

CLASSICS

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IN THIS ISSUE

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**FRONT COVER
IMAGE**
The head of Odysseus,
Marble sculpture from
Sperlonga, Italy 1st
century BCE
Photo by HungryBild

**BACK COVER
IMAGE**
Rome, Italy - April 12,
2010: Scene from
Roman Forum
Photo by Krikkiat

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alumni and friends.

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1 | EX CATHEDRA | MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

By the time you read this, it will be greetings from the former Chair: on July 1, my term came to an end and Prof. George Boys-Stones took over as Chair. The department is very grateful to him, as am I, for taking on this role; we are confident that he will do a great job and wish him all success (at a minimum, no global pandemics!). I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have served with me on the executive committee over the past three years: Associate Chairs Graduate Christer Bruun (2020-21), Seth Bernard (2021-22), and Regina Höschele (2022-23), and Associate Chairs Undergraduate George Boys-Stones (2020-21), Ben Akrigg (Autumn 2021), and Kevin Wilkinson (Winter 2022, 2022-23). It was a pleasure to work with you all.

2022-23 has been a particularly busy year as we have all tried to put Covid behind us as much as possible and get back to normal. The excitement of being able to meet again in person has made for an unusually active events calendar. The academic year kicked off with Ancient Food Day, organized by outgoing CLASSU President John Liao, with culinary and organizational assistance from the CLASSU senators. The menu was based on recipes adapted from the first-century CE gourmand Apicius and included tuna steaks in honey-wine sauce, parsnip fries, crab cakes, and the ever-popular fried doughnut holes (ancient Timbits). The event was so successful that they held a second iteration in January; this event was covered by a reporter from Arts & Science News, who I think was a bit surprised to learn that the Greeks and Romans ate at all, much less such delicious and varied dishes.

The closing event of the year was a Donor Appreciation Lecture delivered by University of Chicago professor Christopher Faraone and reception, both well attended by faculty, graduate students, and donors. It was especially appropriate to show our appreciation to our donors in a year that has seen two major donations to the department, one, the John Spina Classics Scholarships, to recognize high-achieving undergraduate students in introductory and intermediate Greek and Latin classes and to promote the study of the ancient languages; the other an annual award for one undergraduate and one graduate student to support the study of Ancient Greek History. Donations like these benefit not only the students who receive the awards but the whole department, and we are very grateful for the generosity of our donors.

Between those two events were nine departmental lectures, as well as numerous lectures and events organized by the streams (Ancient History, Literature) and collaborative specializations (MACS and CSAMP), and four successful international conferences: “Arts of Allusion: Greek Intertextuality Over Time” (held in September by Regina Höschele and Peter Bing, with Waterloo colleague Andrew Faulkner); “Impoverished Aesthetics: New Approaches to Marginality in Latin Literature” (organized by Lorenza Bennardo and Rebecca Moorman in October); “Philosophy in the Roman Mediterranean: Towards a History” (led by George Boys-Stones in December), and the CSAMP workshop on “Plato Latinus” (run by alumnus Matthew Watton and postdoctoral fellow Peter Osorio at the start of June). As next year is shaping up to be an equally busy one in terms of departmental events, let me remind you that lectures and workshops are generally open to anyone who is interested: keep your eye on the department’s website and social media and if you have questions, please contact the event organizer.

This year we undertook a review of our undergraduate curriculum to see what was working well and what could use some improvement or updating. The review committee consulted extensively throughout the year with both undergraduates and instructors and has drawn up a slate of proposed new courses which we expect to go into effect in September 2024. These will include 200-level classes on “Magic, Science, and Religion,” “Sex, Death, and Poetry,” and “Literature and Empire” and 300-level courses on “Philosophy and Literature” and “Slavery in the Ancient World,” as well as a new 100-level course “Ancient Texts/Modern Worlds” and new 300/400-level Greek and Latin courses on the literature of classical Athens, post-classical Greece, the Roman Republic, and the Roman Empire. The biggest development to come out of the undergraduate program review was the hiring of a new 5-year Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream in Ancient Language Pedagogy. We are delighted to welcome Adriana Brook, who will be joining us on July 1, or rather rejoining us, since Adriana received her PhD from the Classics Department in 2014. Adriana has been charged with pedagogical and curricular innovation in the introductory and intermediate Greek and Latin sequence; she is open to feedback so if you have thoughts or ideas you want to share with her, please drop her a line.

Finally, 2022-23 has been a year of ups and downs. The lowest “down” came with the news of the passing of Associate Professor Emeritus Hugh Mason. Hugh is fondly remembered for his generosity and kindness to his students and colleagues and his dedication to the department, where he taught from 1968 until his retirement in 2011, and also served as Graduate and Undergraduate Coordinator. You can read the In Memoriam below. The “ups” came above all in the form of the many accomplishments of our undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and alumni. I won’t try to recount them all: you can read about some in the pages to follow and find others on the departmental website news feed. But I will single out one faculty achievement particularly important for the future of the department: in May Sarah Murray was granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Tenure is a major milestone in the life of an individual scholar, needless to say, but it is also an important moment in the life of a department. We are very proud of Sarah and hope that she will be with us for many, many years to come.

