PLUS!
ANNUS MIRABILIS: ASHMOLEAN LATIN INSCRIPTIONS PROJECT CELEBRATES ITS FIRST YEAR

ALUMNI NEWS
A double first: the Faculty launches a new webpage for alumni, and a range of new alumni events

OUTREACH
A busy year for the Outreach Programme: the return of Saturday Morning Latin, the start of Classics in Communities, and more

PEOPLE
Undergraduates, Postgraduates; Arrivals, Departures, Major research funding awards

BOOKS
New books and recent publications

FACULTY OF CLASSICS
NEWSLETTER

Song of Sappho
EXCITING NEW DISCOVERY FROM THE ANCIENT WORLD

From obelisk to orbit
THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF ANCIENT DOCUMENTS GOES INTO SPACE

Manar al–Athar
A PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE WITH CLASSICAL HERITAGE FROM TRIPOLI TO DAMASCUS

Bronze rostra
INTRIGUING FINDS FROM THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

Coin hoards
A GROWING DATABASE OF HOARDS FROM THE ROMAN EMPIRE
As I slowly fade out as Chair of the Faculty, it is good to end with continued good news. This year, a notable event was our first Alumni Day held on (we hope not inappropriately) the Isles of Scilly, which was very oversubscribed and by all accounts very successful: we plan the same next year. Our developing links to a wider public were boosted also by two pleasing occurrences. First, the Division’s generous permission to fill our Outreach Officer post on a permanent basis, a generous acknowledgement of our national and international efforts; the University’s van Houten Fund also contributed £15,000, which stands beside other grants acknowledged elsewhere. Secondly, we are very glad to look forward to restarting our Saturday Latin Teaching Scheme for local state schools, as a result of the Stonehouse Foundation’s generous gift.

We have seriously addressed our financial situation. The Faculty has again been very successful in securing posts under the Teaching Fund scheme, in conjunction with colleges, and now has some ten posts funded in perpetuity. Major research grants are still being won: Tobias Reinhardt (Major) and Justine McConnell (Early Career) secured Leverhulme awards, Dirk Obbink major awards from the AHRC and JISC (which funds IT projects in British Universities), and we will welcome Chris Dickenson on a European Union-Marie Curie Fellowship. After a small but not unprofitable start last year, we began to experiment seriously with the use of the Ioannou Centre for generating income from conferences, and we have just welcomed our first large summer school. There is obviously a balance to be struck between the academic demands on the building and our need to address our financial situation, but we have put in place ways in which we hope will strike it. Finally, we are now in a position to appoint to a new post in Byzantine Archaeology and Visual Culture, in association with History and the School of Archaeology. Other successes are mentioned elsewhere, but one must highlight here the magnificent achievement of Martin West in becoming one of only 24 members of the Order of Merit.

As I leave, I must thank very warmly for all their help the five Heads of Administration and Acting Heads who have guided my steps: we have just said farewell to Peter Mandrich and now welcome Dr Lindsay Jude. I am enormously grateful to my colleagues, especially on the Faculty Board, for their generous advice, guidance and wisdom. I close by welcoming my successor, Teresa Morgan, and hoping she gets as much from her time as I did myself.

PROFESSOR FIONA MACINTOSH

The Ioannou Centre continues to serve its original purpose as the hub of serious intellectual exchange amongst classical scholars from around the world. Its architectural beauty contributes no small measure to its success.

There have been some minor building works undertaken during the past few months, including the siting of a reception desk outside the Outreach Room and the work on the second floor to enclose the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents with glass windows on safety and also temperature grounds.

The Reading Room on the ground floor is now the home of a sizeable collection of books, which will shortly be catalogued; it is an invaluable space for young scholars as well as retired senior Faculty members, who are able to make use of the cupboard for their personal possessions.

Finally, Christ Church has kindly loaned the Centre a portrait of Gilbert Murray, which will shortly be hung, together with portraits of E R Dodds (already in the Faculty’s possession) and other eminent Oxford classicists (male and female), outside the First Floor Seminar Room. We would be most grateful to hear of any suggestions for suitable subjects for inclusion and of any portraits that might be made available to the Centre on loan.

If you have any concerns or thoughts about how we can improve the Centre, don’t hesitate to contact me: fiona.macintosh@classics.ox.ac.uk.

A E Housman declined it, and Isaiah Berlin would have done so, because he believed it would involve wearing a funny hat, but a tearful mother not persuaded him to accept.

There are only 24 at any one time, and Martin is one of only 28 scholars to have received it. Previous holders from Cambridge include Dr Barnaby Taylor, currently Emeritus Fellow in Classics at New College, will start a three-year post in October as Departmental Lecturer in Latin Language and Literature while Prof Tobias Reinhardt is on special research leave.

In January, Dr Nicholas Ray joined the Faculty as Assistant Director of the Oxford Roman Economy Project following his role as Research Associate for the Trans-Sahara Project at the University of Leicester.

Ben Cardridge and Henry Spelman have joined the Faculty’s language teaching team as part-time Language Instructors in Latin and Ancient Greek.

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The Ioannou Centre
FROM OBELISK TO ORBIT
THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF ANCIENT DOCUMENTS GOES INTO SPACE

