

FACULTY OF CLASSICS

# NEWSLETTER



## BEFORE ZEUS

THE RISE OF THE  
NEAR EASTERN  
STORM GOD

CONNECTED  
COINAGES  
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

DRAMA  
IN LOCKDOWN

PTOLEMAIC  
INSCRIPTIONS  
FROM EGYPT

THE RETURN OF  
RHETORIC TO THE  
CURRICULUM

FACULTY NEWS  
ACCESS & OUTREACH  
AWARDS

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



One benefit of a classical education is a capacity to deal with deferral of gratification. The restless impatience of a teenage mind struggled to cope with the long and winding road towards (sort of) mastery of the Latin third conjugation; but such formative experiences enable the Faculty Board Chair to endure, with relative equanimity, the pandemic-driven postponement of opportunities to meet our alumni. And now the Ioannou Centre hums with human activity at levels unknown for a year, from the basement classrooms where a new generation braces itself for the challenge of the third conjugation, up to the sublime susurrations in the Classical Art Research Centre high above. I look forward eagerly to the addition of in-person visits by past students to this heady brew, and the chance to introduce them – you! – to our extraordinary variety of activities, illustrated below by Christopher Metcalf's stalking of his storm god, Charles Crowther's unveiling of his Ptolemaic priest, and the resonant chinking of Andy Meadows' change.

There is more than mere proprietary pride in this eagerness to showcase colleagues' work. 2021 marks the end of a seven-year Research Excellence Framework census cycle, and the heavy chore of producing a faculty submission for this has also involved much constructive reflection upon the 'impact' of our research, for it has been more than ever important for us to identify, and demonstrate, the ways in which our activities make a difference beyond the walls of our seminar rooms, lecture halls and libraries. I have been struck by how many of the 'impact case studies' compiled for this exercise – ranging from the Manar al-Athar digital archive, through the Empires of Faith project and exhibition, to the 'Classics in Communities' programme – have featured in recent newsletters, which in turn inspires thoughts about how we might involve

alumni more actively in helping evaluate such enterprises, rather than merely describing them. We increasingly operate in territory where even modest indicators can signify greatly, and here you represent a resource of enormous potential, a well-trained legion of seismographs. Translation of this metaphor into practical activity might begin with something as modest as more assiduous collection of feedback from these annual reports; establishing and developing more channels of communication with the wider Classics community must be the best way forward.

More effective communication is indispensable, to invigorate the conversations on which the long-term survival of the subject depends. Every classicist is regularly confronted either with blank ignorance about our subject ('Jane Austen?'), or else with the easy caricatures ('it went and killed the Romans...') that enjoy such insidious and entrenched influence in spheres which ought to be better informed. We must tell our stories better: even our students sometimes struggle to appreciate just how far beyond the walls of Athens and Rome our horizons extend. And the business of sharing more widely the quiet excitement of our research activity is only half the task. For, to continue to attract the brightest and best to our subject, we must not only continue to find ways to make Classics genuinely open to all who have the appetite and aptitude for it, but must also demonstrate to constituencies sceptical of its twenty-first century relevance the practical skills that it promotes. The following pages present examples of our activities here – I commend especially Peter Thonemann's meticulous analysis of our admissions profile, Arlene Holmes-Henderson's glimpse of her contribution to the campaign to promote 'oracy', and Vee Kativhu's exhilarating envoi – but there is much to be done, and here again you, our readers, as you continue to triangulate your own adventures in classical antiquity with your experiences in the

modern world, can and should be part of the conversation.

One area in particular where work remains to be done, inside the Faculty, relates to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). An open letter last summer, to which some of you subscribed, asked a number of legitimate and searching questions under these headings, and a busy year has followed, in which reading lists have been examined, papers reviewed, and new graduate options introduced, with unprecedented levels of student involvement. This is only a beginning, and the creation of a new Faculty position, the EDI officer, with a committee in support, now allows the Faculty, for the first time, to develop coherent and sustainable initiatives, in conjunction with student representatives. Rhiannon Ash took up the role of EDI officer this term; you will hear from her in the next issue.

And meanwhile, the Faculty has marked its comings and goings, and found much to celebrate. Our welcome to new arrivals Kathryn Stevens and Giuseppe Pezzini swelled to hearty congratulations when they both were awarded the prestigious Philip Leverhulme Prize. Gregory Hutchinson became a Fellow of the British Academy, and Teresa Morgan an International Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Andreas Willi was awarded the 2021 Goodwin Award of Merit, and Robin Lane Fox the Greek government's Gold Cross of the Order of Honour. We were saddened by the retirement of Lisa Kallett and the departure of Felix Budelmann; we mourned the death of David Raeburn and James Adams. And there was much sweet sorrow as we said goodbye to Audrey Cahill, our Head of Administration and Finance, who for six years has infused our operations with her own remarkable blend of passionate commitment, resolute common sense, and deep humanity.

Dr Neil McLynn  
Chair, Faculty Board of Classics



COVER IMAGE: RELIEF OF THE STORM GOD, 9TH CENTURY BC, SAMAL/ ZINCIRLI HÖYÜK (TURKEY).  
© STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN-VORDERASIATISCHES MUSEUM, PHOTO: OLAF M TESSNER.

PRINTED BY ORCHARD PRESS, CHELTENHAM, ON FSC® ACCREDITED PAPER USING VEGETABLE-BASED INKS. PRINT PRODUCTION SYSTEMS REGISTERED TO ISO 9001 & ISO 14001 STANDARDS.

DESIGN: [WWW.CATHERINECHARNOCK.CO.UK](http://WWW.CATHERINECHARNOCK.CO.UK)



## REGIONAL CLASSICS PODCAST

During summer 2021, we brought together 22 Oxford Classicists, ancient historians and archaeologists from regional areas which have traditionally been under-represented within the Faculty – namely, the North and South-West of England, the Midlands, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – to discuss what 'Classics' means to them and how they overcame the barriers to accessing classics in their regions. We have since released five episodes (with two forthcoming) of the Regional Classics podcast.

Roberta Thomson, a person of colour originally from Wolverhampton, found that studying Cicero was the best training for a career in PR – she currently leads Facebook's product communication team. In the Northern Ireland episode Dr Sarah Cullinan Herring, Senior Instructor in

THEY JUST COULDN'T IMAGINE  
SOMEBODY WHO LOOKED AND  
SOUNDED LIKE ME TO BE GOING OFF TO  
STUDY AT OXFORD  
— ROBERTA THOMSON

Latin and Greek, Jenyth Evans, currently studying for a DPhil in medieval pseudo-histories, and Professor Peter Stewart, director of the Classical Art Research Centre, found common ground in the Northern Irish Troubles, discussing Seamus Heaney and the meaning of 'Classics' in the 21st century. Dr Rebecca Armstrong and Justin Vyvyan-Jones (BA in Classics and German), both said how their work on Vergil's *Georgics* had drawn upon their childhood experiences of rural Devon. Jess Curry, a current undergraduate (IB) at St Hugh's, explained how tuition fees can be a deterrent to Scottish applicants, and Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson, Senior Research Fellow in Classics Education, talked about accents – not Greek accents this time!

Alongside the podcast, a photographic exhibition will be mounted in the Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies and a short film series will explore how the

history, literature and material culture of ancient Greece and Rome and their Near Eastern, Indian and North African neighbours can be made more accessible to all.



You can listen to the podcast  
hosted by Katrina Kelly at:  
[https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/  
series/regional-classics](https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/regional-classics)

## GRADUATES: AN ENCOMIUM

Graduates have had a tough couple of years. It's not easy coming to a famous place, where you are quizzed on what you mean by so and so, have to find your way round various libraries (some circular), learn to write academic English – perhaps not your native language – and whizz through a nine-month MSt or excogitate 100,000 words of DPhil thesis. But then imagine that the libraries suddenly close; that you only see your supervisor online; that for seminars you become a small initialled ball on Teams. Even at the start of this academic year, when things seemed better, seminars were conducted in masks; everyone sat on widely distanced black plastic chairs in the Ioannou Centre, like an intellectual programme on ITV in the 1970s.

Yet the graduates have done brilliantly. They have coped with research online (it's so slow and frustrating in this subject). They have got through the huge volume of work for the MSt and MPhil; DPhil theses have been produced to

the usual very high standard. Graduates have joined in online seminars cheerfully; thanks to them, these bizarrely artificial affairs have become lively exchanges of ideas, even fun. Graduates have supported each other; their graduate-only Work in Progress seminars have thrived, and that without the usual essential of cake. It has been such an impressive effort. For all the immense difficulties and challenges, there has been a lot of enjoyment; people have been immersed in discussing Classics, and the vitality of the subject has been as evident as always.