I will end my message on that happy note and invite you to read the rest of the newsletter, composed and edited by Dr. David Sutton, Donald McCarthy, and the department’s new Administrative, Outreach, and Communications Assistant, Peter Schwarz. I hope you enjoy it and will keep in touch with the Classics Department and drop by to say hello whenever you are in the neighborhood.



*Professor Victoria Wobl
Chair of the Department of
Classics (2020-2023)*

2 FACULTY NEWS

DISPATCH FROM GIESSEN

Funded by Professor Martin Revermann's Humboldt Research Prize (see page 4), a team of graduate students, alumni, and faculty of UofT Classics travelled to Germany this spring for a workshop on Latin and Greek translation. The team is part of an international research group formed with colleagues from the University of Giessen in Germany and the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, Italy, and they will spend three workshops in 2023 and 2024 investigating the history, theory, and methods of translating Latin and Greek into modern languages. As Professor Revermann explained, translation is at the very core of the discipline of Classics, but Classicists have rarely taken translation practice as a serious subject of inquiry in its own right, and this working group is setting out to change that. Following the workshop in Germany, the whole group will visit Toronto in the fall of 2023 and Pisa in the spring of 2024 to continue their work, and we caught up with several of the participants to get some initial thoughts on their own contributions to the project. Our questions were answered by Matt Ludwig and Kat Furtado, who are both current PhD students at UofT, and Rachel Mazzara who completed the UofT PhD and will be Assistant Professor of Drama and Mythology at East Tennessee State University beginning in Fall 2023.



A view of the Alexander von Humboldt Haus at the University of Giessen where the first workshop was held

What was the topic for your contribution to the workshop, and how did it fit into the overall theme of translation and Classics?

Matt: The topic I am researching for this group project is, to put it most broadly, 'celebrity translation'. For instance, from Alexander Pope to Emily Wilson, the translation of Homeric epic provokes astonishing levels of public interest not typical for the literati. The success of Pope's translation of the *Iliad* (completed when he was in his early 30s) both solidified his reputation among his peers as a standout talent in the English literary tradition. It is largely because Pope translated Homer that he is still a household name today! Three centuries later, Emily Wilson's *Odyssey* has managed to capture the interest not only of *The Guardian* and *New York Times*, but has even set TikTok ablaze. At our first workshop in Giessen, then, I suggested that the relationship between translation and celebrity is not accidental. Rather, the task of translation involves several implicit tensions, as have been observed by translation theorists for decades, which bear a

striking relationship to core aspects of modern celebrity. Whereas we might suppose that translation automatically effaces the presence of the translator, we see celebrity translators leverage the innate tension of visibility in translation to actually augment their own voice over that of the source author. Homer's legacy and cultural authority are simultaneously evoked and coopted when Pope and Wilson strongly assert their presence into his poems.

Rachel: My topic for the workshop is "Translating Obscenity," that is, translating sexual and scatological words that are considered rude most of the time. In Giessen, I used examples from Catullus to demonstrate the challenges that translators can encounter when different words are considered obscene in the source and target languages or when words that overlap in meaning are considered differently obscene. Given how often obscenity in Greek and Latin texts coincides with invective, I also addressed the implications of translating ancient insults with modern-day slurs.

Kat: My paper is trying to theorise 'retro-translation' (translation into dead languages, namely ancient Greek and Latin) both by comparison with regular translation from the original (source) language into the translated (target) language and with some insight provided by Bernard Suits' definition of games as 'the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles'. Insofar as there are no living native speakers of ancient Greek and Latin, retro-translation is unique both in its function and in the process of translation itself. Regarding function, retro-translation as a general rule isn't trying to bring a source text to a wider audience who doesn't speak the source language. Moreover, the dead languages into which we retro-translate are quite fossilised, so we are quite restricted and must judge correctness based on surviving texts, and we tend to be very careful in going about how to render modern ideas in these languages, lest we should sound 'unclassical' or be accused of having made a mistake that Cicero or Plato might scorn.

Tell us a little about the international experience. Did anything stand out about visiting the host university, city, or country, or your experiences with the German and Italian scholars participating in the project?

Rachel: I was particularly impressed by how cohesive the group of participants became and how quickly that happened. Most of us who traveled from North America met our colleagues from Germany and Italy for the first time on the first day of the workshop, but because we all share a deep interest in translation and our approaches and questions overlapped, we were able to have detailed and productive conversations about our papers almost immediately. It was a highly rewarding experience.

Matt: I am incredibly grateful to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Martin Revermann, and our generous hosts in Giessen for making this workshop such a fantastic experience! Beyond the lovely atmosphere of the von Humboldt Research Centre where we workshopped, the town of Giessen proved an idyllic backdrop for rigorous, complex conversations that began on our morning walks to the Justus-Leibig campus and continued through a series of exceptional dinners. Additionally, I'm surely not alone in my enjoyment of our Frankfurt afternoon! Anyone know where I can find Handkäse and Apfelwein in Canada?

Kat: I'd never been overseas as an unsupervised adult, so it was a bit nerve-racking preparing, but more experienced friends and colleagues were very good about guiding me through that. I really should've done more practice speaking German before going, as my brain was pulling up French, Greek, and Latin - for speaking! - before finding its long-buried first year German. In addition to the variety of insights from a broader selection of scholars (which I'm not sure was based on cultural or linguistic differences so much as a larger sample size), having input from Italian and German scholars on published retro-translations in particular was really helpful. My research into published retro-translations like *Winnie Ille Pu* has been largely anglocentric, so it was neat to hear from them. I even came across a Latin translation of the German book *Der Strewelpeter* in Frankfurt.

