe has died (κάθινα γάρ Ζώιν), her childless parents no longer lived a life, they only tolerated it, full of grief (λύπη καρτέρεον βίοτον). When epitaphs address the passer-by as ‘dear’, they express the desire to make him part of a continually expanding ‘emotional community’ of mourners (ην ἐσορὰς στήλην μεστὴν ἐσορὰς, φιλε, πένθους). “Death, the entire earth and the wide air give birth for you. And you suddenly snatched my baby away! Was it necessary? And if he were to grow old, wouldn’t he still be yours?” (Ἄπασα γεια καὶ πλατοῖς ἀντὶ γεινα οσι, θάνατε. Ἐξαπίνης μου τὸ βρέφος ἠρπασαι 5. Ἡ τις ἀνάνκη; Εἰ γάρ ἐγιήρα, οὐχεὶ σου ἢνιο). Whenever we read this inscription aloud (as we should), we repeat a mother’s loud cry in front of her child’s grave in Katane. How manifestations of grief are controlled by authorities is also revealed by inscriptions: in Archaic Delphi the participants in funerals were asked “neither to lament nor to scream at the graves of those who had died in the past”; in Classical Thasos the relatives of the war-dead were not allowed to wear signs of grief for more than five days or to mourn them; in Kindos the entire population was made into a community of mourners for a deceased benefactor.

Emotions have a history. The new Oxford project hopes to illuminate some of its aspects.

Primary Investigator: Angelos Chaniotis. Research Associates: Jane Anderson (Archaeology), Georgy Kantor (Inscriptions), Chrysi Kotsifu (Papyri), Christina Kuhn (Inscriptions, Jan.-Sept. 2009), Paraskevi Martzavou (Inscriptions), and Ed Sanders (Literary sources).

Angelos Chaniotis
Ancient philosophy at Oxford

The first chancellor of the University (c.1228), Robert Grosseteste, translated Aristotle’s Ethics into Latin, and wrote commentaries on the Physics and Posterior Analytics. When the Oxford University Press revived in the late 16th century, the first book it printed was a commentary on Aristotle’s ethics by John Case (Speculum moraliun quaestionum in universam ethicen Aristotelis, 1585). Ever since the revival of philosophy in Oxford in the 19th century, the study of ancient philosophy has held and still holds a prominent place in both Classics and Philosophy. In modern times some leading Oxford philosophers (including Benjamin Jowett, John Cook Wilson, Sir David Ross, John Ackrill) and Classical scholars (including Ingram Bywater, E.R. Dodds, Donald Russell) have been leaders in the study of the Greek and Roman philosophers.

Today Oxford is one of the leading centres in the world for the study of ancient philosophy (i.e., the philosophical works written in Greek and Latin between the 6th century BC and the 6th century AD), just as it is one of the leading centres for Philosophy and Classics. This is only reasonable, for we cannot understand Classical antiquity or the development of philosophy unless we understand the philosophy of the Greek and Roman world. For the philosopher, ancient philosophy throws light on the sources and development of fundamental questions in central areas of philosophy, including: the relation between knowledge and belief; the objectivity of moral values; the challenge of scepticism; language and meaning; logic and argument; body and mind. For the theologian, the metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle provides the philosophical basis for the Christian theology of the patristic and mediaeval periods and for mediaeval Jewish and Islamic thought. For the student of Classical antiquity, Greek and Roman philosophy are important influences on the literature, religion, medicine, mathematics, and scientific thought of antiquity. Moreover, ancient political philosophy reveals the views of intelligent students of political life, and so illuminates the study of ancient history and ancient society.

The study of Classics and Philosophy in Oxford has always emphasized the central place of ancient philosophy. Undergraduates who read Literae Humaniores can study ancient philosophy in both Mods and Greats. In Literae Humaniores, and in the other Honour Schools that include Philosophy, they study ancient philosophy in combination with contemporary philosophy. Many study it in Greek or Latin; many more study it in English translation. They have a choice of authors and texts from many periods of the ancient world. Plato’s Republic and Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics have been, and remain, central in the study of ancient philosophy in Oxford. Students also have an opportunity to study Early Greek Philosophy (the ‘Presocratics’), other major works of Plato and Aristotle, and the Hellenistic philosophers (Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics).