Our graduates go on to various things; but certainly the future of the subject depends on scholars who start their career as graduates. Graduates from Oxford and Cambridge are fundamental to the country's, and the world's, study of Classics. A marvellous feature of our graduate body has been its international range, and the strengthening of the subject through the twining of traditions from different countries. Our graduate body has mirrored and made actual the remarkable spread

of traditions and approaches seen in the subject at scholarly level. This is going to become harder, since students from the EU now have to be charged the same high fees as students from the US, or anywhere else outside the UK. The Faculty, unfortunately, cannot choose its own level of fees. Humanities subjects in general are in pressing need of more graduate scholarships, as external support from British bodies diminishes. Our need is especially acute, if we are to remain a Delphi for Classics. (Anyone who feels tempted to make a contribution should go to <https://www.development.ox.ac.uk/classics>; we would be so grateful). The challenges of the pandemic have been intense but – we hope! – relatively circumscribed in time; the challenges produced by political developments look set to last much longer. However, no one who works with Oxford graduates in Classics can fail to feel optimism breaking in.

Gregory Hutchinson, *Regius Professor of Greek, Christ Church*

## PROFESSOR DAVID RAEBURN

1927 – 2021

During a teaching career of some seventy years, David Raeburn played a fundamental role in extending the study and enjoyment of classical texts and classical drama. He believed passionately in their ability to develop the mind and enrich the spirit, qualities which he exemplified, amazingly, into his early nineties. His Oxford years had three formative phases: first as an undergraduate at Christ Church where he heard E R Dodds' great lectures on the *Bacchae* and was a pupil of Denys Page; then as the University's first Grocyn Lecturer and mastermind of the first Faculty courses in the Greek language; and lastly as the Rodewald Lector at New College where he continued to instil Greek into undergraduates at all levels, returning to the Classics Centre to run yet more classes on anything from the Periclean Funeral Speech, which stretched even his ability, to the *Bacchae*, the *Agamemnon* and extracts from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a text he loved. His later Oxford decades were exceptionally happy, open to new friendships and initiatives. He personified geniality and kindness, supported by an energy which seemed to increase with each decade. He ascribed it to his constant association with the young, the 'best pension', as he often remarked.

Born in Hampstead in 1927, he was the eldest of seven children of Walter, a barrister and judge, and Dora (née Williams). After his schooling at Charterhouse, his Greats degree at Christ Church and National Service in the Royal Army Educational Corps, he went on to co-found the JACT Greek Summer School at Cheltenham, that crucial initiative for spreading and deepening school pupils' learning of ancient Greek. First at Cheltenham, now at Bryanston, the summer school remains

the essential seedbed for aspiring classicists, whatever their social background or level of linguistic ability. Raeburn lived to see some of his earliest summer school pupils become distinguished professors of Classics themselves. Without the courses he directed and helped to devise, first in these schools, then in Oxford, Greek would have shrunk to be a language for a dozen new minds a year.

Even in advanced old age, he would crown the summer Bryanston course with his own readings of extracts of Greek drama. In 2003, Raeburn, then 86, amazed the Hollywood producers (who had sought his advice in order to add ancient Greek into the soundtrack of Oliver Stone's film, *Alexander*) by performing a long extract from the *Bacchae* himself.

As an undergraduate at Christ Church, he directed his first Greek play, Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* in Louis MacNeice's translation. It was to be the first of dozens of English productions over the next seventy years. Raeburn often translated the dramas himself, using rhythms for their choruses which came as near as possible to the Greek originals. He grasped the implicit role of gesturing, vocal range and modulation in the texts and made his actors bring them out. He emphasised the inherent architecture of long speeches, especially messenger-speeches. A carefully rehearsed messenger would use gesture and changes of tone and pace to reinforce the story he had to tell.

With Oliver Thomas he published a fine commentary on Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (2012) which gives due weight to questions of staging and acting, neglected in Fraenkel's massive edition. It has become a lifeline for first-time readers, among others. In a further book, *Greek Tragedies*



© JANE LIGHTFOOT

as *Plays for Performance* (2016), he discusses 10 of the surviving tragedies with an emphasis born from his direction of them as living theatre. Late Euripides remained a speciality, both the tragicomic strand in the *Ion* and the unsettling psycho-tragedy of the *Bacchae*. Four of his translations of Sophocles' plays were published in 2008 by Penguin Classics as *Electra and Other Plays*. They had already published his verse translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (2004), which brings out the wit and deeper range of that influential work.

As a director his methods developed over the decades, even when he put on Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and Sophocles' last masterpiece, *Oedipus at Colonus*. A mere fifty years after he first staged them in formal dress he changed to modern costumes and girls in the chorus. He also translated Sophocles' play afresh. As Oedipus hobbled forward, self-blinded, to be taken from this life in the Warden of New College's garden, none of his audience could help transposing the nonagenarian Raeburn himself onto the final scenes. In the golden evening light they were a vindication of his life. As he himself used to say, a quietly committed Christian, 'It was what I was meant to do'.

*Robin Lane Fox, Emeritus Fellow of New College, Oxford, and Reader in Ancient History*

## DRAMA COMPETITION

The David Raeburn Prize is an exciting new performance competition developed by the Faculty of Classics in partnership with the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (APGRD) for young people from across the UK. Perform a piece of ancient drama or deliver a spoken word composition and be in with the chance of winning great prizes!

<https://clasoutreach.web.ox.ac.uk/drama-competition-2021>

Calling all budding performers and lovers of ancient drama! For students aged 11–18 years



# BEFORE ZEUS:

## THE RISE OF THE NEAR EASTERN STORM GOD

If asked to define the 'Classics' or the essence of the 'Classical', many would probably reply that the terms refer to the Greco-Roman foundations of Western culture. The influence of Greek and Roman antiquity on the West, and beyond, is of course enduring, and controversial; it now forms a well-established topic of research in itself. But what about the reception of non-'Classical' cultures by the ancient Greeks and Romans: to what extent did they not only give, but also receive? One area in which this question seems particularly important and intriguing is early Greek poetry and myth – a uniquely rich and important corpus of evidence that becomes accessible to us from about the 8th century BC onwards, but that clearly presupposes a very deep and complex history which we cannot recover from the textual evidence alone.

While there was some interest from early modern Classical scholarship in comparisons between Homer, Hesiod and the Old Testament, it was the decipherment of the cuneiform script in the 19th century that gradually unlocked the literatures of the wider ancient Near East to modern eyes. These discoveries led to some exaggerated claims (sometimes known as 'Pan-Babylonism') that overstated the influence of ancient Mesopotamia on Classical antiquity, the Old Testament, and everything and anything else. At the same time, scholarship on the ancient Near East rapidly specialised, and formed sub-disciplines such as Assyriology, Sumerology, or Hittitology, which were understandably keen to assert their autonomy, independent of any claim to ancestorship of this or that better-known part of cultural history. The result is that, today, interest in Near

Eastern elements in early Greek poetry and myth seems greater on the Classical side than on the part of Orientalists. We were thus particularly fortunate to be able to gather not only Hellenists but also several experts on ancient Mesopotamia and the wider Near East at a conference in Oxford, in order to discuss the latest evidence on the issue.

If you are wondering why any of this might matter, consider that the most influential Greek myth on the birth and rise to power of Zeus undoubtedly drew on earlier, non-Greek myths about the rise of the Near Eastern storm god. The most important (though by no means isolated) piece of evidence for this is a Hittite poem dating

to about 1300 BC,

which presupposes earlier sources in a language called Hurrian, and whose ancient contexts have been greatly illuminated by very recent progress in the reconstruction of the Hittite ritual tradition: as a result, we now have a much clearer understanding of how the Near

Eastern myth of the rise

of the storm god may have been transmitted, perhaps in ritual contexts, to Greeks in the eastern Mediterranean.

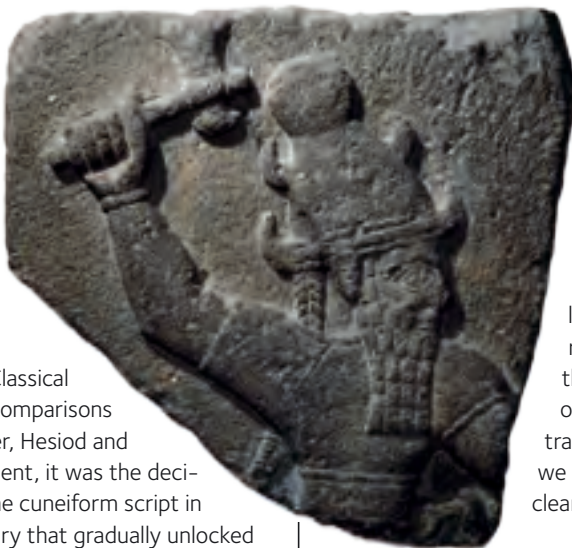
And much remains to be discovered. Several papers at the conference illuminated aspects of early Greek myth that can only be fully grasped once their Near Eastern background is taken into account: these include such 'classics' as the tale of Pandora, the myth of the Ages, or Herodotus' accounts of Lydian and Persian kingship. You may have noticed that most of the examples mentioned are associated with the poems

*Dr Christopher Metcalf,  
Lobel Fellow in Classics  
at The Queen's College;  
Associate Professor in  
Classical Languages and  
Literature.*



of Hesiod, a figure who has seemed strange and bewildering to many Hellenists, but who takes on a much more familiar appearance when approached from the East, as it were. On the other hand, his works are also profoundly integrated with the themes and style of early Greek epic at large, and it is precisely this ambiguity that occupied significant parts of the conference.