This is a long-term project, and the group will be meeting again in Toronto in October to continue its work. Where are you taking your topic next? Or, is it too early to ask!?

Kat: I spent most of the Giessen paper theorising retro-translation, so I'll really be digging into the pedagogical side of things for the Toronto workshop. This means lots of reading about bilingual (as opposed to monolingual/immersive) language teaching in the classroom, and the usefulness of translation in a classroom. Attempts to gamify retro-translation in Classics have been receiving considerable attention, but these attempts are usually only applicable in intermediate classes or higher. Attempting to identify the game-like qualities inherent in the very act of retro-translation provides some insight into how this activity can be offered to students.



Workshop participants gather to hear a presentation by Donald McCarthy on bible translation

Rachel: In the Giessen meeting, I used a range of modern English translations of Catullus' invective poetry as a case-study for translating obscenity, but obscenities occur in a wide range of Greek and Latin texts. For the October meeting in Toronto, I'm looking forward to expanding my paper to incorporate more genres, including comedy and satire.

Matt: I spent the time allotted in Giessen introducing my topic and then analyzing a few features of Dryden's *Aeneid* (1697) and Pope's *Iliad* (1720). My hope was to use these two works as initial case studies to provide a sense of how translation influenced celebrity already in the transition from the 17th to the 18th century—that is, at the outset of the modern period when the very concept of celebrity as we now know it was first becoming possible! In Toronto, I hope to move the discussion from the 18th over to the 19th century and from England to Germany by discussing another literary luminary who used classical translation to bolster his fame: Friedrich Hölderlin. In anticipation of our UTM session, I am also very excited to hear updates from all my fellow workshopers, enjoy some guest speakers, dig into issues of translation pedagogy together, and, finally, to see what our German and Italian friends think of the T-dot. We can't make wine from apples but I'm sure they will all find something to enjoy in the exciting multicultural hodgepodge that is our city!

IN MEMORIAM: PROFESSOR HUGH MASON (1943-2023)



After receiving his BA (First Class) in Classics at McGill in 1965, he took his Masters (1965) and PhD (1968) in Classical Philology from Harvard University. He worked at the University of Toronto for 43 years. He was a devoted teacher of Greek literature and culture in the Department of Classics, where he was hired as an Assistant Professor in 1968 and promoted to Associate Professor in 1972. Professor Mason's scholarship was wide-ranging. His earliest work was a lexicon and analysis of Greek institutional vocabulary, the topic of a book (*Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexicon and Analysis*. Toronto: Hakkert, 1974) and several articles. Much of his career was devoted to the study of the Ancient Novel, especially Apuleius and Longus, and to the history and culture of Lesbos. But he also had interests in modern Greek literature and in eighteenth-century music and culture; the latter interest lives on in the Department's post-lecture "bottega del caffè," so named by Professor Mason after Goldoni's comedy. In the Classics Department he is remembered as a kind and generous teacher, supervisor, and colleague.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Professor Martin Revermann received the the 2022 Humboldt Research Prize, recognizing outstanding senior researchers producing cutting-edge research with significant impact on their disciplines. Read more about Professor Revermann's win on page two.



Associate Professor Katherine Blouin is the 2023 recipient of the Elaine Fantham Award for Public Engagement from the Classical Association of Canada, and the 2022-2023 Public Scholarship Award from the Women's Classical Caucus for her blog [Everyday Orientalism](#).



Professor Emeritus John Traill was honoured at an international symposium held by the Greek Epigraphic Society in Athens on April 28th and 29th. The two day conference featured talks by many prominent international scholars speaking on Greek epigraphy and Professor Traill's contribution to its study.



Associate Professor Boris Chrubasik was appointed Chair of Historical Studies at the University of Toronto Mississauga, a transdisciplinary department that encompasses programs in Classical Civilization, Diaspora and Transnational Studies, History, History and Political Science, History of Religions, and the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality.



Associate Professor Sarah Murray published *Male Nudity in the Greek Iron Age: Representation and Ritual Context in Aegean Societies* through the University of Cambridge Press in September. Professor Murray's book investigates the ritual and ideological origins of nudity in Greek art and culture.



Professor Christer Bruun was awarded the Frontinus Medal for his contributions to the study of ancient water supply. The Frontinus Medal is presented by the Frontinus Society, an international scientific association founded in 1976 dedicated to the history of water, energy, and piping technology.



Associate Professor Adriana Brook is joining the Department for a 5 year term in the Teaching Stream of Ancient Language Pedagogy. Adriana obtained her PhD in Classics from the University of Toronto in 2014, and an MEd from Brock University in 2021.



Professor George Boys-Stones received a SSHRC Connection Grant to support a workshop, held from December 8th to 10th, titled "Philosophy in the Roman Mediterranean: Towards a History," on the problem of writing a history of Mediterranean philosophy in the first two centuries CE.