Oxford is a lively centre of graduate study and research in ancient philosophy. Graduate students reading for the BPhil (normally the first two years of the DPhil course) may specialize in ancient philosophy, while also working in other areas of philosophy. Since 2008 a new degree, the MST in ancient philosophy, has been open to students who want to spend a year on specialized study in this area. (After a second year, they may be admitted to the DPhil.) Since Oxford is fortunate to have an unusually large number of members of the Faculty who teach ancient philosophy, students have a wide choice of supervisors for their graduate study.

The study of ancient philosophy is necessarily interdisciplinary, and most of those who teach it in Oxford also pursue research in some other area of philosophy or Classics. Many people share interests in the ethics, metaphysics, and psychology of Plato and Aristotle, and in their relevance to questions in contemporary philosophy. But they also cover a much wider range. Among the areas in which we aim to develop co-operative research involving Classics and Philosophy is ancient science and medicine; a joint appointment in this area would both strengthen our present resources and lead us in a new and fruitful direction.

An outline of the research of a few colleagues may suggest some of the breadth and depth of work in ancient philosophy here:

DIRK OBBINK (Christ Church) combines the study of ancient philosophy with papyrology. He is director of the Imaging Papyri project. He has worked intensively on the Herculaneum papyri, and especially on the Epicurean philosopher Philodemus. He has published Philodemus On Piety.

TOBIAS REINHARDT (Corpus Christi) is working on a edition of Cicero’s Academica (for the Oxford Classical Texts) and on a commentary on the same work, in which Cicero examines the debate, conducted over some 200 years, between Academic sceptics and Stoics about the nature of knowledge. His research interests cover Latin prose, rhetoric, and literary criticism. His work combines close philological analysis with broader interests in intellectual history and Greco-Roman culture.

DAVID CHARLES (Oriel) has published Aristotle’s Philosophy of Action, and Aristotle on Meaning and Essence. In his current research he examines the way in which philosophers today understand experience as a purely psychological phenomenon which then needs to be reconnected with a purely physiological set of brain processes. He contrasts Descartes’ conception of mind and body with the Aristotelian view that experience is essentially inextricably psycho-physical.

URSULA COOPE (Corpus Christi) works on time, change, and infinity. She has published Time for Aristotle. Her current work examines Aristotle’s views on action, animal psychology, and rational and non-rational desire.
Prizes and distinctions

Once more members of the faculty, or research projects lead by them, have been recognised through prizes and distinctions.

The Beazley Archive, along with six other museums, collections, and libraries in Oxford, has been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize, in recognition of its outstanding quality and high public benefit; details may be found on the website of the Beazley Archive (www.beazley.ox.ac.uk). The director of the Beazley Archive is Professor Donna Kurtz.

Sir John Boardman, Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art emeritus, has been awarded one of the first Onassis International Prizes in Law and Humanities (see www.onassis.gr).

The Archaeological Institute of America has presented the 2010 James R. Wiseman Book Award to Judith McKenzie for The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, 300 BC–AD 700 (New Haven 2007). The announcement states: “McKenzie’s book is a monumental accomplishment. It provides the first comprehensive treatment of the ancient architecture of Alexandria, one of the principal cities of the Mediterranean in antiquity, from its founding by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.E. to the aftermath of the Islamic conquest of 642 C.E. In doing so, it constitutes the culmination of years of meticulous research by McKenzie and others on countless buildings through many phases of urban development. McKenzie draws on archaeological, literary, and epigraphic evidence to show that, despite the harsh ravages of time, much of this ancient city can be reconstructed and understood. Her study exposes a vibrant and innovative architectural tradition, informed by the cultural interactions that took place within the city’s limits.” Judith McKenzie’s research expenses were generously funded by the British Academy, the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, the Australian Research Council, Miss Rhys-Davids’ bequest to St Hugh’s College, and the Craven, Griffith Egyptian, and Wainwright Funds of Oxford University. Those of A.T. Reyes, who co-authored one chapter, were supported by the Dillon Fund of Groton School.