It may be a surprise to many that the evidence can sometimes also point in the other direction: there is good reason to think that an enigmatic passage in the Biblical book of Genesis, which mentions 'the heroes of old, the men with a name' in early human history, reflects the kind of heroic myths familiar to us from Homer! Finally, we wanted to move away from simply talking about origins and sources, and instead to see what the manipulations of common patterns and themes could tell us about the texts *in their own settings*, not merely as interesting footnotes in the history of Classical Greek and Roman texts. This is, we hope, a lasting achievement of the published volume that has resulted from our conference.



Top: Red-figured amphora depicting Zeus hurling a thunderbolt, attributed to the Berlin Painter circa 480–470 BC. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum BM 1867,0508.1114.

Bottom: Basalt relief of the storm god from the King's Gate, Carchemish (Gaziantep), circa 10th century BC. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum BM117909.



# PTOLEMAIC INSCRIPTIONS FROM EGYPT



Around the middle of the third century BC, an Egyptian priest named Pasos offered a dedication in Greek to the god Anubis in fulfilment of a vow on behalf of two individuals identified simply by their names as Apollonios and Zenon. Pasos has the rare but appropriate title of *kynoboskos* (κυνοβοσκός), 'dog-feeder': he was responsible for feeding the jackals sacred to the god Anubis. Apollonios and Zenon are not identified further, but we know a great deal about both of them through the chance survival of an extensive archive of Zenon's personal and business papers, more than 2,000 papyri now dispersed among several collections. Apollonios was the finance minister (*dioiketes*) of Ptolemy the Second (282–246 BC) and Zenon, a Greek from Kaunos in Caria in south-western Turkey, the manager of his large estate at Philadelphia in the Fayum. The monument on which Pasos made his dedication encapsulates the cultural milieu brought by the Macedonian-Greek occupation of Egypt. It is a small (0.49 metres high, 0.15 metres wide) limestone pedimental stele (Fig. 1: CPI 210). The Greek inscription recording the dedication is cut on a lower panel beneath a relief depicting a figure identified by a short, apparently incomplete, hieroglyphic label as Anubis, 'Lord of the Two Lands'. The lettering of the Greek inscription is cut in a semi-cursive style, reminiscent of the papyri written by Apollonios and Zenon themselves. This is one of the more remarkable documents to have survived from Ptolemaic Egypt. In bringing together a Greek monumental representational form, an Egyptian relief sculpture, and two writing systems, it reflects the confluences and cross-currents of Greco-Macedonian Egypt.

The Pasos stele is not alone in its fusion of monumental form and writing from different traditions. The Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, recording a priestly synod decree of 196 BC, is no less representative of a multilingual society and culture in which cultural interactions operated and acted in different directions, with creative tensions. The Rosetta Stone is incomplete, but two almost intact stelai from sites in the Nile Delta in the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo preserve full hieroglyphic, Demotic and Greek copies of an earlier priestly decree in honour of the Ptolemaic rulers in 238 BC (Fig. 2: CPI 119 and 129). They give an indication of how the Rosetta Stone would once have appeared, with a curved upper edge enclosing a winged solar disc with asps hanging from it, a relief scene, and three panels of text in hierarchical order: hieroglyphic followed by Demotic and Greek. There are partial copies of at least five other similar trilingual priestly decrees.

The concept and formulation of these priestly decrees are Greek rather than Egyptian and an innovative adaptation of traditional forms. The interaction of Greek and Egyptian writing traditions is equally evident in monolingual monuments. Early in the first century BC a poet named Isidoros (literally 'gift of Isis') composed an elaborate series of hymns in Greek hexameter and elegiac verse celebrating Egyptian Isis which were



Dr Charles Crowther,  
Fellow of The Queen's  
College; Associate  
Director of the Centre  
for the Study of Ancient  
Documents

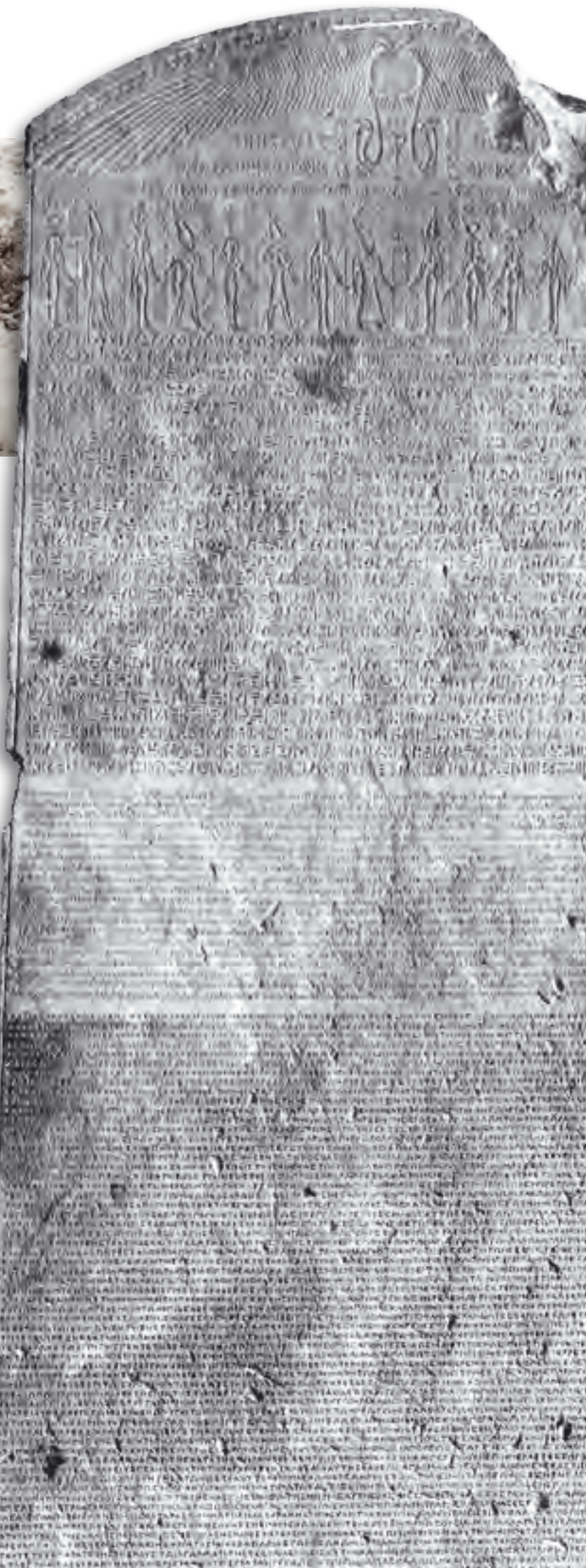




inscribed at the entrance of a new forecourt for the pharaonic temple of Renetutet at Narmouthis in the Fayum (Fig. 3: CPI 281). A Greek dedication in favour of Cleopatra (VII) from 51 BC by an association of priests from Hawara in the Fayum is inscribed on a repurposed Egyptian-style stele in an inset panel below a winged solar disc and a relief scene of a male pharaoh making an offering to a seated Isis suckling Harpokrates (Fig. 4: CPI 223).

The multiculturalism of Egypt under Greco-Roman rule is a reflection of conquest, colonialism and elite assimilation. The inscribed textual monuments of the Ptolemaic period allow us imperfectly and in vignettes to follow these processes. In the past, Greek, hieroglyphic and Demotic texts have been collected and published separately. An Oxford Classics project to compile a *Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions*, which itself began as a profound study by the late Peter Fraser of just the Greek inscriptions of the Ptolemaic period, has attempted to bridge these divides by collecting and publishing the different language texts of multilingual documents together. As the project director, Professor Alan Bowman, notes, 'It hardly needs pointing out that in order to see the Rosetta Stone one does not have to go to three different rooms in the British Museum'.

The first of three volumes of a *Corpus of Ptolemaic Inscriptions* was published earlier this year by Oxford University Press, together with a separate volume of interpretative essays, *The Epigraphy of Ptolemaic Egypt*. The *Corpus* will eventually also be published online; a preview is available on the project website: <http://cpi.csad.ox.ac.uk>.



Far left: Fig. 1: CPI 210

Above: Fig. 3: CPI 281

Right: Fig. 2: CPI 129

Left: Fig. 4: CPI 223



# THE CONNECTED WORLD OF ANCIENT COINAGE

Coinage was invented in Anatolia around the middle of the 7th century BC. War gave birth to coinage, as men expected to be paid for their service, and warfare spread it, as armies marched and spent their wealth.