FACULTY FEATURE: ALISON KEITH



Professor Alison Keith has been promoted to the rank of University Professor, the highest and most distinguished academic rank at the University of Toronto. University Professors are appointed in recognition of exceptional scholarly achievement and pre-eminence in a

particular field of knowledge, and appointments to the rank do not exceed 2% of the tenured faculty. This prestigious appointment closely follows Professor Keith's election as the 2023 President-Elect of the Society for Classical Studies, the premier professional association in North America for the study of ancient Greece and Rome. Professor Keith has also served as the Director of the Jackman Humanities Institute since 2017, and was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2012.

She is the author and editor of books on a wide variety of topics, including women in Latin literature, Ovid, Propertius, and Vergil, and the author of nearly 100 articles and book chapters.

Professor Keith has held fellowships and appointments across the University of Toronto and abroad and, in addition to her scholarship, has received awards for excellence in teaching and has supervised nine successful PhD dissertation defences.

The Department is tremendously proud of Alison for both of these new achievements, and grateful to her for taking on an important leadership position for the profession of classical studies in North America.

INCOMING CHAIR: PROFESSOR GEORGE BOYS-STONES

Professor George Boys-Stones has been appointed Chair of the Department of Classics, effective July 1, 2023. Professor Boys-Stones graduated with a BA in Classics from Cambridge University (Christ's College) in 1992, and went from there to St John's College, Oxford to work for a PhD on Plutarch. In 2019, he joined the University of Toronto as Professor of Classics and Philosophy. Professor Boys-Stones' publications cover a wide range of topics and figures in ancient Greek and Roman

philosophy, but he has retained a special concern to promote interest in the efflorescence of philosophical activity around the Mediterranean in the post-Hellenistic period. The Department also extends its deepest thanks to Professor Victoria Wohl, who has served as Chair since July 1, 2020, for her exceptional service, unwavering dedication, and successful leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPORT FROM UTSC

Over the past academic year, Classical Studies at UTSC offered a selection of courses that disrupt the traditional boundaries of Classics. These include Professor Suleyman Dost's (UTSG DSR) new course "Between Two Empires: The World of Late Antiquity" and "Early Islam: Perspectives on the Construction of an Historical Tradition", and Professor Katherine Blouin's completely revamped courses "Race and Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean and West Asian Worlds" and "Constructing the Other: Orientalism through Time and Place". Students who took Prof. Blouin's Race and Ethnicity class read and discussed a substantial amount of work pertaining to the racial politics and ancient historical background that underlie the recent controversy surrounding Netflix's *Queen Cleopatra*. Students also did quite a bit of work on monuments: They conducted a monument field trip, wrote an "occluded history" plaque, and, in the last week of term, pitched a monument under the theme "Classics, Race and Settler Colonialism". Monuments proposed include a "guerilla histories" virtual tour, an Indigenous-curated reclamation of the space occupied by a neo-classical colonnade that stands in Guild Park, and a bronze monument commemorating the Buffalo Slaughter.

Students enrolled in the Orientalism course created art pieces based on the course's theme and material, as well as an accompanying interpretive essay. A selection of their work will be the subject of a virtual exhibit in the summer 2023.

UTSC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Special mention as well to graduating undergraduate student Karuna Sinha, who presented a portion of the work they conducted on the history of the ROM at the last CAC conference, which took place in Halifax.
- UTSC Classical Studies instructor and former UofT Classics postdoctoral fellow Dr. Flavia Amaral has recently been offered an Assistant Professor in the University of Winnipeg's Classics department. Dr. Amaral also published an essay entitled [From Contract to Contract: A Precarious Academic's Story](#) that generated quite a bit of conversation.
- In the summer 2022, veteran instructor Dr. Tracy Spurrier has taught a special course on the intersection between conspiracy theories and archaeology. Dr. Spurrier has also conducted archaeological work at the Shamash Gate in Mosul (Iraq) in the context of U of T's Nineveh Project.
- Last but not least, long-time UTSC Classical Studies instructor Dr. Kate Cooper, who has played an instrumental role in Prof. Akrigg's and Chrubasik's SSHRC-funded 'ROM coins' project, was recently offered a part-time lectureship in the department of Historical and Cultural Studies.

Congratulations to all!

The HCS department has also been a strong supporter of public-facing scholarship and digital humanities initiatives. This includes a series of virtual panels organized by Everyday Orientalism (which was awarded the Women's Classical Caucus' 2022-2023 [Public Scholarship Award](#) and Classical Association of Canada's 2023 [Elaine Fantham Award in Public Engagement](#)). Three of these panels were co-sponsored by the department of Historical and Cultural Studies, where Classical Studies is housed. You can access the recording as well as relevant references here: [The Gates 2: Academia & Visa Gatekeeping in North America & Europe](#); [The Gates 3: Ancient Studies, Heritage and War](#); [The Gates 4: On the Precarization of Academia – #EOTalks Panel](#). Professor Blouin is also completing a research project dedicated to the analysis of all public references to Classic and History found in two GoFundMe donors sheet to the winter 2022 'Freedom Convoy'. This work has been done thanks to the support of the Institute of Islamic Study. The research team includes Mahima Rao (UTSC), Alison Cleverley (DRS), Anass Dakkach (CLA) and IIS director, Prof. Anver Emon. The final report of the project is due to be launched in the early Fall 2023.