MAGGY SASANOW

The Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (CSAD) has recently become involved in a remarkable cross-discipline enterprise, which becomes more interesting by the day. Combining two of the Centre’s current projects, the Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions (CPI), and Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI), the CSAD has recently begun preparation for the capture of RTI and 3D interactive images of the 6.7 metre tall obelisk from Philae in Egypt, now situated in the grounds of the Kingston Lacy estate in Dorset. The obelisk was discovered in 1815 by William John Bankes, heir to the Kingston Lacy Estate, ‘at whose suggestion and expense’ it was transferred from Egypt to Dorset under the direction of the flambouyant Italian circus performer and archaeologist, Giovanni Belzoni. Today the obelisk forms part of the largest private collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts in the UK, now on permanent display in the house and grounds at Kingston Lacy. The CSAD’s CPI project is creating a corpus of up-to-date editions of over 500 Greek and multilingual inscriptions on stone from Egypt during its rule by the dynasty founded in 323 BC by Alexander the Great. The obelisk’s inscription is that it can reveal surface information that cannot be seen with the naked eye. While the scripts on the Kingston Lacy obelisk are in a reasonably good state of preservation, and reading is still possible, the opportunity to improve the accuracy of the text, and to find and identify elements of pigment in the inscription, provide sufficient reason for re-examining the monument. For the National Trust, which now owns the Kingston Lacy estate, there are also conservation benefits to be gained from the creation of a permanent, accurate, interactive virtual image of the obelisk as it is today, since gradual deterioration of the original over time is inevitable. As well as its particular epigraphical interest for the CSAD, the obelisk is set to achieve considerably wider significance later this year: its name has been given to the robotic craft that in November 2014 will attempt a landing on Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, as part of a mission launched in 2004 by the European Space Agency (ESA). The main robotic spacecraft is named Rosetta, after the famous Egyptian obelisk at its base, featuring a decree in three scripts, and the lander is named after the Nile island of Philae, where the Kingston Lacy obelisk was discovered. Having identified the obelisk as a rewarding though challenging object for RTI and 3D imaging, the CSAD team has been encouraged by this exciting coincidence to carry out the exercise as part of a multidisciplinary focus: on the obelisk planned to culminate at the time of the comet landing in November. Imaging of the obelisk, together with another obelisk fragment and a sarcophagus nearby in the Kingston Lacy grounds, will be carried out in the early autumn, and time-lapse photography will record the whole process. An exhibition and a short documentary film on the obelisk and its flambouyant history, and the CSAD’s part in recording it, are also being discussed, all to be ready to mark the style of the landing of its namesake, Philae, on the comet in November.

RTI is a photographic method that captures a subject’s surface shape and colour and enables the interactive re-lighting of the subject from any direction. A particular strength of RTI is that it can reveal surface information that cannot be seen with the naked eye. While the scripts on the Kingston Lacy obelisk are in a reasonably good state of preservation, and reading is still possible, the opportunity to improve the accuracy of the text, and to find and identify elements of pigment in the inscription, provide sufficient reason for re-examining the monument. For the National Trust, which now owns the Kingston Lacy estate, there are also conservation benefits to be gained from the creation of a permanent, accurate, interactive virtual image of the obelisk as it is today, since gradual deterioration of the original over time is inevitable. As well as its particular epigraphical interest for the CSAD, the obelisk is set to achieve considerably wider significance later this year: its name has been given to the robotic craft that in November 2014 will attempt a landing on Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko, as part of a mission launched in 2004 by the European Space Agency (ESA). The main robotic spacecraft is named Rosetta, after the famous Egyptian obelisk at its base, featuring a decree in three scripts, and the lander is named after the Nile island of Philae, where the Kingston Lacy obelisk was discovered. Having identified the obelisk as a rewarding though challenging object for RTI and 3D imaging, the CSAD team has been encouraged by this exciting coincidence to carry out the exercise as part of a multidisciplinary focus: on the obelisk planned to culminate at the time of the comet landing in November. Imaging of the obelisk, together with another obelisk fragment and a sarcophagus nearby in the Kingston Lacy grounds, will be carried out in the early autumn, and time-lapse photography will record the whole process. An exhibition and a short documentary film on the obelisk and its flambouyant history, and the CSAD’s part in recording it, are also being discussed, all to be ready to mark the style of the landing of its namesake, Philae, on the comet in November.

EXCAVATING ARCHIVES
AT THE CLASSICAL ART RESEARCH CENTRE

DR PETER STEWART

‘...I am going to become a kind of soldier... A colleague of mine who is home from Flanders says the humours of the war are grand, but there is too much dirty work for a sportsman and a gentleman... they were sent into action, and afterwards the brigadier handed out a little speech to them saying that they had done well and he would pay them the compliment of not sparing them in future: “this was received without comment, but without applause…” Economists say the war will finish in April; but they are always wrong.’

So wrote John Beazley, tongue-in-cheek to his friend, the Boston curator Lacy D. Caskey in November 1914. Six months later: ‘Dear Caskey, I have decided after all not to be a soldier, at least until I must. When the fit was on me I couldn’t, and now the fit has past.’ And in February 1916: ‘The War Office is still coquetting with me, I have no idea what will happen. Meanwhile I am learning from the Roumanian with a vague idea it might be useful!’

His subsequent letters are from the Censor’s Office in Boulogne, where he was able to carry on some of his pioneering work on Attic pottery for the remainder of the war. Beazley’s correspondence with Caskey, which runs from 1912 until the latter’s death in 1944, gives a fascinating insight into the scholar’s life and work. It is only one of many sets of manuscripts and documents in the Beazley Archive which still offer a trove of potential new discoveries to researchers. Along with the archives of several other important figures in classical archaeology, the original Beazley Archive remains a key part of the resources offered by the Classical Art Research Centre (CARC), and we have continued to research them and make them increasingly available to academics and students over the last year.

One of the most important recent developments, anticipated in last year’s newsletter report, was the completion of the Beazley Notebooks Project, generously funded by CARC’s donors. The digitisation project now makes available the little-known manuscript notes and drawings used by Beazley in the early part of his career, mostly between 1907 and 1927 (www.carc.ox.ac.uk/tools/beazley). There was an exceptional response when the notebooks went online in February, as students, curators and vase-researchers around the world could study for the first time in detail exactly how Beazley went about examining Greek vases and developing his attributions to artists – a conversation that still underpins most work on the subject. We hope and expect that users of the digitised notebooks will make discoveries about them and CARC researchers will also be examining them further over the next year.

Meanwhile CARC’s existing suite of databases and online resources has continued to grow and CARC’s website (www.carc.ox.ac.uk)

has a huge international audience, receiving nearly 8 million page views in the past year from nearly every country in the world. The largest of the databases, the Beazley Archive Pottery Database (BAPD) – which is based on CARC’s physical collections – now contains nearly 110,000 records of Athenian and other ancient Greek figure-painted pots, more than half of which are illustrated. The records are regularly updated with new bibliography. The Gems Database has been augmented with more than 400 additional records and many new photographs. The latter resources relate to the long-standing Gems Research Project conducted by Dr Claudia Wagner and Sir John Boardman (formerly one of Beazley’s successors in the post of Lincoln Professor at Oxford). The team’s research in the last year has continued to cast new light on old collections of engraved gems, both ancient and neoclassical, and they are bringing to press their catalogues of the eighteenth-century Bevyeley collection at Atwick Castle as well as the important Lindaire and Sangiorgi collections.