Sometime around the middle of the 7th century BC, probably during the reign of Gyges of Lydia, perhaps even at his instigation, coinage was invented. From its origins in western Turkey this new monetary invention spread, as do wildfires today, rapidly across the Aegean and then the length of the Mediterranean. Created in the crucible of mercenary war, coins accompanied successive societal transformations, particularly in warfare, from the mercenaries of the Near East to the trireme fleets of old Greece, to standing armies of Philip of Macedon and his successors. War gave birth to coinage, as men expected to be paid for their service, and warfare spread it, as armies marched and spent their wealth. By the time the Romans, themselves propelled to power through the adoption of coinage, came to rule the known world, coinage had been produced by Greeks and their neighbours everywhere

from Spain to Afghanistan, from the Balkans to southern Arabia. More than 1,500 different places have been identified by modern scholarship as producers of coins in this period, and, no doubt, there are more still to be found (Map 1).

Although, for convenience, we refer to this field as 'Greek' numismatics, the map alone reveals the inadequacy of this term. Matters are further complicated by considering the various ethnicities and political entities that produced and used coinage across this vast expanse of the ancient world: Greeks, of course (Fig. 1), but also Phoenicians (Fig. 2), Lycians (Fig. 3), Persians (Fig. 4) and Himyarites (Fig. 5), to name but a few. Coins were produced by city-states, tyrants, satraps and kings, in high value gold down to low value bronze. They were produced, moreover, in enormous quantities and, as a result, survive in

Andrew Meadows,  
Professor of Ancient  
History; Tutorial Fellow  
New College; Director of  
the Centre for the Study  
of Ancient Documents



enormous quantities today, often coming to light in hoards of buried treasure.

The massive body of evidence that survives constitutes a huge and still largely untapped resource for the study of the ancient world. We are all, of course, used to seeing coins illustrated in modern books to show us the portraits of the long-dead, or the political and religious preoccupations of their producers (Figs. 6 and 7). But coinage is first and foremost an economic instrument. Its production signifies monetary output on the part of its issuer; its discovery in hoards signifies circulation and use by wider



Map 1. Coin producers in the west, 7th-1st centuries BC





communities. The places of production and discovery open windows on connectivity and isolation. And changes in its nature may suggest societal change: growth, stagnation, decay. Just a simple map of mints and hoard findspots (Map 2) reveals the potential of the data.

However, for generations the sheer mass of data, and its geographic and cultural diversity have stymied attempts to classify, collect and study it in its entirety. There still exists no comprehensive account of 'Greek' coinage, in contrast to the better-organised coinage of Republican and Imperial Rome. And without structure, collection of data is difficult, and without collection there can be no analysis.

All of this is now changing. Recent years have seen significant developments in the application of digital technologies to the discipline of ancient numismatics. New

Fig. 1. Silver Tetradrachm of Syracuse in Sicily, mid 5th century BC. Heberden Coin Room, HCR42891.

Fig. 2. Silver quarter-shekel of Tyre in Phoenicia, late 5th century BC. The American Numismatic Society, 1944.100.72660.

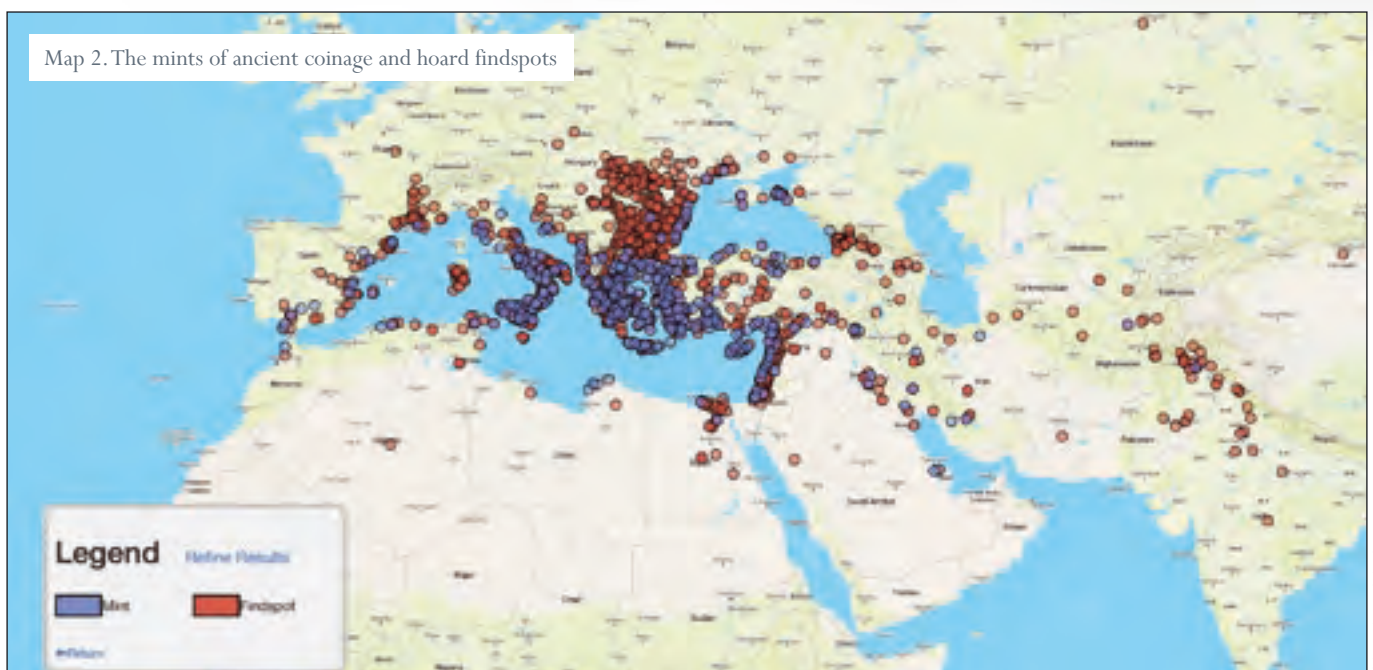
Fig. 3. Silver stater of the Lycian dynast Mithrapata, early 4th century BC. The American Numismatic Society, 1996.63.11.

Fig. 4. Gold Daric, Persian Empire, 4th century BC. Paris, BnF, Chandon de Briailles 612.

BACKGROUND IMAGE: GOOGLE, © LANDSAT/COPERNICUS

COINHOARDS.ORG

Map 2. The mints of ancient coinage and hoard findspots







resources, particularly in the field of Roman numismatics, have shown the way. Online Coins of the Roman Empire (OCRE: <http://numismatics.org/ocre/>) provides simultaneously a comprehensive overview of the entirety (41,713 varieties) of Roman imperial coinage, together with access to 161,136 examples in 48 different collections. The major project based at the Ashmolean Museum to collect all the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire (<https://chre.ashmus.ox.ac.uk>) currently contains details of 12,475 hoards. Both resources are still growing. Underpinning this new technology is an international initiative to create a Knowledge Organisation System of numismatics: [nomisma.org](http://nomisma.org).

The tools are thus in place, and the example exists in Roman coinage. So, what about the rest of the ancient world? Here the approach until now has been to divide and conquer: specific projects such as Hellenistic Royal Coinage, based in New York, have tackled discrete areas, but still we have no overview that will allow us to ask the big questions of the evidence.

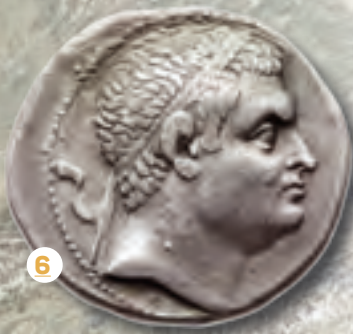
Fig. 5. Silver coin of the Himyarite king 'Amdan Yuhqbid, 1st century BC. Paris, BnF, Y 4122.

Fig. 6. Silver tetradrachm of king Euthydemus I of Bactria, late 3rd century BC. Heberden Coin Room, HCR45122.

Fig. 7. Gold decadrachm of Berenice II, queen of Egypt, 246–222 BC. The American Numismatic Society, 1967.152.562.

Fig. 8. Bronze coin manufactured according to the Indian standard for the Greco-Bactrian/Indo-Greek King, Agathocles, with a bilingual inscription in Brahmi and Greek c. 190–180 BC. Heberden Coin Room HCR54061.





Three projects based at the Faculty's Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents (CSAD) are now working to change this landscape and provide, for the first time, an overview of this vast phenomenon, and exploit its potential for writing the social and economic history of the ancient world.

### THE ARCH PROJECT

- A collaboration with the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and colleagues at the University and Museum in Valencia.
- Partners in Spain are working on a full collection of material from one of the densest areas of coin production in ancient Spain; those in Paris, using the French national library's enormous collection as its basis, are working with us to produce a typological overview of the whole of the rest of the ancient world.
- Oxford provides the technical hub, through a collaboration between CSAD and the Oxford E-Research Centre (OERC), using a technology known as Linked Open Data to ensure that the work we carry out conforms to international standards and is fully compatible with other ancient world resources online.
- Funded by three national agencies in Spain, France and the UK (The Spanish ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation, the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche and the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)) within a European framework, the Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage.