Jim Adams, Senior Research Fellow at All Souls, has been awarded the Kenyon Medal of the British Academy for Classical Studies and Archaeology. The announcement states: “In a scholarly career of more than thirty years, pursued at the Universities of Manchester, Reading and Oxford, James Adams has made a series of major contributions to the study of the Latin language in the Roman Empire. After early work on particularly important collections of texts from various parts of the empire, including Egypt, Britain and North Africa, as well as a host of articles on detailed philological and linguistic matters, he published two major and authoritative books, Bilingualism and the Latin Language (2003) and The Regional Diversification of Latin (2007). No scholar of the late 20th or early 21st century has made a greater contribution to understanding the development of the Latin language, and its relationship to other languages in contemporary use, through detailed analysis of the documentary and other non-literary evidence from the provinces of the Roman Empire.”

Christopher Pelling, Regius Professor of Greek, has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Prizes and distinctions

Thomas Johansen (Brasenose) works on natural philosophy, and especially on causation, sense-perception, the intellect, the nature of the soul, and its relationship to the body. He has published Plato’s Natural Philosophy and Aristotle on the Sense-Organs.

Jessica Moss (Balliol) has examined Plato’s and Aristotle’s theories of human motivation: desire, emotions, pleasure, reason, and their interactions. She is especially interested in the role of imagination and appearance in the explanation of action and in ethics.

Christopher Shields (Lady Margaret Hall) has published especially on metaphysics and philosophy of mind. His books include Classical Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction; and Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle; and Aristotle. He is completing a translation with commentary of Aristotle’s De Anima (Clarendon Series). He also writes on contemporary philosophy of mind and metaphysics, on Plato, Aquinas, and Suarez.

In recent years Oxford has been fortunate to be able to appoint new colleagues in ancient philosophy who have studied and taught elsewhere. They find Oxford a congenial and stimulating place. In their own words, ‘the research environment at Oxford is intense and highly collaborative: there is pretty much a workshop, graduate seminar, or reading group in ancient philosophy for every day of the week. … I came to Oxford for the opportunity to be part of a community of scholars working on topics close to my own interests, and for the opportunity to teach the texts I study to dedicated, eager, intelligent students. I am very glad I did. Co-teaching with other faculty members, attending seminars and workshop talks, being part of reading groups, and having tutorials and supervisions with excellent students, have been extremely rewarding; I do not think there is any better place to do ancient philosophy in the world.’

Terence Irwin
The syllabus has not changed much, from then to now, and for a good reason. The Greeks of the Roman period studied their own classics at school; and it was their set books that survived, copied and recopied, through the Middle Ages. These survivors peopled the revival of Greek in the Renaissance, and they people our syllabus still. But of course there is a difference. In the second century AD the literate enthusiast could widen his reading from efficient book-shops and in well-stocked libraries. By the fifth century, these resources were disappearing, and with them at least 90% of the Greek literature that had once circulated. On bad days, classical scholars faced a depressing calculation. Seven plays of Sophocles survive; originally there were 120. Apply the same rate of survival to Shakespeare, and we should be relying on no more than two of his plays and a fragment.

For a long time, it seemed that only resignation would serve: *quod vides perisse, perditum ducas*. And then, little more than a century ago, began a mini-Renaissance. Archaeologists in Egypt came upon the towns and villages of the Egyptian Greeks, the colonial class that dominated Egypt for some thousand years after Alexander the Great. These marginal Hellenes read classical Greek, and the dry sand of Egypt has preserved thousands of their books and papers. Here at last was a limited entrée to those lost libraries. The process of excavation and decipherment, in which Oxford papyrologists have played a leading part, began in the 1890s and still continues. As a result, we can now study, in fragments, works and authors and even whole genres that had been lost since the fall of Rome. There are the new works by known authors, like the satyr *Ichneutae* of Sophocles and the romantic *Hypsipyle* of Euripides. There are the famous authors whose fame had not saved their work from oblivion, among them songs of Sappho, speeches of Hyperides, comedies by Menander and elegies by Callimachus. There are the populist genres that intellectuals saw no need to preserve – the mime, the comic novel, the political pamphlet.