Finally, CARC has continued to stimulate and disseminate fresh research on all aspects of ancient art by developing a wide variety of events, projects, and publications. Recent highlights include a special lecture by Prof Salvatore Settis and the appearance of Greek ideas in the Imperial Hermitage Museum by our colleagues and collaborators in St Petersburg, A Bukina, A Petrakova, and C Phillips, which is the latest volume in the CARC series, Studies in the History of Collections.

D 
using this past year, the APGRD team has organised a number of major events and exhibitions in Oxford and continued to develop our partnerships with colleagues in the creative industries around the world.

In September 2013 the APGRD director, Prof Fiona Macintosh, together with the two founding directors, Edith Hall and Oliver Taplin and our archivist, Naoms Setchell, were invited to Lublin, Poland to mark the inauguration of the Centre for European Theatre Practices. In addition to giving lectures, we co-curated an exhibition in the Centre in Gardzienice on ‘Ancient Drama in Modern Theatres.’

In November we organised a major exhibition and event in the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony Harrison’s Trackers of Oxyrhynchus at Delphi (in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive, the Classics Centre in Oxford to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the premiere of Tony 

This year we have continued to organise numerous events under the auspices of the APGRD’s Leverhulme-funded ‘Performing Epic’ project. In September 2013 our first colloquium ‘Performing Epic to 1800’ included a plenary session on early modern performances of epic and a recital from the world-renowned baroque soprano, Emma Kirkby, accompanied by lutenist Jakob Lindberg. We also hosted a number of speakers in our termly lecture series: the opera director Stephen Langridge on Thespis operas and prize-winning performance poet Kate Tempest in conversation with Justine McConnell about her recent collection Brand New Ancients. There were also lectures from leading scholars: Colin Burrow on ‘Shakespeare and Epic’ and Sukanta Chaudhuri on ‘Metamorphosing A Midsummer Night’s Dream’. On 18–19 September 2014, ‘Performing Epic to the Twenty-First Century’ will include talks by experts on epic on stage, film, opera, music, and dance; a performance by German poet Barbara Kohler; excerpts from a new epic-inspired opera; and a danced version of the Iliad by New Movement Collective.

For our twice termly lecture series, we hosted talks by leading scholars Roderick Beaton (KCL), Mary Hart (Paul Getty Museum), and Jonathan Kent (Opera and Theatre Director), who spoke on his work with Greek tragedy. We continue to co-organise the Faculty’s very popular Reception seminar in Michaelmas term and after last year’s theme ‘Reception and Genre’, the focus this year will be ‘Reception and the Senses’.

After a hugely productive year, we have said one very sad farewell. After four and a half years as inspirational archivist for the APGRD, Naoms Setchell is leaving us to move to Australia. However, we are delighted that she is remaining with us as Honorary Curator/Archivist on a number of our forthcoming projects. Her successor is Researcher/Administrator, Dr Claire Kenward, who has been working on our Performing Epic project for the past year.

We are also delighted to report that our Leverhulme Performing Epic Post-doctoral Research Associate, Justine McConnell has been made the first TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities) Leverhulme Early Career Fellow and will take up her post in October after three highly successful years with us. Justine will continue her association with us as she moves down the road to the Radcliffe Humanities Building.

For details of all APGRD events and publications, visit our website www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk.
It has been a very exciting year for Classics Outreach; the programme has grown from strength to strength! Our open days, Classics Taster Days, and Ashmolean Museum tours are as popular as ever, drawing students from all backgrounds across the state and independent sectors. In addition we are looking to expand our work with primary schools as we firmly believe that the earlier we can reach out to pupils the better informed they will be about their university choices in the future.

We encourage state-independent school partnerships and over the last year we were delighted to host such a partnership with Thomas Kensington Prep School and its neighbouring state primary schools (St Mary's, Colville School and St Thomas') for their Latin programme. We have a number of primary school visits to the Faculty planned for the next academic year and look forward to developing and supporting Classics in these schools.

Something new this year for Classics Outreach has been the Oxford Classics Documentary Shorts under the supervision of Dr Jane Masséglia. The film-making workshop took place in the Ashmolean under the supervision of Dr Jane Masséglia. There have also been several large events and projects including a Roman Medicine Day, a mosaic project and six re-enactment shows for hundreds of local primary school pupils as well as students from Cheney School and community visitors.

We are also proud of our collaborative work with Oxford colleges offering special Classics events for students and supporting university-wide access programmes such as the Pathways, Murder in the Cloisters and UNIG Summer Schools programmes (www.pathways-ox.ac.uk; www.ox.ac.uk/local/community/outreach-and-education; www.unigox.ac.uk). This year we shall be hosting the first ever Classical Archaeology & Ancient History and Ancient & Modern History summer school.

The Iris Project is an independent charity which works with a number of universities nationally.

THE IRIS PROJECT IS AN INDEPENDENT CHARITY WHICH WORKS WITH A NUMBER OF UNIVERSITIES NATIONALLY

Our collaborative work extends beyond Oxford and we are now (among other HE institutions) supporting Classics for All (a Classics education charity) in its new initiative 'Capital Classics' (www.capitalclassics.org.uk). Classics for All had been awarded £250,000 by the Mayor of London's London Schools Excellence Fund to lead a partnership which will train 70 teachers to work in London schools, teaching Latin and other Classical subjects.

Our biggest achievement has been reviving the Saturday Latin Teaching scheme and the introduction of Classics in Communities. The Classics in Communities project is largely based in the Faculty of Classics at Oxford, with external partners such as The Iris Project, Swansea University, and the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge. The aim of the project is simple: to promote and encourage the teaching of Latin and Ancient Greek at primary and early secondary level (and beyond) in UK state schools. In addition, we are aiming to bring together primary, secondary, and higher education level teachers, to enable the creation and development of sustainable links.

The first stage of the project was to organise an international conference on ‘Theories and Practices to develop Classics Outreach in the 21st Century’. The conference was held at Corpus Christi College and we were overwhelmed by the positive responses in the lead up to the conference and on the day. Over 100 participants attended (some coming from as far as the USA and South Africa). We were extremely lucky to have inspirational keynote speakers in Prof Edith Hall and Dr Michael Scott as well as outstanding workshop leaders.