REPORT FROM UTM

2023–2024 was the first year that all classes were back in-person at UTM. To celebrate the return to campus—and for many to welcome them to campus for the first time—we hosted Classics and the World Today 5 with Prof. Lin Foxhall (University of Liverpool) and Prof. John Wilkins (University of Exeter) on Diet and Consumption in the Ancient World, which had been postponed since 2020. The event drew a crowd of c. 150 undergraduates, graduate students and alumni who, after an engaged discussion, retired to the gorgeous Grand Hall of Maanjiwe nendamowinan for a reception. On the next day, our guests led a full-day workshop with 17 graduate students from the Tri-Campus Classics Department and from McMaster University. It was wonderful to see so many people in person over these two days. Discussions on the classical world continued throughout the year in classes and in 7 sessions of the UTM Annual Classics Seminar. This academic year, Historical Studies also hosted Prof. Ulrich Gotter, Chair of Ancient History at the University of Konstanz, Germany, for the academic year, and he held lectures and a workshop on Pliny's letter and the Christians during his tenure. We are proud of our students and their achievements this year of adjusting to in-person classes, and we congratulate this year's graduates. This year, we wish to single out two of our members: Anna Dawson, winner of the Classical Civilization Merit Award, and Lillie Nadeau for winning the [second runner up prize of the Senior Greek Sight Competition of the Classical Association of Canada](#).

3 | UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

CLASSU PRESIDENT'S OUTGOING REPORT

CLASSU is beyond proud to report a year of resounding community-building and very ambitious firsts for the undergraduates of the Classics Department and for our executive members. We held two Ancient Food Day events, with historic numbers of interested attendees both from Classics programs and further afield in the UofT community whose enthusiasm for ancient food practices — and eating them — have allowed us to connect with so many passionate students. We also held a



A selection of Greek- and Roman-inspired drinks featured at CLASSU's Ancient Food Day (photo by Sean McNeely)

very successful Alumni Seminar, alongside many other cherished events and old traditions, as well as yet another very successful run of our student journal *Plebeian*, with entries by many diverse students from first to fourth year and beyond in this Department covering a wide range of topics. This year also saw the creation of CLASSU's first database of academic awards and opportunities by one of our outstanding senators, which will

hopefully provide a convenient resource for Classics students for years to come.

None of this would have been possible without the many faculty, graduate students, and staff who have been indispensable in their support for every initiative during a very experimental and ambitious year for CLASSU. Special thanks goes to Professor Wohl, Professor Wilkinson, Professor Höschel, Professor Yu, and, of course, Bianca Viseu. We are extraordinarily grateful to work in such a supportive department.



John Liao,
President,
Classics Student's
Union



PLEBEIAN: JOURNAL OF THE CLASSICS STUDENT UNION

EDITOR'S REPORT

I am delighted to say that our ninth issue of *Plebeian* was a resounding success, producing illuminating, cross-disciplinary scholarship from discourses on gender, literature, and reception, to histories of government, athletics, and political intrigue. Bolstered by a talented series of authors and an intrepid team of editors, the *Plebeian* editorial board and I have rededicated ourselves to the guiding principle of our journal: creating an opportunity for all Classics undergraduates to explore and grow as future academics, fostering a community as well as a platform. This year, the administrative board was proud to present our inaugural First-Year Feature, a space reserved for a current first-year student to showcase their work and receive extensive training on research methods, academic writing, and presentation skills.

Thanks to the hard work of Anna Hurnanen and her editors, the initiative was a success, and we hope this attempt to dissolve any insularity within our journal will become a fixture in future issues.

Furthermore, we were tasked with hosting the Assembly of the Plebs, our research conference, in-person for the first time in three years. Thanks to close work with CLASSU, the event was well attended and intellectually stimulating, bringing an end to the online-only conferences of the past few years. We look forward to replicating and further innovating these achievements in next year's publication, our journal's ten-year anniversary. Thank you to the Classics Department, and those who have continued to support us!

— Piper Hays, Editor-in-Chief



UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT: IZZY FRIESEN

Our students have an excellent track record of success in the Classical Association of Canada (CAC) annual undergraduate competitions, and the department is always immensely proud of them for bringing great kudos on themselves and on UofT Classics. One of this year's winners was 3rd year BA Classics Major, Izzy Friesen, who took first prize in the senior competition for Latin Sight Translation. We offered our huge congratulations for this achievement, and took the opportunity to ask Izzy a few questions about triumphing at translation.

Congratulations on your first prize! What do you think is the secret to successful sight translation? Do you do anything to prepare in advance, or just sit down to the passage and trust in your knowledge of Latin to see you through?

In the past, when I've prepared to take a sight test in class, I usually take a stab at some passages from the author/genre we are studying on my own time and check where I have trouble (vocabulary, grammatical quirks, pacing, etc.). Then I focus my time on reviewing whatever gave me the most trouble. I find that the secret to successful sight translation is simply not to panic! It can be really overwhelming to look at a long passage you've never seen before, and immediately have a weird form or a word you don't know jump out at you. By having done intentional preparation beforehand, it's easier to trust in yourself and pace yourself as you work through the passage, and not panic over small details and then get stuck reading the same sentence over and over. I have to admit, though, for this contest I didn't really do any extra preparation beyond glancing over some handouts from my LAT350 class. I had no idea what context or author the Latin I would be reading would come from, so I thought it would be best to follow my mantra of "don't panic" and not get too caught up trying to think of everything that could possibly happen before I sat down to write the test. This definitely served me well, and this result has confirmed to me that I was right to trust myself!