The readers of Greek Egypt are a study in themselves, a snapshot of literary culture in the age of Plutarch. They read the classical curriculum: Homer above all, Euripides, Herodotus and Thucydides, Plato and Demosthenes and more Isocrates than we would nowadays think compatible with health and safety. They read also for amusement and information: Philaeinis *On Seductions*, Alcidamas *In Praise of Poverty*, cannibalism and highway robbery in *Phoenician Story*, a parody of *Iphigenia in Tauris* staffed by flatulent clowns and unintelligible Indians – and beyond that, cookbooks, medical manuals, handbooks of divination, and tables of conjugation for the contract verbs (which they found increasingly difficult). In between these extremes they found time for a wide range of masterpieces, and so preserved them for us.

So it is from their books that our generation can read, for the first time, Pindar’s vision of the third temple at Delphi, all bronze and gold, or Menander’s lovemonger soldier mooching in the rain, or Heracles and the Nemean Lion as gently guyed by Callimachus. The new finds give a new pleasure; they also upset the generalisations of the old textbooks. We knew about Archilochus the father of invective, and Simonides the master of poignant lyric: now we know that Archilochus told myth in his elegies, and that Simonides celebrated the Battle of Plataea in an elegiac mini-epic. Euripides’ *Helen* supposes that only a virtual Helen went to Troy, while the real Helen lived a guiltless life in Egypt: we now know that this face-saving manoeuvre derives from a lyric epic of Stesichorus, a century and more earlier. The Greek novel, the last and most influential of hellenic inventions, survives in five medieval texts: papyri have shown how the genre originally spread beyond its Barbara Cartland essentials to the picaresque and the orientalising. Hellenistic poetry, now again in fashion, has gained a poet

POxy 3965 Simonides
Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Imaging Papyri Project, University of Oxford
who formerly existed only in a few quotations: Posidippus turns out to have manufactured epigrams for all, in a society where a man giving a jewel to his mistress required some well-turned verses to go with it.

Such new finds in Greek naturally affect also our understanding of Latin. Roman writers relate to their Greek predecessors in different ways: they borrow, they vary, they trump. From recent papyri we can see in detail how Plautus vulgarised Menander, Lucretius modelled his dialectic on Empedocles, Petronius added genius to the Greek comic novel; we can now join the ancient reader in spotting an allusion to Philodemus in Horace, or tuning in to the free fantasy on a theme of Callimachus with which Virgil begins the Third Georgic.

If you look at Mods and Greats now, you will find the same great central authors as before – Homer, Thucydides, Plato. But alongside these there are substantial texts that did not even exist when I myself was an undergraduate. Greek Lyric Poetry now includes fragments of Alcman at his most voluptuous (first published in 1957) alongside Stesichorus' poems *Heracles* and the three-bodied *Geryon* (1967) and *Sons of Oedipus* (1977). Greek Comedy requires Menander’s *Dyscolus* (1959), along with *Sikyonias* (1964), *Dis Exapaton* (1968), *Aspis* and *Samia* (1969), and *Misoumenos* (constructed from eleven different papyri between 1910 and 1970). Thus even the syllabus moves, often a generation late but not always – those opting for Hellenistic Poetry read not only earlier papyrus finds of Callimachus but the epigrams of Posidippus first published in 2001.

Classics are classics because they display an immortalité mouvante, said Malraux. That movement resides partly in the changing society in which we read them, partly in the changing intellectual currents which direct our reading, but partly also in the new finds which epigraphists and papyrologists contribute from day to day. The Athenians, who, according to Acts (once but no longer a set book) ’spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing’, would surely have approved.

**Peter Parsons**

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### Epigrams and one-liners, versions and diversions

**The joy of (mainly Latin) verse composition**

The story is told of Tom Brown, a student at Christ Church in the 1680s, who was summoned for some misdemeanour by the unloveable Dean, Dr. Fell. The Dean opened a volume of Martial at random and asked Brown to translate epigram I. 33:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare;} \\
\text{hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.}
\end{align*}
\]

Brown allegedly turned away decanal wrath by offering a snap translation as follows:

I do not love thee, Dr Fell, the reason why I cannot tell; 
But this I know, and know full well: I do not love thee, Dr Fell.