The second stage of the project was to deliver seven teacher training workshops across the UK in order to provide teachers (non-Classicists and Classics specialists) with the confidence and support to teach Latin or Ancient Greek.

In addition, Classics in Communities plans to provide teachers with detailed information about teaching approaches, available resources (course books, online resources), and funding. We have currently completed five workshops which took place at King’s College London, the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, Birmingham’s Lordwood Girls’ School, and the University of Glasgow.

Plans are afoot to deliver further workshops in Exeter, Wales, and Northern Ireland. As part of the project we are looking to undertake research on Classical language education to enhance and support professional practice in the classroom.

We have been very lucky in being granted funds from the following organisations for the Classics in Communities project: the Classical Association, the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the Knowledge Exchange Seed Fund (Oxford), the John Fell Fund (Oxford), Classics for All, and the Greek Embassy. Not only has this given us the chance to develop this project but to expand our team and employ an administrative assistant, Emma Searle (a DPhil student), to work on the day-to-day running of the project, and a postdoctoral researcher, Dr Arlene Holmes-Anderson, to work on the research and impact of the project.

We are looking forward to yet another great year in Classics Outreach!
SUNDAY MORNING LATIN

500 SCHOOLS HAVE TAKEN UP LATIN IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, ALMOST DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF STATE SCHOOLS OFFERING THE SUBJECT

PROFESSOR CHRIS PELLING

It has been a good year for Latin, and Oxford and Oxford has been playing its part. Elsewhere in this Newsletter, Mai Muskel describes the successful launch of “Latin in Communities”, in which she has been playing a leading role. We are very proud of her energy and enterprise, and are delighted to report that the University has now made her position a permanent one.

We continue to work closely with Lorna Robinson and the iris project, with undergraduate and graduate students going into local schools to give Latin lessons, and the launch last October of Lorna’s East Oxford Community Classics Centre was another highlight, and here too there has been enthusiastic support from the faculty.

Meanwhile I was myself appointed by Michael Gove to lead a project supporting Latin in the state sector, where again there is a lot of good news to report: something like 500 schools have taken up Latin in the last few years, almost doubling the number of state schools offering the subject at some level. Now Latin is once again taught in more state schools than independents, though not to so many pupils. I am working closely with Will Griffiths and the Cambridge Schools Classics Project, who are administering the scheme – another sign of the collaboration across universities and organisations that is so important if we are to do the best for the subject that we love. I am proud too that I have just been asked to become a patron of Classics for All, the charity that has given so many teachers and learners a crucial helping hand. There is, indeed, a lot going on.

And there is about to be more. In last year’s Newsletter I reported on our Saturday Morning Latin scheme, and expressed the hope that we could get this restarted. Thanks to a very generous donation from the Stonehouse Educational Foundation, that hope has now been realised. Thus we will shortly be contacting local schools to begin our recruiting, with classes planned to start in January 2015. We are expecting it to run on similar lines to those we have tried in the past. We are aiming for an age range around 11 or 12 when they start, and are expecting two groups of perhaps twelve to fifteen, we will take them through to GCSE in two and a half years, taking the examination in the summer of 2017. The teaching will be offered free of charge, and anyone is eligible to apply provided (a) that the school supports the application and (b) that the school does not itself offer Latin on its syllabus. There will be a separate part-time administrator to run the scheme, working closely with Mai Muskel; and, given the pace at which the teaching and learning has to be done, we shall also ask some experienced teachers to take this on. We might ourselves know one or two things about Latin, but there is also the little matter of knowing about children – and that’s where we need the professionals. But of course we will be closely involved ourselves, just as we were before.

We are very excited about this, and are deeply grateful to Richard Stonehouse and the Stonehouse Foundation for making it possible. We still hear from some of those who benefited from our earlier runs, including one who is now an Oxford undergraduate. There is still, though, the future to consider, and we cannot count on such generosity from foundations for further rounds. Our long-term aspiration is still the same as it was a year ago, to build up a fund which will allow us to appoint a full-time teacher who will combine this with undergraduate language teaching. Juliane Karcher and her team are doing a terrific job on our various courses which teach Greek and Latin; there is a lot to do, and they need reinforcement.

Many who read Classics in the past will be unusually aware of the opportunities that are closed to our young equivalents today. Donations from our alumni and supporters really can make a difference, and for this reason, we enclose a donation form. From teaching posts to student support and resources, philanthropy will help us to achieve our goals and support projects like the Latin Teaching scheme. We hope that you will join a growing number of donors who want to support staff and students in the department.

When I entered upon my present post ten years ago, I said in my inaugural lecture that language teaching was the most important thing that we do. That took some by surprise, but as I near the end of my term I still think the same way. We will be deeply grateful for anything you can do to help. And so, more importantly, will those young people who might, thanks to you, have the chance to learn some Latin after all.

NOW LATIN IS ONCE AGAIN TAUGHT IN MORE STATE SCHOOLS THAN INDEPENDENTS, THOUGH NOT TO SO MANY PUPILS

COIN HOARDS

A GROWING DATABASE OF HOARDS FROM THE ROMAN EMPIRE

DR PHILIPPA WALTON

Thousands of coin hoards have been discovered throughout the geographical area which once constituted the Roman Empire. The information provided by these hoards is an important resource, with the potential to transform our understanding of the Roman economy, but until now, no comprehensive summary of hoards has ever been compiled.

In January 2014, as the result of a generous donation by the Augustus Foundation, the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire Project was set up. It is a joint venture between the Ashmolean Museum and the Oxford Roman Economy Project and has the aim of collecting information about hoards of all coinages in use in the Roman Empire between 30 BC and AD 400.

During the first phase of the project, Research Fellow, Dr Philippa Walton will be working with several postgraduates at the University of Oxford as well as a range of partner institutions, both in the UK and abroad, to collect summary hoard data from as many Roman provinces as possible. This data will include details of the contents, date and context of each hoard. For a selection of hoards we will also be inputting data at the level of the individual coin with accompanying images, where available. In the first six months of the project, the team has entered data on 2,254 hoards!