Speaking of the passage in question, what was set for the senior competition this year? Did it present any unusual challenges or particular problems for translation?

The passage set was Letter 3.5.1-2, from Pliny the Younger's *Epistulae*. Admittedly, I've read a lot of Pliny the Younger in translation, but I haven't read the entirety of one of his letters in Latin before. What posed me the biggest challenge with this passage was that Pliny the Younger refers to many aspects of his uncle, Pliny the Elder's, schedule and life. Taking on the sight passage with no context made some of these features seem confusing, especially in my preliminary and more literal translation. The specific tone of the letter -- that is, the way in which Pliny speaks to his recipient and about his uncle -- is hard to replicate well when translating in such a short amount of time, especially when one wants to stay as close to the text as possible to show that they're not guessing at meanings!

And what's next on your Latin journey? Do you have plans to continue your studies with the language, in university or otherwise?

I will certainly be continuing with the language through the last year of my undergrad degree. I'm actually a Classics (Latin and Greek) major, so I'm excited to finally take a stab at a 400-level Latin course come this fall. I'm still not sure what my life after undergrad will hold for me, but I do hope to keep up my Latin no matter what! I absolutely love studying it and reading the variety of texts that it opens up to me.

UNDERGRADUATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chau/Chan Scholarship in Classics:
Amory Zhao

Chau Family Undergraduate Scholarship in Classics:
Drew Badgley

C. B. Farrar Undergraduate Scholarship in Classics:
Liam Sherlock

Graham Campbell Fellowship in Memory of Maurice Hutton in Classics:
Jordan Nemeč

W. B. Wiegand Prize in Ancient Greek:
Lana Glozic

Dorothy Ellison Scholarship in Latin:
Shu Hao (Howard) Kuo

Dorothy Ellison Graduating Scholarship in Latin: **Leah Gukathasan**

Eric Trevor Owen Scholarship in Greek:
Lana Glozic

All Souls Historical Essay Prize:
Mariam Ali Khan ("Roman Collegia: A Testament to Economic Benefits of Institutions"; submitted in CLA372H1F and nominated by Seth Bernard)

James William Connor Greek Composition Prize:
Lana Glozic



The Classical Association of Canada 2023 Annual Meeting Awards

Senior Latin Sight Translation
Competition, 1st place
Izzy Friesen

Senior Greek Sight Translation
Competition, 3rd place
Lillie Nadeau

Senior Essay Contest, 1st place
Sandy Forsyth ("Sibi quisque auctor: the people of Rome as the agents of Tacitus' *Historiae*")

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GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL NEWS

CLASSICS GRADUATE STUDENT UNION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year saw a vigorous return to 'normal.' The consensus amongst the graduate students has been that though this academic year has gone by with classes and events being held in-person, there was a lot of catching up to do. Events, workshops, talks, and lecture series, most of which had been put on hold during the height of the pandemic, were now resumed with an eye to the future. The will to make up for lost time resulted in increased traffic on department grounds, the rooms and hallways of Lillian Massey filling with a shuffling eagerness to get to all the events on time. Though grateful that the world seems to have stabilized somewhat, the graduate student body still had to grapple with the problems brought forth by the pandemic and war from the previous years. 'Being back', however, allowed for community, for a renewed sense of collegiality and the assertion that we have each other. There was a plethora of social events organised this year and a chance for those who had not met their colleagues in-person to finally do so.

Despite what seemed like an endless race to a finish line barely in view, the graduate students advanced greatly in their work this year. Indeed, a very warm congratulations must go out to all the grad students who worked tirelessly to complete coursework, pass their stream exams, their language exams, the major field exam, keep up with teaching responsibilities, honour TA and RA placements, and achieve distinctions in the form of academic awards. Congratulations too to all MA students moving on to PhD programs elsewhere. In addition, and with in-person activities and events resumed and travel restrictions lifted, grad students attended conferences like the SCS in January, and a good number attended the CAC in May. Students also participated in exchange programmes to Europe, and as fieldwork season is almost upon us, several grads are getting ready to head on off to new adventures in the various countrysides of the Mediterranean.

The Annual General Meeting early in the fall semester served as a common meeting ground to touch base and assess current affairs in the department. Several important issues were raised, and discussion continues as the department recalibrates its course. Interest was expressed to organise a graduate student conference next year, with several students currently in discussion about its logistics. I would sincerely like to thank all the members of the CGSU executive committee, Erika Sakaguchi (Vice President), Tiphaine Lahuec (Treasurer), Lauren Tisdale (Secretary), and Anastasia Zabalueva (Social Chair). They have done exceptional work balancing their responsibilities in their personal and professional lives and honouring their commitment to our exec. With all GSU meetings attended, all internal meetings documented, numerous social activities organised, such as pub nights, bowling nights, board games nights at the Woodbury, Secret Saturnalia, and ghost walks of the city of Toronto, as well as an update in our banking processes, the CGSU this year continued to work tirelessly to support the graduate student body and make sure things run as smoothly as possible. Finally, I would like to thank the members of the faculty who provided support and guidance to all of us when we reached out, and the Department Chair, Prof. Victoria Wohl, for her commitment to providing a space for discussion.