### CHANGE

- A much deeper dive into the densely numismatically populated area of Asia Minor.
- Collaboration with the British Museum in London and Staatliche Münzkabinett in Berlin and again with OERC.
- Will provide the first overview of the entire monetary production of the place where coinage was born.
- Through a five-year research programme, will explore the role of coinage in the growth of city-states and empires, the shift from intrinsic value to monetary systems to fiduciary, and will quantify monetary production across hundreds of locations and seven centuries.
- Funded by the European Research Council.



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

### OXUS-INDUS

- Carries us to the eastern end of this world.
- A collaboration with the American Numismatic Society in New York, the National Bank of Pakistan and the University of Peshawar.
- Will deliver the first complete online overview of the coinages of the kingdoms of Bactria and the Indo-Greeks in the regions of modern Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- Jointly funded by the AHRC and National Endowment for the Humanities in the USA.



With a combined value of €3 million, and participants in multiple institutions in multiple countries, this group of projects is testimony to a research environment as lively, international, and connected as the phenomenon it is studying. It is satisfying, too, that Oxford is at its centre.

# DRAMA IN LOCKDOWN

## GREEK TRAGEDY MASTERCLASS ON FILM: ANTIGONE

The APGRD's TORCH-funded Greek Tragedy Masterclasses on Film project is part of the University's Humanities Cultural Programme and has brought together international theatre practitioners and experts to make a 40-minute film about Sophocles' *Antigone*, the ancient play that has been at the heart of politico-legal, philosophical, religious, gender and psycho-analytical debates from antiquity onwards. The *Antigone* masterclass film is the first in a series of free, high-level, and durable digital resources on Greek tragedy aimed at university and school students and an expansive, global, online audience expedited by the Covid-19 pandemic.



The masterclass, a partnership between the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (APGRD) and the theatre company Out of Chaos (Artistic Director, Paul O'Mahony), builds on the recent success of Out of Chaos' Reading Greek Tragedy Online project, which has reached diverse international audiences eager for artistic expression during global lockdowns. In collaboration with the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, Out of Chaos has performed one Greek play per week on YouTube since Covid-19 closed theatres around the world, with over 75 actors from 8 countries, including leading actors

from the RSC, Shakespeare's Globe and The American Shakespeare Center, receiving more than 60,000 views to date. The masterclass also builds on the APGRD's own interactive/multimedia eBook project, which has produced two freely available eBooks on the performance histories of Euripides' *Medea* and Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* respectively. These eBooks have similarly brought new audiences to the ancient plays and have been of particular value in the lecture theatre and classroom, as well as to actor trainers for whom the eBooks' interactive aspects have added a much-needed sense of aliveness during the pandemic, especially in classes that have a workshop element<sup>1</sup>.

The Greek Tragedy Masterclass: *Antigone* was filmed, in accordance with Covid-19 rules, at the English Touring Theatre's studio space in south London. Actors Evelyn Miller and Tim Delap, directed by Paul O'Mahony, worked together on the confrontation scene between Creon and *Antigone* (lines 446–525) in Oliver Taplin's translation (Oxford 2020). They performed the scene in two very different ways: first and unusually as an intimate family dispute; secondly, as a public confrontation between the forces of the state and the claims of the individual, and a clash between male and female perspectives. Comment and context were provided by Lyndsay Coe (Senior Lecturer in Ancient Greek Language and Literature, University of Bristol), Fiona Macintosh (St Hilda's, Oxford, Director of APGRD), Jane Montgomery Griffiths (scholar-practitioner, Melbourne), and Oliver Taplin (Magdalen, Oxford, co-founder of APGRD), whose contributions by Zoom were subsequently edited into the rehearsal footage by filmmaker Joel Philimore. The aim of the film

Fiona Macintosh,  
Professor of Classical  
Reception; Fellow of  
St Hilda's; Director of  
APGRD



was to make *Antigone* accessible to new audiences by introducing and integrating multiple performance and philological approaches, and by demonstrating the craft and process of acting and the role of the rehearsal in the creation of a play-text's meaning.

There is a huge appetite for this kind of pedagogical material on dramatic scripts, but in marked contrast to Shakespeare, there is surprisingly little relating to Greek theatre. By creating a free resource that is accessible on YouTube and also via the Faculty's digital resource hub, the hope is that the *Antigone* masterclass on film will reach audiences across the world hungry for access to high quality performances and discussions on Greek tragedy. This first round of funding has allowed us to demonstrate proof of concept for a larger array of future masterclasses, with plans for a second (on *Oedipus Tyrannus* funded by Washington's Center for Hellenic Studies) well underway.

For further information about this project, contact [apgrd@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:apgrd@classics.ox.ac.uk)



To watch the *Antigone* masterclass, see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6Qi3RjODIk>

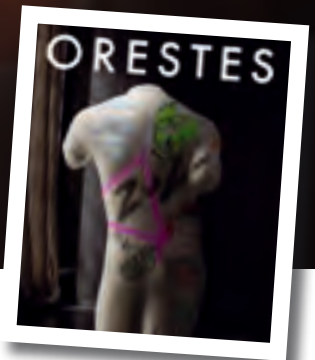


To watch discussion with the film's contributors which took place before the premiere, see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O156BCmUcJ4>

<sup>1</sup> Actor trainer, Tisch School, NYU, 16/6/2020





## THE OXFORD GREEK PLAY

In April, the *Oxford Greek Play 2021: Orestes* went live on YouTube. We streamed to an audience of nearly 500 viewers – a full house. For the first time in the Play's 140-year history we combined ancient Greek and English in the same performance with the help of four excellent translators, all of whom were students or alumni. Moreover, we pushed the limits of Zoom, creating an innovative and joyful performance which combined live and pre-recorded elements, electric stand-up, dance, as well as commentary from four world-leading specialists in ancient Greek tragedy: Nathalie Haynes, Fiona Macintosh, Rosa Andujar and Edith Hall. Now the entire production is available online, and we have produced an

accompanying educational guide to support engagement with *Orestes* in the classroom.

We both felt that Euripides' *Orestes* – a play about collective trauma, inherited chaos and failed communication – spoke to the political moment. Since the members of the chorus are community activists, we saw an opportunity to make climate protest and queer resistance integral to our production.

We wanted to make a show for people who might encounter Greek drama as part of their studies, at GCSE, A-level or beyond, and we wanted to encourage discussion about what a tragedy is, and who contemporary productions of ancient drama are made by and for. At Oxford, these

questions have already been asked by the Oxford BAME Drama Society, especially through their production of *Medea*, staged in November 2019, and they are a part of a broader project to decolonise and diversify Classics – necessary work that is being led in Oxford by the *Christian Cole Society for Classicists of Colour*. We hope that our performance has made a contribution to these conversations, and will help to make Classics fairer and more equitable.

*Alison Middleton and Marcus Bell, Co-Directors of the Oxford Greek Play 2021: Orestes; DPhil Candidates in Classical Languages and Literature*

## TRANSLATING AND FRAGMENTING EPIC AND TRAGEDY UNDER LOCKDOWN 611–300 BC

This past academic year we ran two workshops with postgraduate students in Classics, in the Ioannou Centre in Michaelmas and Hilary terms. They were the only collective activity allowed during lockdown. For some masters students, they were the only opportunity they had to spend time in the building and socialise with fellow students.

The aim of the workshops was to explore the meanings and structure of original texts and translations through theatrical exercises. At the end we discussed how the sessions helped us to read the original texts. Our first workshop focused on fragments of ancient texts dealing with the Trojan War. We translated existing fragments and extracted other fragments from plays or epics.

Our fragmented experience of the world has been exacerbated by the pandemic, and the downsizing of our realities into

screens and the grids on Zoom or Teams. The second workshop further explored this fragmentation by setting up a dialogue between an ancient text and a contemporary news piece.

In order to stage the workshops, we had to comply with social distancing measures. We used the huge atrium of the Classics faculty as a rehearsal space and performed on different floors. To avoid interpersonal proximity, we put poster-sized translations of the texts on the walls, where they became part of the scenery.

So our work on fragments responded to, and was informed by, the circumstances. Yet, rather than resting upon the lack of unity, the dramaturgy of ancient fragments that

emerged from our workshop found its possibility of survival in the communality and fluid circularity of human and non-human bodies in the same space.

*Dr Estelle Baudou, Marie Curie Fellow, APGRD, Oxford, and Dr Giovanna Di Martino, Leventis Research Fellow, UCL*



# HOW TO WIN ARGUMENTS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE:

## ANCIENT RHETORIC IN THE CONTEMPORARY CURRICULUM



Over the last eighteen months, I'm sure many of us have cast our minds back to the last live event we attended before the UK 'locked down' in March 2020. For me, it was the final of the Lytham St Annes Classical Association's annual Classics Competition, a public speaking event where I was the guest judge. The student competitors (aged 16–17) had been tasked with presenting the three figures from the ancient world whom they would most like to invite to a dinner party: the attendee lists were eclectic, featuring a range of scandalous figures and after-dinner speakers, including emperors, gods and even a chorus of frogs! Some of the four finalists chose historical figures (such as Herodotus and Livy), others wanted to invite characters from myth (like Orpheus and Pasiphae) and runner-up Katherine had a fascinating trio in Caligula, Cicero and Artemis – an entertaining evening for sure!