It is envisaged that the data the project collects will provide the foundations for a systematic Empire-wide study of hoarding and will promote the integration of numismatic data into broader studies of the Roman economy. As the project progresses, the database with accompanying analytical and mapping tools will be made available to the general public as a web application on the OXREP website. A conference to be held in 2016 will focus on the analysis and discussion of hoard data and its implications for the Roman economy and a monograph based on this conference will be published by Oxford University Press in the series Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy.

To find out more about the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire Project and our partner institutions please visit our website: http://oxrep.classics.ox.ac.uk/coin_hoards_of_the_roman_empire_project/ or our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/CoinhoardsRomanEmpire

Above: A hoard of 4,917 Roman coins in a pottery vessel found in Chalgrove, Oxfordshire in 2003. Below: The distribution of the 2,254 Roman coin hoards for which the project has information thus far.
Earlier this year a new poem of Sappho was identified along with parts of four stanzas from the beginning of a love poem. Both are preserved on a second/third century AD papyrus. The longer fragment mentions prominently two figures, Charaxus and Larichus, identified in the ancient biographical tradition as the brothers of the poetess. In an already known poem (5) she prays that an unnamed brother should get home safely, ‘atone for all his past wrongs’ and cause us ‘not a single misery’. The new papyrus adds the fact that this prayer was addressed to ‘Queen Nereids’. Herodotus later told that ‘the poet Sappho’s brother Charaxus’ was a traveller to Egypt and paid a vast sum to buy the famous courtesan Rhodopis, ‘and when he got back to Mytilene Sappho wrote a poem roundly abusing him (or her)’ (2.135). Later sources add that Charaxus was a wine trader, and give the name of his girlfriend variously as Rhodopis or Doricha. Larichus was a young cup-bearer to the aristocrats that Charaxus was a wine trader, and give the name of his girlfriend variously as Rhodopis or Doricha. Larichus was a young cup-bearer to the aristocrats

THE NEW POEM

Oh, not again – Charaxus has arrived!
His ship was full! Well, that’s for Zeus
And all the other gods to know.
Don’t think of that,
But tell me, ‘go and pour out many prayers
To Hera, and beseech the queen
That he should bring his ship back home
Safely to port.
And find us sound and healthy.
For the rest,
Let’s simply leave it to the gods.
Great stormy blasts go by and soon
Give way to calm.
Sometimes a helper comes, if that’s the way
Zeus wills, and guides a person round
To safety: and then blessedness and wealth
Become one’s lot.
And we? If Larichus would raise his head,
If only he might one day be a man,
The deep and dreary draggings of our soul
We’ll lift to joy.
(Translation by Chris Pelling in TLS, 5 February 2014)

THE SONG OF SAPPHO

“You’re always chattering on…”, we read, but the poet who artfully crafts these words, who in their simple immediacy is not chattering back: she is singing. The story is told of Sappho, who, on hearing a boy singing one of Sappho’s songs, begged someone to teach it to him ‘so that I may learn it and die’. Similar sentiments occur in modern contexts of musical appreciation: a swooning comment posted below a Youtube video of a popstar singing to the guitar states ‘I love this song so much I want to die’. Was Sappho struck by Sappho’s words alone? Surely it was the total effect that struck him with such mortal reprise – mousikē, words, rhythm and music combined.

When we read this extraordinary new fragment, then, as with all the fragments of Sappho’s poetry, we are reading the lyrics of a song. What difference would it make to us if we could hear the words sung to their original music? We are told that Sappho performed her songs to the accompaniment of a lyre, in this case the elegantly elongated bôrmos (or barbiton). The gut strings when plucked emit a soft and gentle tone that accompanies the voice without obscuring it. Lyrics have been reconstructed from images on vases by scholars of ancient music such as Stefan Hagel of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, who in a recent paper on the different capacities of ancient instruments. Also instructive are performances by non-Western folk musicians such as players of the Ethiopian kir (= kithara), who sing songs in traditional style accompanying their singing note for note on their instrument (You tube is an invaluable resource for hearing examples of such music).

What about the melody? Sappho was the total effect that struck him with such mortal reprise (it was later used in tragedy). Partly thanks to rece ssive accentuation, every stanza here ends with a melodic cadence falling from a high-pitched antepenultimate syllable to a lower-pitched penultimate syllable.


identical pattern of long and short notes, with a final rhetorical flourish to end the stanza. The rhythm of each line falls naturally into three parts: a slow 4-note ‘basis’ (♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ in which at least two and usually three notes are long), a more active central section (‘choriamb’ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩), and a 3-note rallentando (♩ ♩ ♩) to end each line. But in the final line this tripartite pattern is followed immediately by an extended choriamb (‘tadorna’), ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩, an echoing cadence that brings the stanza to a satisfying close.

What about the melody? Sappho was singing two centuries before the Greeks developed a melodic notation, but something of her musical idiom may be conjectured from later Greek melodic practice. Greek musical theory identified and described in detail systems of modes (harmonia) used as the basis of melodic composition. The musical theorist Aristoxenus ascribed to Sappho the use (and possibly invention) of the Mixolydian mode, whose relative note-pitches, including quarter-tone intervals, can be recreated. Meanwhile, the pitches on ancient Greek words (conventionally marked from the third century BC on with signs for acute, grave, and circumflex) made it an inherently musical language. The few dozen surviving fragments of Greek melodic notation show that melodies tended to be composed in accord with the tonal inflections of Greek words; broadly speaking, syllables on which the voice would rise in pitch would be set to higher notes than other syllables. The Aeolic dialect of Lesbos was notable, however, for having a different pitch structure from other dialects, in that the higher-pitched syllables tended to occur as early as possible in each word – the pitch-accent is regularly ‘recessive’. Sappho’s Greek would thus have sounded slightly foreign to the Athenian Solon, and we are told that the Mixolydian mode had a lamentatory quality (it was later used in tragedy). Partly thanks to recessive accentuation, every stanza here ends with a melodic cadence falling from a high-pitched antepenultimate syllable. With its music, this poem would have struck ancient listeners as vigorous, exotic and hauntingly lovely.

“...a new discovery from the ancient world”

PHOTOGRAPHS © IMAGING PAPYRI PROJECT, OXFORD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Sappho und Maira playing the harpion, red figure kalathos (Munich, Staatsliche Antikensammlungen).

Armand D’Angour has been conducting research into the reconstruction of ancient Greek music with the support of a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship.