Brown's version, now better known than the Latin original, is a model for converting elegiac couplets into English. Rhyming couplets capture the flavour of Martial's sharp *ad hominem* barbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{cur non mitto meos tibi, Pontiliane, libellos?} \\
\text{ne mihi tu mittas, Pontiliane, tuos. (7.3)}
\end{align*}
\]

You know why I don't send you poems, Pontilian, you hack? 
It's so that you, Pontilian, won't send me poems back.

The Welsh schoolmaster John Owen (1563–1622) emulated Martial with his own brand of acerbic wit. In his day he was a celebrated composer of (neo-)Latin epigrams, some of which I translated into English couplets for a paper delivered to the Classical Association in 2009:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{esse in natura vacuum cur, Marce, negasti?} \\
\text{cui tamen ingenii tam fit inane caput. (1.23)}
\end{align*}
\]

That Nature has a vacuum, Marcus, how can you deny? 
The vacuum inside your head is clearer than the sky.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Orpheus uxorem raptam repetivit ab Orco;}
\end{align*}
\]
Latin verse

duxit ab inferno femina nulla virum. (V.6)

Orpheus brought back his wife from Hades, so they tell; Was ever there a woman born who saved her man from Hell?

The pithy form of the elegiac couplet is an apt vehicle for cheeky humour (as Ovid said, *risisse Cupido dicitur*), and ideal for incorporating for puns on Greek and Latin words. There is a long tradition of such wordplay in England. ‘Should one say *thalassa* or *thalatta*? The latter, the latter!’ schoolboys once punned on Xenophon’s memorable phrase. Then there is the alleged telegram sent by General Napier after he conquered the province of Sindh without orders, *PECCAVI*: ‘I have sinned’, both an apology and a play on ‘I have Sindh’. This came to my mind when the cellist Paul Tortelier told me how he had been furious with his son when the latter carelessly broke his cello-bow by accident. In his anger, he ‘made the tragedy complete’ by snatching up two fine bows made by the master-craftsman Dominique Peccatte (1810–1874) and breaking them in two. He had not forgiven himself, and took small consolation by letting him take his final bow.

Puns on names are found in the elegiacs of Catullus (‘Lesbius est pulcer’) and Martial, and can be a useful starting-point for epigrams on individuals. Don Fowler, my predecessor at Jesus, had a name ripe for punning, since ‘Don’ (as in ‘Oxford don’) derives from *dominus* and a fowler is someone who nets birds: *eligit Andreas uxorem: extollite cuncti.* I subsequently worked this, together with his name, into a suitably contorted hexameter

*Torto alio, en, arcu, tandem peccata resolvit*

which may be loosely translated as a clerihew:

Behold, Tortelier
on judgment-day:
Having broken two Pecattes in a row,
let him take his final bow.

Puns on names are found in the elegiacs of Catullus (‘Lesbius est pulcer’) and Martial, and can be a useful starting-point for epigrams on individuals. Don Fowler, my predecessor at Jesus, had a name ripe for punning, since ‘Don’ (as in ‘Oxford don’) derives from *dominus* and a fowler is someone who nets birds:

*verborum Dominus, Venator nomine vero,*
*non avium, pulchrae sed rationis, erat.*

His name spoke true, he was a Don of words,
And Fowler of fine wisdom – not of birds.

When Peter North retired as Principal of Jesus, I suggested the following for a commemorative silver bowl donated to the Fellows:

*hoc soci grate fruimur memoresque cotino,*
*lux Borealis in his aestibus usque miciet.*

In grateful memory we Fellows use this vessel fine:
Within this College may a Northern light forever shine.

After North’s successor John Krebs (German ‘crab’) was appointed to the House of Lords, I shrank from proposing 

*cancer eat rectum* (‘let the crab go on a straight path’) in preference for an epigrammatic fable:

*olim cancer erat, sed solum nomine pravus:*
*nobilis, ecce, redit qui modo cancer erat.*

There was a man whose name was Krebs, but crabby just in name: He who was crabby once, behold, a noble Lord became.