Whilst Cicero is unlikely to be a popular invitee to most dinner parties, Katherine selected him for his banter and her own use



of Ciceronian rhetoric when presenting her case was certainly convincing. Indeed, all the speakers not only demonstrated their knowledge of the Classical world and their creative interpretation of the brief, but they also put into practice rhetorical techniques in a bid to persuade myself and the audience (there was a People's Choice Award also at stake) that their three chosen guests were the most interesting combination and that their presentation was the most engaging. They spoke eloquently, carefully arranging their words for maximum effect, and used critical analysis alongside humour, visual communication, and comparative evaluation in their presentations. This excellent display of oracy – that is, according to charity *Voice 21*, 'the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language' – conveys the value of teaching ancient rhetoric in contemporary classrooms.

As my ongoing research into the intersection of Classical rhetoric, oracy and citizenship education has shown, there are three key reasons why we should teach ancient rhetoric more widely. Firstly, because it provides a framework around which young people can articulate and eloquently share their ideas on key civic issues – indeed, the Citizenship curriculum requires that students can 'research and interrogate evidence, debate and evaluate viewpoints, make persuasive and reasoned arguments, justify and substantiate their conclusions and take informed action'. Secondly, it allows them to deconstruct the arguments, advertising and rhetorical flourish that they constantly encounter from politicians, journalists, broadcasters and their peers, particularly via social media, and instead to judge what they hear, so as to discern the truth behind the 'spin'. The third is preparation for democratic deliberation, which equips young people to be active and participatory citizens in the twenty-first century. By teaching rhetoric, we equip young people not just to be literate but also aware of their civic agency and their communicative powers.

**Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson, Senior Research Fellow in Classics Education; OPEN (Oxford Policy Engagement Network) Policy Leader 2021–22**



I have recently shared my research findings as an expert advisor with the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Oracy, highlighting how ancient rhetoric enriches oracy across the contemporary school curriculum. This APPG brings together cross-party MPs, international experts and stakeholders across the education sector. With funding from Research England's Strategic Priorities Fund, I conducted research and co-authored the APPG's *Speak for Change* report in April 2021, which indicates that 'a greater focus on oral language improves outcomes for the most disadvantaged students' since 'oracy nourishes healthy debate, helps us bridge divides, navigate disagreement and understand different perspectives'.

One recent success was the Department for Education's announcement of the £4 million Latin Excellence Programme, which will introduce Latin in up to 40 state schools. This is the outcome of a Research and Public Policy Partnership I have held with the government since 2020. As a TORCH Knowledge Exchange Fellow and Oxford Policy Engagement Network Leader for the Humanities, I continue to raise the profile of Classics in the curriculum and to promote oracy to policymakers via my role as expert advisor. The most persuasive advocates, though, would be the finalists from the Lytham St Annes Classical Association's annual competition.

Left: Arlene outside No. 10. Top: Katherine Baker, finalist in the Lytham St Annes Classical Association's 2020 competition, describing an imaginary dinner with Caligula, Cicero and Artemis.





## CLASSICS ACCESS AND ADMISSIONS 2019–21

# HOMER... FOR EVERYONE

Perhaps the most exciting development in Oxford Classics over the past two years has been our spectacular progress in diversifying our undergraduate intake.

**T**he traditional focus on the study of ancient languages within our Classics degree has in the past tended to limit the number of students from less advantaged backgrounds coming our way. In 2020, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the creation of Classics 'Course II', a strand within the Classics degree for students who did not have the opportunity to study either ancient language at A-level. It is no exaggeration to say that over the past two years, the promise of Course II has finally been fulfilled, in spectacular style.

In 2019, the University launched a major new access initiative, [Opportunity Oxford](#). Under this scheme, the University makes available around 200 additional places each year, reserved for UK students from significantly under-represented groups who would otherwise have narrowly missed out on an offer. Students taken under the scheme go through an intensive and rigorous summer bridging programme after A-levels, consisting of a two-month online course followed by a two-week residential, focused on a mixture of academic study skills (critical reading, note-taking, essay-writing) and core subject knowledge (for Classicists, beginners' Latin or Greek). One of the main aims of the scheme is to encourage admissions tutors to take 'risks' on talented but relatively underprepared students, with the reassurance that they will

receive serious skills support before being thrown into their first Michaelmas term.

Classics has been an enthusiastic early adopter of the new scheme. For many years now, we have been running our own summer [Classics bridging programme](#) for upcoming Course II students (generously funded by Classics alumni), and over the last two years we have brought that scheme into close alignment with the new Opportunity Oxford programme. In summer 2019, we welcomed a total of 18 students for the combined Classics/OppOx summer bridging programme, a number which rose to 26 in summer 2020. Our first cohort (who have just completed their first year at Oxford) proved to be an exceptionally talented and dedicated group of students, from a very wide range of ethnic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds; over half of them were alumni either of our UNIQ Classics summer schools or the Wadham Classics summer schools, both of which have a superb record of identifying talented students from under-represented groups who go on to make successful applications to Oxford.

The impact of the scheme on our Classics undergraduate intake has been transformative. To take a crude measure, over the three years 2016–18, an average of 31% of our UK Classics intake came from the maintained sector, while in the last two admissions rounds (2019–20), that proportion

has risen to 48%. More pertinently, we have hugely increased the number of students coming from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. In the most recent admissions round, 10.4% of our UK Classics intake was drawn from the most socio-economically disadvantaged group within the UK population (ACORN category 5), and 8.3% of our UK intake came from the quintile of young people least likely to proceed to higher education (POLAR quintile 1). These figures represent the most dramatic broadening of our undergraduate demographic in the history of Classics at Oxford.

There is more to come. In autumn 2022, the University will recruit its first cohort of students to [Foundation Oxford](#), a foundation year programme targeted at young people from the most disadvantaged groups within UK society. Classics has already committed to full participation in Foundation Oxford, and we are currently designing the Classics strand of the programme, which we hope will appeal to a wide range of students who have not had the opportunity to study the subject at school. Thanks to schemes like these, we are well on the way to achieving our aim of a linguistically rigorous, intellectually demanding Oxford Classics degree which is, at last, truly open to everyone.

*Prof Peter Thonemann teaches Ancient History at Wadham College; he co-ordinates the Humanities stream of Opportunity Oxford.*

**200**  
ADDITIONAL  
PLACES

**31%**  
FROM MAINTAINED  
SECTOR 2016–18

**48%**  
FROM MAINTAINED  
SECTOR 2019–20

**10.4%**  
FROM ACORN  
CATEGORY 5

# ACCESS & OUTREACH

The Access and Outreach Programme has had an exciting year evolving and adapting to the challenges faced in the wake of the pandemic. Our projects and events have been transformed into online offerings which have been well received by our target audience. We are particularly proud of our team for their efforts in creating exciting and accessible digital options.

## CLASSICAL CONVERSATIONS

### OXFORD CLASSICS PROFESSORS GO ONLINE FOR SCHOOLS IN LOCKDOWN

We seized this year's opportunity of distance learning to engage virtually with schools from Exeter to Inverness. Our experts in ancient subjects talked to primary and secondary learners about everything from togas to epic poetry. The brainchild of the Chair of the Faculty Board, Dr Neil McLynn, 'Classical Conversations' are part of a multi-point push to enrich learning and boost interest in studying classical subjects.

Schools have reacted with considerable enthusiasm – more than 75 Classical Conversations have taken place across the country, reaching some 800 pupils, and teachers report renewed interest in Classics at all levels.

### CLASSICAL CONVERSATIONS: BESPOKE TALKS IN LIVERPOOL

We also arranged two sets of bespoke talks for Year 12 students in collaboration with Aspire Liverpool. Aspire Liverpool is an organisation which works with young people from across Liverpool to provide information about Oxford and Cambridge and show that applying to these universities is within students' reach. The Faculty is delighted to be reaching and inspiring around 150 students for whom Classics and Archaeology are completely new subjects.



In March, colleagues from the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research gave a series of short talks introducing the history and art of the Byzantine Empire.

In June, the Faculty collaborated with the Ashmolean Museum to deliver two talks on Classical Archaeology.

Clare Cory, Learning Officer: Secondary and Young People at the Ashmolean, gave a talk entitled 'Stories about Archaeology – coins, pots and palaces – how objects can tell us about life in ancient times'. Clare was followed by an introduction to Classical Archaeology from Dr Maria Stamatopoulou, entitled 'Not really Tomb Raiders: find out why archaeologists love looking in graves'.

The students found the talks enjoyable and informative. Around 70% now want to find out more about studying at Oxford and about half of those were encouraged to think about applying for a Classical subject.