SAPPHO: A NEW DISCOVERY FROM THE ANCIENT WORLD

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© J J HORNER, (1828), PL.24

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Oxford Centre for Phoenician and Punic Studies

Dr Jonathan Prag & Dr Josephine Quinn

There was a lot more to the ancient Mediterranean than Greece and Rome, and the study of ancient history is now opening up to other people, places, and languages alongside these ‘classical’ cultures, a movement in which Oxford is leading the way. One example of this is the Oxford Centre for Phoenician and Punic Studies, or Octopus, which was only launched last year but already has its tentacles in plenty of pies, providing graduate students, faculty, early career academics and visiting scholars with opportunities to carry out and just as importantly talk to each other about their research.

In March 2014, the centre, which is co-directed by ancient historians Jonathan Prag and Josephine Quinn, and now generously funded by Baron Lorne Thyssen’s Augustus Foundation, again hosted the UK Punic Network’s annual graduate workshop in Phoenician and Punic Studies. Students from Oxford, Stanford, Calgary, Malta, Bristol, Gent, Barcelona and Bochum gave presentations on their dissertation work to students and academics from the Oxford faculties of Classics, Archaeology and Oriental Studies, as well as specialists from Italy and elsewhere in the UK. As ever, the most valuable part of the experience for the students was the chance to meet each other and swap ideas, contacts and future plans.

We also held a Faculty workshop with scholars from the Italian Institute for the Study of the Ancient Mediterranean on child sacrifice and the ‘tophet’ sanctuaries in which it took place. The seminar was prompted by the publication of a new book on The Tophet in the Phoenician Mediterranean. As well as talks from the book’s contributors, we heard a series of commentaries on the book’s subject and themes from Oxford scholars Nicholas Purcell, Scott Scullion, and Stephanie Dalley, who work in adjacent fields of ancient history, ancient religion, and near eastern studies. Cultures that are only hundreds or even tens of miles distant from the Phoenicians geographically are usually several light years away in the newly dissected world of academic scholarship, and these talks offered some startling new perspectives.

The ancient Punic port of Sabratha in Libya.

BRONZE ROSTRA
INTRIGUING FINDS FROM THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

Dr Jonathan Prag

What did ancient warships look like? We still only have a very limited idea, since no wreck of an ancient trireme or other warship from the ancient Mediterranean has yet been recovered.

However, an underwater survey off the western coast of Sicily (The Egadi Islands Project), begun in 2005, has located an extensive debris field on the sea bed, which marks the site of the final battle of the First Punic War. The Battle of the Aegates Islands was fought on 10 March 241 BC, and the Roman destruction of the Carthaginian fleet brought an end to the 24-year long war, an account of which we find in the Greek historian Polybius. Archaeologists from the Sicilian Soprintendenza del Mare and RPM Nautical Foundation have so far located and recovered ten bronze rostra – the rams mounted on the front of ancient warships.

Only one other bronze ram was previously known from an archaeological context (a Ptolemaic ram, from Israel). The rams provide crucial information about ancient warships, since they were individually moulded and cast onto the bows of the ship, and so provide a negative image of the bow timbers of the vessels. These rams are surprisingly small (weighing a mere 125 kg) and raise difficult questions for our attempts to reconstruct ancient warships, since they imply a ship significantly smaller than the reconstructed trireme Olympias – and yet our ancient narratives describe this battle as being fought by fleets of the even larger quinqueremes.

The majority of these rams also carry prominent Latin inscriptions, recording the efforts of individual Roman questors to oversee the manufacture of the rams – and it was to an Oxford ancient historian, Jonathan Prag, that the excavators turned for assistance in interpreting these spectacular and unusual early Latin texts. Only one ram carries a Punic text, which by contrast contains an appeal for divine support. The cultural contrast is striking.

2014’s activities will wrap up in December with the second annual Octopus lecture, which will be given this year by Corinne Bonnet from the University of Toulouse-Le Mirail, author of a new book on religion in Hellenistic Phoenicia. The lecture will also be a chance to celebrate the publication of a new collection of essays on the Punic Mediterranean by Cambridge University Press.

Octopus also helps bring foreign scholars to Oxford, especially graduate students and early career academics. This year we welcomed Adriano Orsinger as a post-doctoral scholar for the academic year 2013–14 to write up his doctorate from La Sapienza (Rome) on the pottery from the tophet sanctuary at Mazia in Sicily. The book provides for the first time a ceramic sequence to match the excellent stratigraphic chronology from the site. Graduate students from French and Spanish universities have also spent periods from two weeks to three months in Oxford as Octopus Research Associates, working in the Sackler library on dissertations on Greek and Phoenician bilingual inscriptions, mining technologies in the early colonial period in the Western Mediterranean, and the Punic colony at Cadiz in the Roman period.

DON’T MISS THE 2ND ANNUAL OCTOPUS LECTURE IN DECEMBER 2014

The ancient Punic port of Sabratha in Libya.
The Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions Project Celebrates Its First Year

Dr Jane Messèglia

APPRAISING THE END OF ITS FIRST YEAR, THE AHRC-sponsored Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions Project (AshLI), a joint venture between the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (CSAD), Warwick University, and the Ashmolean Museum, has been celebrating a run of good news and academic success. With the help of Ben Altshuler and Sarah Norodom, AshLI has already completed the Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) needed for its large stone collection and, well, ahead of schedule, is ready to move on to small inscribed objects in the Autumn. Among the existing advances afforded by RTI technology, there has been a new reading of a red sandstone altar from Roman Chester, with an inscription that had been illegible since the nineteenth century. A Principal Investigator, Prof Alison Cooley, was able to use the RTI results to test and amend earlier transcriptions from the seventeenth century and confirm that the altar was dedicated by a Spanish soldier of the 20th Legion Valeria Victrix in AD 154, to the Roman-Celtic god Jupiter-Tanarus (fig 1). RTI was also used on a large, unpublished stone inscription which was re-discovered by the team in an off-site storage depot. The large marble block, heavily worn and eroded in places, comes from Ephesus in Turkey, and minute inspection has revealed a tantalising list of Roman names (fig 2).