I once observed to Luke Pitcher (then a graduate student, now Classics Tutor at Somerville) that his surname in Latin was *cadus*. No, he said, ‘pitcher’ is *urceus*. I sent him an apologetic email:

*nempe ex ore tuo veri profunditur aqua – Urceus es recte, nec potes esse Cadus.*

The simple truth flows from your mouth, I see: You are a ‘Pitcher’ – ‘Jar’ you cannot be.

Luke coolly responded by return:

*Urceus esse quidem dicit; sed gratia vino dulcior ex labris stillat, amice, meis!*

‘Pitcher’ I am; but from these lips of mine, My friend, what drips is sweeter far than wine!

When the Grammatikos Andrew Hobson got engaged to be married and asked me to mark the occasion with elegiac verse, I could hardly turn him down. I wrote Latin and Greek versions of a celebratory couplet (replacing ‘Hobson’s choice’ with ‘he is driven to love’ and ‘man is a slave’ respectively):

*eligit Andreas uxorem: extollite cuncti.*
*eligit, atqui non eligat: actus amat.*

Brave Andrew chose a wife to wed: now praise him with one voice. He chose, and yet he didn’t choose; for his was Hobson’s choice.

*εἴλετ ἀρ. Ανδρέιος γαμετήν μακαρίζετε πάντες, εἴλετο, καὶ μήν οὐχ εἴλετο· δουλός ἁνήρ.*

As many instances above indicate, when verbatim translation is impossible one must find a suitable equivalent in the target language. This principle is illustrated by a number of mottos that I have translated into Latin over the years. In one case, when a society of retired professionals called ‘The Has Beens’ wanted a Latin tag, the name reminded me of the Pythagorean injunction against eating beans (allegedly because they contained human souls, or perhaps because beans induce wind). I suggested a pentameter line, *nos meritis fruimur, Pythagorasque fabis, to be translated ‘Retired we enjoy our means, just as Pythagoras has beans’; but the society were bound to reject a motto implying that they were Old Farts. On another occasion, I was asked to translate ‘No one should depart this earth before they have starred in a show’ for an old people’s home serving former actors and ‘people with
A harder challenge was presented to me by Stephen Wolfram, the physicist, computer scientist, and inventor of the computation program Mathematica, who wanted to present the mathematician Gregory Chaitin a specially minted medallion based on that once dedicated to Leibniz (1646–1716). The Leibniz medallion shown on Chaitin’s website neatly summarises the binary system with a Latin inscription: OMECUS EX NIHILIO DUCENDIS, SUFFICIT UNUM 

‘For all numbers to be generated from 0, 1 is sufficient’. Chaitin himself has devised the mathematical concept of \( \Omega \), ‘for all numbers to be generated from 0, 1 is sufficient’. He proposed VINCIT VELOCITAS, NON SINE VIRIBUS as being suitably lapidary Latin, but Acer simply repeated that he wanted a translation of the phrase ‘Every second counts, but so does the size of your nutsack’ (Oliver glossed ‘I suppose ‘nutsack’ is a euphemism like ‘lunchbox’). Turning this into Latin elegiacs, I have placed one testis next to the other, and my English version brings out the mischievous subtext:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vincendi studium, sed non sine viribus, urget:} \\
\text{tempus erat testis, testis et acer ego.}
\end{align*}
\]

A Neo-Latin composition is currently thriving in Cambridge, where in the past few years David Money has edited several publications to which versifiers have contributed compositions in various metres. In 2008, the subject of one such volume was the Battle of Oudenarde (1708) on its three hundredth anniversary. While a single distich is ideal for translating a witty one-liner, more than one is usually needed for more serious purposes. But the sound and meaning of Oudenarde (from Flemish oude aarde, ‘old earth’ or ‘old field’) inspired me to submit a Greek epigram in the style of Simonides with punning intent (as underlined):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ΟΥΔΕΝ ΑΡΗΣ ΑΡΔΕΙ ΠΕ∆ΙΟΝ ΠΑΛΗΝ ΑΙΜΑΤΙ ΚΟΥΡΟΝ} \\
\text{ΟΣ ΚΡΥΟΕΝΤΟΣ ΞΕΧΩ ΟΥΔΕΝ Α∆ΗΝ ΠΟΛΕΜΟΥ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