Katerina Apokatanidis
President,
Classics Graduate Student
Union

GRADUATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Photo credit: Gallery 44

PhD Student Leticia Cosbert Miller published a book of essays exploring water as a historical and political site titled "Swimming up a Dark Tunnel" written during her tenure as Writer-in-Residence of Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography in Toronto.

PhD Candidate Gianmarco Bianchini (right) published a paper ("Virgilio epigrafico. La prima testimonianza su pietra di Aen. 1, 5-6") in *Rationes Rerum* and presented "The Presence of Lucretius in Latin Inscriptions: Some Considerations," at the XVI Congreso Internacional de Estudios Clásicos de la Federación Internacional des Associations D'études Classiques (FIEC) at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.



PhD Student Vittorio Bottini (left) was awarded the DAAD 12-month scholarship to spend a year as a visiting researcher at Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen (Germany) this academic year (2022-2023). While in Germany, Vittorio presented multiple papers (some in German) on Babrius in Tübingen, Graz and Basel.

PHD PURSUITS

Several of our MA graduates are off to prestigious institutions to pursue their doctorates:



Diontay Wolfries-Thomas
Harvard University



Kate Tandberg
University of Oxford



Lana Glozic
Princeton University

Congratulations and we wish you all the best!

Fellowships, Scholarships, and Awards

Ontario Graduate Scholarship for
International Students

Claudia Paparella

John Lundon Memorial Fellowship

Claudia Paparella

Hal Jackman Foundation Fellowship

Taylor Stark, Katerina Apokatanidis, Claudia Paparella

Norwood Traveling Fellowship

Claudia Paparella

IDC Exchange Program

Claudia Paparella

IE+ Award

Claudia Paparella



The Classical Association of Canada 2023 Annual Meeting Awards

Graduate Student Presentation Prize
Claudia Paparella ("Speaking Objects, Artisans, and Romanization: The Evolution and Social Context of Artisan Signatures in 7th-2nd century Italy")

James William Connor Greek
Composition Prize: **Grace Caldwell**

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT: GEORGIA FERENTINOU

Before arriving in Toronto in 2018, Georgia earned her BA (2009-2013) and MA (2014-2016) degrees in Classics at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Her research revolves around Latin, imperial epic, especially of the Flavian period and its immediate predecessor, the Neronian Bellum Civile. More specifically, she is interested in the aesthetic aspects of horror, nefas, and the collapse of identity and boundaries and their influence on narrative structures; the use of imagery and metaphors in describing literary influence and imitation; the interaction of epic with Senecan poetics and aesthetics; the reception and development of the epic genre in the post-classical world.

Tell us about how you spent this last year. Where have you been, and what have you been working on?

After finally being done with exams the previous academic year, I decided to apply for the Exchange Graduate Programme between our department and the Classics department at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, a programme that was advertised for the first time that very same year. For that reason, I spent the fall term of this last year as a visiting student in Pisa, working on the first chapter of my dissertation on the theme of incest in Statius.

How did this year abroad affect your doctoral research? Who have you been working with, and were there any big differences working in Italy compared to studying in Toronto?

To begin with, I would say that it affected me more generally in helping me improve my ability to be more communicative about my research and my interests, especially since my studying period at the Scuola Normale coincided with the “proper” beginning of the writing of my thesis. And while networking or joining a new working environment is never without stress and anxiety for me, it was rewarding to have the chance to further improve myself in this regard. I gave a presentation on my first chapter early on at the department there and I found the feedback of everyone extremely beneficial, especially of my supervisor there, Prof. Alessandro Schiesaro. I was also extremely lucky to audit Prof. Gianpero Rosati’s PhD course on Statius’ *Thebaid* 7 and in general to interact and have discussion with many of my peers who work on imperial Latin poetry and especially epic.

As for differences between studying in Italy and in Toronto, at least when it comes to the stage I am currently in my PhD programme, I would say there are more differences of size or environment. Some aspects like spending countless hours at the library or attending lectures remains the same regardless of whether you are in Toronto or Pisa. The feeling of the department at the Scuola Normale is that of a small community, where everyone meets their peers at least once a day, going to eat lunch and dinner at the mensa (their canteen). At the same time, Pisa is a town rather than a big city like Toronto, therefore everyday life in all aspects feels more relaxed and quieter. However, this does not mean that this is not a competitive or demanding environment. For instance, both the first-year

undergraduates and PhD students attend the same courses. Personally speaking, I would say that an important difference between my first year studying as a newcomer in Toronto and as a newcomer in Pisa, had more to do with life-work balance. Compared to my first years in Toronto, I decided I shouldn’t do the same mistake with Italy and maybe see more than the otherwise beautiful Piazza dei Cavalieri, where the library was located.



The Piazza dei Cavalieri, home of the Scuola Normale Superiore, in Pisa. Photo by Jeff Warder, June 2007, via Wikimedia Commons.

Has your Italian improved? And what everyone wants to know: how was the food?