Below: Athenian black-figure pottery pelike attributed to the Eucharides Painter. Found in Rhodes, 550–500 BC. Courtesy of Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

MORE THAN  
**75**  
CLASSICAL  
CONVERSATIONS

**800**  
PUPILS

RENEWED INTEREST  
IN CLASSICS AT  
ALL LEVELS

"IT WAS FANTASTIC TO SEE THE  
LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT FROM OUR  
STUDENTS. THE QUESTIONS THEY  
ASKED WERE GREAT!"

— HARRY DOYLE, ASPIRE LIVERPOOL

THE TALKS HAVE BEEN  
REALLY WELL PITCHED AND  
WELL RECEIVED! WE HAVE REALLY  
APPRECIATED THEM, EVEN THOUGH FOR  
MOST, THESE ARE COMPLETELY  
NEW SUBJECTS.

— ALICE CASE, CLASSICS FOR ALL,  
LIVERPOOL HUB

CLASSICS IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM  
MANY OF THE HUMANITIES THAT I HAVE  
BEEN TAUGHT IN THE PAST SO I FOUND IT  
INCREDIBLY INTERESTING TO HEAR ABOUT  
NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

— ASPIRE LIVERPOOL STUDENT



## LOCKDOWN LATIN CLUB

Only a few hundred yards up the road from the Classics Faculty, sits St Giles' Church. I'm not sure I ever paid it much heed as an undergraduate, although the hourly tolling of its church bell gave me the frequent reminder that I was running late for one of Matthew Leigh's tutorials at St Anne's. As a graduate student, however, I was invited to start singing in its choir. Not because I have a particularly strong voice or because I look especially fetching in a blue cassock, but because it offered me the opportunity to become part of an educational experiment.

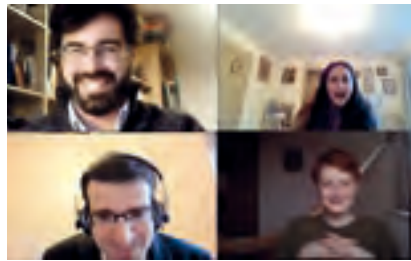
The choir director had a plan to make the sort of musical education and training received by a chorister at New College, Magdalen College or Christ Church Cathedral available to children who do not attend the schools attached to those choirs. Over the last ten years I have seen the tiny choir I joined grow into a large and flourishing educational establishment at which boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds can come together to learn, study and make music.

Apart from the confidence boost the children no doubt got from measuring their musical competence against mine, I made myself useful in two main ways. The first was to help with the Latin pieces we sang – explaining the meaning of the words and the shape of the sentences. The second came in the holidays. Every summer the choir undertakes an Italian singing tour, and I snap into tour guide mode. The Roman Forum, the Vatican Museums, the Cisterne Romane at Todi, the Colosseum, the theatres of Taormina and Volterra, the Grottoes of Catullus – with my clipboard and hat I took the choristers and their families behind the scenes of all these places, subtly evangelising the joys of studying the ancient world.

And then came Covid-19.

The lockdown of March 2020 presented a double-whammy. Not only was singing out of the question, but the speed at which lockdown had been imposed meant that the vast majority of children were receiving zero face-to-face schooling. Into that void stepped my Lockdown Latin Club.

It rapidly became clear that I had underestimated the speed at which these



children could pick up the language. They were quick to grasp grammatical concepts, diligent when it came to learning vocabulary, and – thanks to their experience with scales and arpeggios – remarkably good at chanting their declensions and conjugations until they were committed to memory.

Latin at St Giles' was not going to be a passing fancy to be set aside once life returned to normal. The children enjoyed the rigour of learning the language, they were fascinated by the perspective it opened up on learning about the Romans, and they had no intention of giving it up.

In order to put the Lockdown Latin Club on a permanent footing, I needed a textbook. So I turned to the Classics Faculty for help. Having explained my situation, the outreach team went into action and generously provided each of my students with their own copy of the Cambridge Latin Course – the very textbook with which I took my first steps into Latin as an 18 year old.

To say thank you for supporting their language learning, my students composed and filmed the following letter: <https://bit.ly/latinclubletter>

If you know a child who loves to sing (or, indeed, if you do yourself) please do get in touch with our choir director Nicholas Prozzillo ([choirdirector@st-giles-church.org](mailto:choirdirector@st-giles-church.org)). We are always on the lookout for new choristers to join our boys' and girls' choirs. We also have an adult choir, and a newly formed youth choir for teenage singers.

Please see the website for further information: <https://www.st-giles-church.org/music/#>

*Dr Andrew Sillett, Departmental Lecturer in Latin Literature and Roman History; Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics, St Hilda's College*

## REPRESENTATIVE CLASSICS – NEW PROJECT TO SHOW THAT CLASSICS IS FOR EVERYONE

Recording has begun to celebrate the diverse voices of the Oxford Classics community in a podcast series, film, and exhibition.

Representative Classics seeks to create thought-provoking conversations, engage new audiences, and widen access to the myriad areas of study which come under the umbrella of Classics.

It was created by the Faculty of Classics, in partnership with the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (APGRD), the Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics and the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research.

The project is looking to highlight Oxford Classicists (past and present) who identify as belonging to one or more of the following groups:

- from a working-class background;
- from a non-traditional educational background;
- who are non-white;
- who have disabilities;
- who are, or have been, mature students;
- or who have entered academia after alternative careers.

The team is keen to talk to alumni, Faculty Members and students who are interested in taking part. Please contact [outreach@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@classics.ox.ac.uk) and [katrina.kelly@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:katrina.kelly@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Listen to the podcast:

<https://clasoutreach.web.ox.ac.uk/regional-classics-podcast>

The project has been funded by the Craven Committee and the Humanities Division Culture Change Fund.



© WOMANIZER WOW TECH, UNSPLASH

# VEE KATIVHU

## TURNING LEMONS INTO LEMONADE...

My name is Varaidzo Kativhu, but everyone knows me as Vee. I read Classical Archaeology and Ancient History at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University, from 2016–20. My first year at Oxford was as a member of the first Foundation Year cohort before beginning my undergraduate course and matriculating in 2017. My time at Oxford was unforgettable for many reasons; it was where I came into my own as a young woman. I learned how to assert my boundaries, discovered what I enjoyed and came to understand what my passion in life was. My foundation course helped me find confidence in my academic ability and introduced me to the world of Classics and archaeology, something I had never had exposure to previously. As part of my undergraduate degree, I got to study Latin and Greek, and I had the chance to take part in an excavation in Sicily while being taught by some of the world's leading historians. My academic experience was highly enriching, and if I was given a chance, I would do my time at Oxford all over again.

During my studies, I was involved in access and outreach work and various other projects. I decided to pursue access work for my college because I was frustrated at the University's lack of diversity, especially on my course. I wanted to see more students from backgrounds like mine, who had their sights set on Oxford, to pursue the degree of their dreams at their chosen university. To ensure I could reach as many students as possible, I also launched an educational YouTube channel, a space where I could

share free resources for students aiming for Russell Group universities, especially Oxford and Cambridge. I used the channel, which now has more than 215,000 subscribers, as a space to document my university journey unapologetically. Alongside my channel and work as an access and outreach ambassador for my college and the University, I also launched my academic empowerment platform, Empowered By Vee, which has acquired over 10,000 student followers who regularly use the free resources we provide. Running this platform has taught me so much about young people and has helped fuel my fire to keep on campaigning for access to education for under-represented students in the UK. As founder of Empowered by Vee, I run

**I ALSO LAUNCHED MY ACADEMIC EMPOWERMENT PLATFORM, 'EMPOWERED BY VEE', WHICH HAS MORE THAN 10,000 STUDENT FOLLOWERS WHO REGULARLY USE THE FREE RESOURCES WE PROVIDE.**

an annual empowerment conference with the help of my influential friends and have now launched regular empowerment workshops where I mentor cohorts of girls for two weeks at a time. I have also spent the last year during the pandemic serving as a ChangeMaker for LinkedIn, helping support under-represented young people as they transition into the world of work.

As a young woman born and raised in Zimbabwe, I have remained interested in the country's social, economic and political development. My desire to stay connected to my country of birth and my passion for education has led me to become an activist for female education worldwide, particularly in Zimbabwe. I want to see young girls gain access to a free, safe and quality education. One that leads them to find

empowerment in their financial, personal and political lives. I have volunteered with charities in Zimbabwe such as CAMFED (Campaign for Female Education), WCOZ (Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe) and currently hold a position as an ambassador for Girl Up Zimbabwe, a United Nations Foundation organisation campaigning for women's rights. In the future, I hope to work in a role that allows me to help shape the education space for girls in Zimbabwe and the neighbouring countries. I want to sit at the table with other changemakers and find solutions for issues that hinder girls' access to education, such as child marriage, lack of financial resources, societal norms and non-inclusive education policies.

I recently completed my postgraduate studies in International Education Policy at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. My time at Harvard was phenomenal, and I learned many skills that I can take forward and apply in my work. I am now heading into my first job, where I will be working as Global University Outreach Manager at One Young World, a worldwide organisation that helps empower and support young leaders in community enterprises and education. In addition, I am also working on the publication of my debut book, which comes out 2 December 2021, *Empowered*, a self-help tool for young people to find their inner power, follow their dreams and live an empowered life.