 Assyrian in the Boat Race by the heaviest Oxford crew on record, the cox Acer Nethercott wanted a Latin version of ‘Every second counts, but so does the size of your nutsack.’ I explained that one could hardly include a word like scrotum in a Latin inscription, and suggested adding the words ACER EGO TESTIS. Inscribed on the clock, ‘Keen witness am I’, would imply that Time itself had attested to the close victory, and would also allude to ‘nutsack’ since testis, the root of ‘testify’, ‘attest’ etc., was Latin for ‘testicle’. Turning this into Latin elegiacs, I have placed one testis next to the other, and my English version brings out the mischievous subtext:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{intellectum, sed non sine viribus, urget:} \\
\text{tempus erat testis, testis et acer ego.}
\end{align*}
\]

Desire for victory drove the weighty crew to beat the clocks; Time witnessed how they stroked the line, and their eager cox.

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\]

The War-god waters fields with youthful blood, 

\[
\text{ΟΥΔΕΝ ΑΡΗΣ ΑΡΔΕΙ ΠΕ∆ΙΟΝ ΠΑΛΗΝ ΑΙΜΑΤΙ ΚΟΥΡΟΝ} \\
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Greek palaeography

In 2009 I was asked to compose verses in honour of Rachel Chapman, Classics exams secretary on her twenty-fifth anniversary at the Faculty. As Chairman of Classics Mods some years earlier, I had appreciated Rachel’s invaluable scrutiny of the draft exam papers, and my first thought was to create a version of Keats’ sonnet *On first looking into Rachel> Chapman’s *<final draft of a Mods> Homer <IB exam paper> as follows:

Much have I travell’d in the realms of Mods,
And many goodly scripts and questions seen;
Round many Texts and Contexts have I been
In fealty to the shade of E.R. Dodds.
Oft of one Mods Exam had I been told
That Homer 1B ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till Rachel Chapman wrought it as in gold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout T aplin, when with eagle eyes
He scann’d the Grecian urn — and all his men
look’d at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a desk in Magdalen.

I soon abandoned translating this parody (*multas per chartas et multa per aequora vectus...*?), and presented the following instead:

assidua adiutrix, viginti quinque per annos
hic veterum data sunt scripta probanda tibi;
inspiens chartas, seu Graece sive Latine,
e scriptis poteras omne fugare molum,
semper ut exactam mendis maculisque remotis
rem faceres: grates hic tibi versus agat.

Untiring helpmate, five and twenty years
you’ve scrutinised the Classics papers here;
in checking texts in Latin and in Greek
you’ve extirpated errors everywhere,
producing every time in flawless form
the final drafts: with this our thanks we bear.

Continuous elegiacs of this kind tend to lose the epigrammatic flavour of the single distich, a flavour nicely captured by Coleridge in the case of the English rhyming couplet:

What is an epigram? A dwarfish whole;
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

The last word on the Latin equivalent goes to John Owen (7.106), writing to his friend Theodore Prince:

*uno non possum, quantum te diligo, versu
dicere; si satis est distichon, ecce duos.*

My love for you is such, one verse won’t do;
A couplet may suffice — so here are two.

**ARMAND D’ANGOUR**


2. Cf. Francis Drake’s alleged comment on the retreat of the Spanish Armada ‘Cantharides’ (‘the Spanish fly’), Lord Clyde’s ‘Nunc fortunatus sum’ (‘I am in luck now’) on the capture of Lucknow, Lord Dalhousie’s ‘Vovi’ (‘I have owed’) on the conquest of Oudh, etc.

3. ‘Hobson’s Choice’ is defined as ‘a free choice in which only one option is offered;’ the phrase originates with Thomas Hobson, a 17th-century Cambridge stable owner, who used to offer customers the option of taking ‘either the horse in the nearest stall, or none at all’.