As part of the project’s commitment to make Latin inscriptions accessible to the public, and especially to children, AshLI now has eleven schools ready to test-drive the teaching resources being designed by Dr Jane Messèglia and Dr Anna Clark to meet the needs of students studying Roman Life topics in History, Classical Civilisation and Latin from Primary Key Stage 1 to A-level. AshLI has also opened its first training day for secondary teachers on teaching with ancient artefacts, and will join us in CSAD in the Autumn.

The new academic year promises to be a busy one, with the AshLI team preparing for new displays of Latin inscriptions in the Rome, Mediterranean, and Reading & Writing Galleries of the Ashmolean. Visitors to the museum should start to see these new arrivals in early 2015.

Finally, the AshLI team is delighted that Dr Hannah Cornwell has accepted the role of Research Assistant. She will be responsible for the Epipod encoding of the collection and the project’s digital media, and will join us in CSAD in the Autumn.

The long vacation at the end of the first year is the time for some hands-on training in archaeology. As well as attending the local dig (presently in Dorchester-on-Thames), students have chosen to dig in places including Rome, Majorca, the Adriatic coast of Italy, the Bay of Naples, Israel and, closer to home, Vindolanda and York.

The opportunity to focus on a particular area of interest in the final year, and to use archaeological material to answer historical questions, comes with the museum or site report: topics range from a coin hoard in the Ashmolean Museum to Caesar’s Forum in Rome, a house in Pompeii, or a white-ground lekythos.

Many of our undergraduates have gone on to pursue further study of the classical world. Others have entered a wide range of professions including museum curatorship, teaching, law, cultural consultancy, merchant banking, accountancy, and more.

Dr Anna Clark

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:
CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT HISTORY

I had been interested in archaeology and ancient history from a young age, but at the school I attended there were no opportunities to pursue this interest, not even through the study of Greek or Latin. I remained sure, however, that this was the subject I was most fascinated by and was determined to study it at a degree level.

When I looked at the university courses available there were few that combined both archaeology and ancient history, and those that did took them to be quite separate entities. What caught my eye about the Oxford course, and what I believe still makes it particularly special, is that it operates on the basis that the two subjects are most effective when fully integrated. As such, the first year of the course works around core papers combining literary and archaeological evidence, from which students can expand to more specialist papers in their final two years.

When I began the course my interest leaned more towards archaeology, but now, at the end of my second year, I have found myself taking a range of archaeology and ancient history papers and am thoroughly enjoying all of them. I have discovered over the course of two years at Oxford that what I most enjoyed was the archaeological architecture, which I have been able to engage with in my site report – a detailed examination of a site or museum collection which is the equivalent of a thesis in other courses. This is a great feature of the course because it provides the opportunity to study a site in great detail, and to contribute new ideas to its interpretation.

The course also allows plenty of opportunity to take part in fieldwork, and funding from the faculty allowed me to excavate at the Apolline Project, a Roman villa on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius, an amazing experience and one unlikely to have been available to me elsewhere.
The death of an individual is a decisive moment in which the moral and local values underlying a community’s life are revealed.

The scope of classics has broadened enormously in the last forty years. Even my research into the transmission of Plato through the writings of Cardinal Bessarion and the large collection of Greek manuscripts which he brought with him from Constantinople to Italy in the 15th century is happily tolerated by the Faculty. In fact the influence of Neo-Platonism in the 15th century and the philosophical writings of the Greek emigres and the Italian humanists turns out to be a niche waiting to be explored in Oxford.

The world of Late Antiquity (4th–7th centuries CE) was a world on the move – a world of speeding couriers, marching soldiers, junketing bishops, wandering monks, intrepid sailors, and merchants steadily making their way across desert sands with an undulating train of camels in their wake. Even for ordinary people, the world was one of broader horizons than one might initially think. This was made possible by the breadth of the Roman imperial road network, mainly a product of the 1st-3rd centuries – the empire’s expansionist heyday. And yet travel remained an important component of daily life well after that time not only as a means of moving people and goods, but also for transmitting information and ideas. The rise of the cult of holy places and holy men made travel even more attractive to all classes of society. Travel in the Late Antique Levant: a study of networks of communication and travel infrastructure in the 4th-7th centuries

Travel in the Late Antique Levant: a study of networks of communication and travel infrastructure in the 4th-7th centuries

The world of Late Antiquity was beleaguered by the supposed wide-spread decline in classical standards that many believe took place from the 4th century onwards. In reality, the picture is much more nuanced. Through a combination of literary sources, archaeology and first-hand fieldwork I was able to establish that the development of travel infrastructure in Late Antiquity was characterised not by decline but rather by adaptation and even improvement dependant on regional circumstances. Trade and, in particular, pilgrimage, ensured continuing investment in travel infrastructure despite the withdrawal of Roman military presence in the Near East, and endured even after the Arab conquests.

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The project largely came out of an essay I wrote for the Master of Studies ‘Theories and Methods of Reception’ paper, on the way in which Milton navigates classical ideas about blindness (wanting, perhaps to identify himself with Homer’s creative blindness but not with the blindness which Tiresias suffers as punishment for his transgressions). In the doctorate I expand on these ideas and interpret ways of thinking about the theatre in the light of ideas about seeing and not seeing. I look for differences and similarities in ancient and modern theatrical treatments of blindness, both ‘real’ and metaphorical.

My doctoral work also builds on the breadth of focus encouraged by a Classics and English BA, a fantastic three years during which I was encouraged to read as widely as possible across literature ancient and modern and to develop mechanisms of reading comparatively across different bodies of text. I have also had so many opportunities to be involved with theatre practically as well as academically (including putting on an adaptation of Sophocles’ Antigone, which allowed me to try out different ways of staging Tiresias!) during my years at Oxford, and am currently president of the Oxford University Classical Drama Society, which is putting on Aeschylus’ The Furies in Greek this October.

All of these opportunities as well as the multitude and variety of seminars and lectures on offer at the Classics faculty help to enliven and enrich my research, and after a first year spent reading as much as possible about the various different aspects of blindness and the theatre which may at some point be of relevance to my doctorate, I am excited to take on the next two years of the project.
For the past six weeks I’ve been sitting in on rehearsals for the upcoming production of Euripides’ Medea at the National Theatre (NT). I’ve been able to do so through a new partnership set up between the National Theatre and the University of Oxford, supported by the Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH). 