Find Vee Kativhu's  
channel on YouTube



© VEE KATIVHU

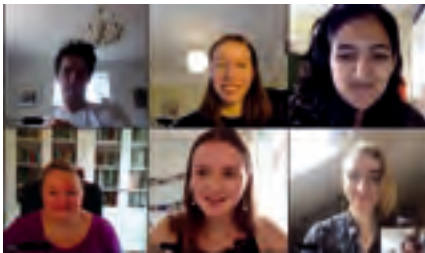


© MAX SELWOOD



## UNIVERSITY OPEN DAYS

Over three days in June, July and September, we welcomed more than 650 visitors for the University of Oxford virtual open days. Academic staff and student ambassadors were available throughout to answer questions about Classics, Joint School courses, Classical Archaeology, and Ancient and Modern History.



## OPEN DAYS – OXBRIDGE GOES ONLINE

This March it was Oxford's turn to host the annual Oxford and Cambridge Classics

**I LIKED GETTING THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE CURRENT STUDENTS. — OXBRIDGE OPEN DAY ATTENDEE**

Open Day which we held online through Teams for the first time. More than 400 students and teachers from 150 schools joined us to discover more about studying Classics and related courses. Applicants and their teachers enjoyed the opportunity to meet tutors and students, experience taster lectures and ask hundreds of questions!

While nothing can replace the experience of visiting Oxford in person, there were definite advantages to going online. Access being the most obvious, as guests were able to join from all over the world.

Others appreciated that there was no need to travel or get up early, and even latecomers could still enjoy events on catch up.

The taster lectures were an especially popular part of the day: Dr Roel Konijnendijk gave a talk entitled 'Stick with them with the pointy end: amateurism in Greek warfare'; and Dr Sarah Cullinan Herring spoke about 'Adonis and masculinity in Greek literature'.

At the end of each lecture, the chat was flooded with hundreds of fantastic questions, demonstrating the extent of the audience's interest and engagement.

**I LOVED THE TASTER LECTURES: THEY WERE VERY INFORMATIVE AND GAVE ME A REAL SENSE OF THE BROAD TOPICS THAT A COURSE IN CLASSICS WOULD COVER. — OXBRIDGE OPEN DAY ATTENDEE**

## OXLAT – ONE COHORT COMPLETES AS ANOTHER JUST BEGINS

OxLAT – our scheme for students who attend state schools where there is no Latin provision – continues to thrive thanks to the generosity of the Stonehouse Foundation. OxLAT offers free tuition in Latin language and literature *ab initio* through to GCSE examination with teachers Elena Vacca and Charlotte Causer, coordinated by Emma Searle.

Huge congratulations to the 21 OxLAT students on completing their GCSE in 2021, with more than 95% who completed achieving grade 7–9 (equivalent to A or A\*). This is a tremendous achievement in spite of the trials of the pandemic.

We are also delighted to announce that OxLAT alumna, Hannah Bailey, will be taking up a place at Trinity this autumn to study *Lit Hum*.

Meanwhile, we've had a bumper year for sign ups and preparations are underway for the next cohort starting in October.

## UNIQU – CLASSICS SUMMER SCHOOL

We were proud to host three UNIQU summer schools. UNIQU offers a series of free subject-specific programmes for Year 12 (or equivalent) students from state schools.

Classical Archaeology, organised by Dr Maria Stamatopoulou and Dr Georgy Kantor, was themed 'Family and household'. Students explored different types of social relations and activities related to the lived experiences of ancient Greek and Roman families. Topics included gender relations, social status, household religious practices, and different types of domestic architecture.

Classics – Greece, organised by Dr Marchella Ward, focused on a central theme: Identities in Ancient Greece. Students considered how the Greeks thought of themselves, how they determined whether someone was or was not 'a Greek', and whether other factors played a role in how they understood their identity.

Classics – Rome, organised by Prof Matthew Leigh, was a programme built

around one famous play – the *Pseudolus* of Plautus first staged in Rome in 191 BC – and with it a fascinating period of Roman history. The comedies of Plautus are the earliest surviving complete works of Latin literature and fit into a great period of development in the Roman theatre starting in 240 BC.

## THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S TEACHING AND LEARNING SHOWCASE – CLASSICS IN COMMUNITIES LEADS THE WAY

After winning a Vice-Chancellor's Education award in 2020, the Classics in Communities team was invited to present at the Teaching and Learning showcase in summer 2021. Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson, the project's principal investigator and Senior Research Fellow in Classics Education, gave a talk which highlighted the project's successes in widening access to Latin and Greek in state-maintained primary schools around the UK, teacher training, resource creation, community engagement and knowledge exchange with policymakers.

The event provided a platform for sharing examples of best practice in flexible and inclusive teaching from across the University over the past 12 months.



## SHARING RESEARCH AND OUTREACH EXPERTISE WITH GOVERNMENT

Since October 2020, Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson has worked directly with the Department for Education via a University of Oxford/Policy Profession Research and Public Policy Partnership. Arlene was awarded funding by the Higher Education Innovation Fund to share her research evidence, academic knowledge and professional expertise with policymakers regarding the learning and teaching of ancient languages in primary and secondary schools. This collaboration continues to inform the implementation of the government's English Baccalaureate languages policy and explores ways to mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on language teaching.

## CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION

Don't miss our drama competition which is now open for entries! See page 4 for details.

Our Creative Writing Competition, in partnership with the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research (OCBR), offered cash prizes for creative writing inspired by images from the Manar al-Athar Photo Archive.

No fewer than 140 school students, aged between 14 and 18, were inspired to enter the competition, and a judging panel from the OCBR and Classics Faculty took a lot of pleasure reading the excellent submissions, and less pleasure whittling them down, with great difficulty, to three winners.

The quality of entries was exceptionally high, and we offer our thanks and congratulations to all the entrants.

**1st Prize (£250)** was awarded to Weiyen Hannah Tan of Cherwell School, Oxford, for 'Sands of Time', a poem inspired by an image of a tomb in Petra.

**2nd Prize (£150)** went to Amn Zain-ul-Abidin, Lahore Grammar School, for 'A Believer's Conundrum', responding to images of the Aya Sofya Mosque in Trabzon.

**3rd Prize (£100)** was won by Jack Hitchcock of Derby Moor Academy for 'Apollo at Cyrene', on the temple of the god at Shahhat in Libya.

You can read the winning entries here: <https://clasoutreach.web.ox.ac.uk/creative-writing-competition-2021>

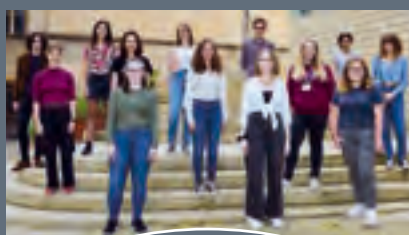


© SEAN LEATHERBURY

### BRIDGING PROGRAMME

The Bridging Programme promotes the success of students of great potential who come from schools, colleges, or neighbourhoods which do not traditionally send many candidates to Oxford.

This year we welcomed 11 offer holders onto the course in addition to 12 Classicists through Opportunity Oxford. The course included an Offer Holder Day – a chance to meet other students, ask questions and start finding out about tutorials and language classes, online learning, and a one week residential in Oxford.



IT WAS VERY ENGAGING AND A RELAXED ENVIRONMENT... IT WAS VERY ENJOYABLE AND I DO FEEL IT ACHIEVED ITS AIM OF 'BRIDGING' US INTO AN OXFORD SETTING.  
— OFFER HOLDER

PHOTOGRAPH © IAN WALLMAN

### JOIN OUR TEACHER NETWORK!

If you would like to receive newsletters and access to events, competitions and other outreach opportunities, sign up here:

[clasoutreach.web.ox.ac.uk/teachers-advisors](https://clasoutreach.web.ox.ac.uk/teachers-advisors)



© BROOKE CAGLE, UNSPLASH

### WHO'S WHO IN CLASSICS OUTREACH

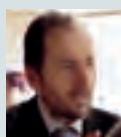
#### 2020–21 Outreach Committee:

Develops and implements the outreach programme.

Neil McLynn, Katherine Clarke, Maria Stamatopoulou, Llewelyn Morgan, Arlene Holmes-Henderson, and Audrey Cahill. Also this year, we have been delighted to welcome undergraduates into the committee, the current representatives are Jemima Sinclair, Jennifer Claridge and Matilda Trueblood.

#### School Liaison Officer

Llewelyn Morgan manages the planning, coordination and delivery of the Faculty's outreach and access initiatives for schools, colleges and prospective applicants.



#### Senior Research Fellow

Arlene Holmes-Henderson provides strategic advice on outreach, access and admissions. Arlene is an OPEN Leader for Oxford University, working with policymakers to raise the profile of Classics in the curriculum.



#### Outreach Officer

Edith Johnson provides administrative support for the team, rallies student volunteers for events, organises open days and runs our social media. If you want to get involved, please email [outreach@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@classics.ox.ac.uk).