5 Iona McLaren, an undergraduate at Oriel, draws my attention to D. Money, ed. *Oudenarde* (Duckworth 2005), p. 12, Tim Rood gives various versions and attributions.

6. According to a handy etymology, *testis* acquired the meaning ‘witness’ because Roman men swore on their private parts when giving judicial ‘testimony’; but philologists are dubious that this is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth...


Greek palaeography at Oxford

Palaeography is a vital ancillary discipline for those who study Greek culture in its various phases. The tiny fraction of ancient literature that we can read was exposed for many centuries to the risks of copying by hand. It was not magically preserved in perfect condition until printing made preservation significantly easier at the end of the fifteenth century. Medieval manuscripts, though supplemented to some extent by papyri from Herculaneum from the late eighteenth century and from Egypt since the nineteenth, are still the main witnesses to the texts. Many scribes can be identified; some are calligraphic, others hard to decipher; some manuscripts offer a text relatively free from error, others exhibit variant readings which reflect the efforts of medieval scholars to make sense of difficult passages.

In August Lincoln College, in association with the Faculty of Classics, will be holding its Third International Summer School in Greek Palaeography. The School offers an intensive course lasting a week. Its aim is to give graduate students or academics at an early stage of their career a basic introduction to an ancillary discipline which is not included in the curriculum of most universities. The students...
The initiative was remarkable; the 29 participants came from 16 countries. Their interests were also very varied: apart from classical philologists there were Byzantinists, New Testament scholars, and students of patristics; if they had all been graduate students in Oxford they would probably have been spread across at least four faculties. This variety is a significant indication of the importance of the subject, which makes it all the more regrettable that so few leading institutions ever make provision for it.

When the time came to organise the second Summer School in 2008 we had some idea of what to expect, but once again we were surprised: there were 76 applicants, and as it became clear that the largest manageable number would be 32, the task of selection was even more difficult than before. Given the level of demand it was not long before requests were made for the course to be held every year. One would like to be able to do just that, and teachers of the right calibre are available; the difficulty is, as so often, financial. So far we have been successful in obtaining grants and donations – in 2008 a very generous grant from the Greek Ministry of Education made a big difference. The expenses consist of (i) modest honoraria, and travel expenses when appropriate, for the instructors, (ii) a smaller amount to meet the cost of inviting established scholars to give plenary lectures illustrating their researches, (iii) last but not least, bursaries for students, many of whom need help, especially if they come from Eastern Europe. In these difficult times we reckon to be able to raise just enough money if we appeal in alternate years; but to attempt it annually would be risky.

In Oxford palaeography was taught for a long time by T.W. Allen of Queen’s (d. 1950), and Edgar Lobel, before he became a very eminent papyrologist, had made a significant contribution to the study of Greek copyists active in the Italian Renaissance. After the Second World War there was for a time relatively little interest in the subject in Oxford; but the exceptionally learned German refugee Paul Maas was available to help if requested, and Ruth Barbour of the Bodleian Library took up the subject, eventually publishing Greek literary hands A.D. 400 – 1600 in 1981. By that time she had left the service of the Library and I had begun to lecture on palaeography and transmission of texts. Classes more specifically devoted to palaeography became a regular feature of the Faculty’s programme when the university instituted one-year and two-year graduate degrees with course work, and I often had about a dozen students from various countries in my class. On my retirement from Lincoln a very generous donation from Professor Mervin Dilts made it possible for the college, assisted by the equally generous policy of the Lyell Electors, to establish a short-term research fellowship in Greek Palaeography and Textual Criticism, which ensured that essential tuition would still be available. When the holder, Dr Gaul, left to take a permanent position in Budapest, we were fortunate to obtain the services of Dr Christos Simelidis, the holder of a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship; now that he too is leaving, to take up a lectureship in Salonica, we are beginning to make plans to ensure that the teaching continues. In the longer term we aim to set up a fully endowed position.

The website of the Greek Palaeography Summer School can be found under http://users.ox.ac.uk/~linc0686/

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