Contrary to what most of my fellow academics expect, I haven’t been there to ‘correct’ pronunciation of names or advise on any aspect of the production. I have been there as an observer, furiously absorbing all the information I can about what it means (and what it takes) to put a production of a Greek tragedy on stage in a major venue today.

In my role as Knowledge Exchange Fellow, I’m using what I know about ancient theatre and working with the Learning Department at the NT to provide a range of materials that will, hopefully, enrich people’s experience of the play. As well as writing a number of articles for the Education Pack – a pdf that can be freely downloaded from the NT’s website for every show – I will also be running a Continuing Professional Development session for teachers, an Archive Learning Day for secondary school students and (together with fellow classicist and Oxford alumnus Dr Rose Wyles) two ‘In Context’ sessions for members of the (paying?) public.

The resources that the NT have shared with me have made this much more than a one-way transfer of knowledge, as can often be the case with some forms of outreach. Through the incredible generosity of all those involved in the production, I’ve been able to gain a unique and thorough insight into how theatres run and all the factors that affect the choices made in the rehearsal room or theatre space. This has already started to inform how I think about theatre ancient and modern. Once the next two weeks are over and all my duties are discharged at the National, I’ll be able to turn back to my own research projects with all this new information. I shan’t be so quick to criticise modern productions, that’s for certain!

The Hellenistic West: Rethinking the Ancient Mediterranean
Jonathan Prag and Josephine Quinn

The Hellenistic period — traditionally dated from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE to the final defeat of Cleopatra in 31 BCE and the imposition of Roman empire across the Mediterranean — is one of the most exciting areas of ancient history: a dazzling landscape of fighting cities, freebooting generals and great kings in ridiculous headgear.

However, the western Mediterranean usually gets left out of this picture; despite having plenty of cities, soldiers and kings, they tend to fall under the shadow of the great cities of Carthage and Rome, and the great rivalry between them.

The Hellenistic West: Rethinking the Ancient Mediterranean, edited by Oxford ancient historian Jonathan Prag and Josephine Quinn and published by Cambridge University Press in November 2013, offers a new look at the archaeology, history, inscriptions, art and coinage of the Western Mediterranean in the Hellenistic period. It argues that the rift between the ‘Greek East’ and ‘Roman West’ in this and other periods is more a product of the traditional importance of, and separation between, Roman and Greek history as academic subjects than a reflection of the Hellenistic world, when the Mediterranean was a strongly interconnected cultural and economic zone, with the rising Roman republic just one of many powers in the region. Indeed, it is a world in which the concepts of ‘East’, ‘West’ and even ‘Hellenistic’ stop making real sense.

TWELVE VOICES FROM GREECE AND ROME: ANCIENT IDEAS FOR MODERN TIMES

Christopher Pelling and Maria Wyke

‘Stand in the trench, Achilles.: how could it be that Achilles, the most special of special cases, could mean so much to so many of those ailed the horrors of the First World War? How much difference does it make that Sappho’s love was same-sex? Is Herodotus’ history a foundation text, or a critique, of racism and ‘Orientalism’? Should international relations theorists stop reading Thucydides? Is there any comfort to be found in Euripides’ gods? Is Caesar a safe text to put in the field today? Is the rising Roman republic just one of many powers in the Hellenistic world, when the Mediterranean was a strongly interconnected cultural and economic zone, with the rising Roman republic just one of many powers in the region. Indeed, it is a world in which the concepts of ‘East’, ‘West’ and even ‘Hellenistic’ stop making real sense.

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NEW BOOKS
A SELECTION FROM FACULTY MEMBERS

MAJOR RESEARCH FUNDING AWARDS IN CLASSICS IN 2014

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20 FACULTY OF CLASSICS NEWSLETTER 2014
First century Greeks and Romans tend to trust themselves and their families; they rarely trust their rulers, and they want to trust their friends but find it difficult. Early Christians (like some Jewish groups) are encouraged to put their trust in God and Christ as more reliable alternatives to earthly powers. But they are never told to love one another (though they are told to love one another), perhaps because trust between friends at this period is problematic.

One of the challenges for early Christians is understanding what kind of being Jesus Christ was and how he ‘saved them from their sins’. They use pasts in different ways to develop varying models of the nature and identity of Christ, placing Christ in several distinctly different relationships with God and humanity.

These are just a few of the arguments of the book, which comes out next year from OUP.

WORSHIPPING DEITIES IN THE DESERT: THE NABATAEAN TEMPLE AT KHIRBET ET-TANNUR, JORDAN, VOL. 1. ARCHITECTURE AND RELIGION, AND VOL. 2. CULTIC OFFERINGS, VESSELS, AND OTHER SPECIALIST REPORTS

Nabataean Religion and Architecture in the Politics of the Third Century AD, near Khirbet edh-Dharih, the third caravan stop on the King’s Highway, 70km north of the rock-cut Nabataean capital Petra. With a striking Hilltop location, it has a fascinating geography, goddess, and busts of astral deities. The exceptionally preserved cult offerings and vessels provide unique information about Nabataean religious practice. Specialist examination of these reveals continuity of Iron Age religious customs after the Roman conquest of Arabia (in AD 106) in a sanctuary of local design, but with architectural decoration and gods in classical form.

These results come from the previously unstudied archaeological material and records of the 1937 excavations preserved in the ASOR Nelson Glueck Archive at the Semitic Museum, Harvard University. Recent scientific analyses of these by an international multi-disciplinary team of experts directed by Judith McKenzie has produced remarkable results. This work is presented in two extensively illustrated volumes. Volume 1 outlines the intellectual and historical contexts in which Glueck was working, then focuses on the reconstructions and phases of the sanctuary, its iconographic programme, and what the results tell us about Nabataean religious practice. Our research has also determined the original location of the sculptures within the temple, revealing a cohesive decorative programme and shedding new light on the ways in which the Nabataeans used the iconography of the surrounding cultures in representations of their deities. The volume concludes with an analysis of iconographic damage to sculptures there and at Petra.

Volume 2 explains Glueck’s excavation records and methodology, followed by specialist reports on the cultic offerings, which include carbonised grains, cakes, sheep, goats, and bulls. It explores the incense altars, lamps for night-time sanctuary use and crockery for ritual feasts. Chemical analyses revealed local glass production and use of ultra-high carbon steel =

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kate.macdonald@classics.ox.ac.uk

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