Definitely — hopefully my Italian friends in the department can attest to it! The courses and other events to which I participated in the department were delivered in Italian, so this definitely helped with improving my comprehension skills, with one exception: when it comes to Neapolitan Italian, it sounded to me like a different language... I have to admit that my Italian was not as good compared to my English arriving for the first time in Toronto, and for that reason I was always somewhat shy trying to talk to Italians in cafes, bars, etc. in my first days. But at the end of my stay there, I grew out of it, thanks also to the encouragement of many working people around town (and beyond), from the pharmacist to the employees of the coffee place I used to go every day.

And talking about coffee, yes, coffee and food are (surprise!) amazing in Italy. I loved Tuscan dishes, like cinghiale (their wild boar stew) or ragu and, in general, I enjoyed travelling around and tasting the local cuisine. I am also a big fan of Italian pastries, but probably the one thing I am looking forward to immediately having again going back this summer is one simple Tuscan street food, about which I raved a lot to everyone: cecina, that is the Pisan flatbread made of chickpeas which they serve stuffed into a focaccia. I wished many times this past winter in Toronto that I could have one during a library break.

POSTDOC SPOTLIGHT: MELISSANDE TOMCIK

*Melissande Tomcik studied Latin and Greek literature at the University of Geneva, where she completed a PhD on dawn and dusk descriptions in Statius' *Thebaid* (2021). She is currently leading a project on fake news in Flavian epic funded by the Swiss National Science Fund, in which she investigates the relation between facts and fiction within a narrative in order to see how the former can be manipulated to create the latter. Her approach is mainly intertextual, as she views earlier texts as a background against which to interpret the alternate versions of a truth forged by later characters.*

Your current project has a fascinating theme. Can you tell us a little about “fake news in Flavian epic”? What is the project about, and where did the idea come from?

The project is all about rumors, deception and misinformation in Flavian epics. The idea came to me during a workshop on how to write postdoctoral research proposals. We were told that the topic had to: a) immediately get people's attention, b) create a buzz in order to make us widely known, and c) have potential to branch out into many directions on the long term. I thought that sounded like a job for Fama. Then I decided that “fake news” was a better metaphor for a research proposal whose contents “don't really have to match the research conducted.” Having worked on Statius' *Thebaid* and *Achilleid* during my MA and PhD I knew there was LOTS of deception in there. I decided to extend the corpus to Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* and Silius' *Punica* in order to compare different treatments of fake news in near contemporary texts.

Could you give us an example of what “fake news” looks like in an epic poem?

My favorite example of fake news is when Venus sends Fama to Lemnos to warn the women that their husbands have replaced them with foreign wives (Val. Fl. 2.107-173). In fact, the Thracian women returning with the Lemnian men are slaves explicitly intended as gifts for their beloved wives. Nevertheless, the Lemnian women believe the false information and decide to murder all male kin in retaliation. This is a remarkable instance of disinformation with dreadful consequences.

Does this project have a relationship with modern society, and with the idea of disinformation and misinformation in politics and the media?

Initially, I didn't think the project would bear any connection with modern society beyond the title, since I am mostly interested in the literary aspects of fake news within a narrative context. However, as my research progresses, I realize that there are in fact many parallels to be drawn: ancient poets described the phenomenon quite accurately!

Moreover, the methods used by social scientists to distinguish true information from fake news are very similar to text analysis, thus providing a toolkit to identify and study of disinformation in ancient narratives.



Ercole Bazicaluva's *Dedication Page with Statue of Fama*, 1638, via the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

Part of the project is an upcoming conference you are organizing. Could you tell us a little more about that?

Stemming from the project I am indeed organizing a conference titled “Fact & Fiction: Deceptive Discourses in Ancient Epic” (5-6 April 2024). The aim of the conference is to explore the dynamics of facts and fiction more broadly: How far can a fact be twisted before it is considered to be fiction? How was distortion of information perceived by ancient audiences? Is a poet composing a fictitious version of historical event doing the same thing as a character lying about his past epic experiences? These are some of the questions that we will try to answer on over the course of the conference by looking at the various ways in which fact and fiction are articulated in different epics. The first day will center around Greek epic, while the second will focus on Latin epic. The conference will also be an opportunity to discover new methodological tools. There will be a demonstration of how digital tools can help advance the study of epic speeches and a session on the benefits of applying cognitive approaches to texts. All welcome!

How are you finding life in Toronto? What are the big differences in a Canadian city and university from living and working in Switzerland?

Obviously Toronto is a much bigger city, so it's a completely different lifestyle. I think the main difference is that I feel like I am on vacation every day, just because I am in a different environment. There are so many new things to discover and explore; it's very inspiring!

5 | FIELD REPORTS

SETH BERNARD FROM FALERII NOVI

Toronto students participated again this summer in the archaeological project at Falerii Novi in Italy, under the supervision of Professor Seth Bernard. Falerii Novi is an urban site in the Tiber Valley, about 50 km north of Rome. The walled town was completely abandoned at some point in the Medieval period and now appears as agricultural land. Surface-penetrating radar survey in the last decade, however, reveals a complex and articulated urban site below ground with orthogonal streets, Roman temples, a forum, houses, and so forth belonging to the settlement founded by Romans around 241 BCE. University of Toronto students joined an international team from Harvard University and the British School of Rome to explore this site's historical development.



The Falerii Novi Team



UofT Classics Students excavating at the site



Seth Bernard in an opened trench

The project in particular aims at reconstructing non-elite urban life in the past through an array of archaeological, historical, and scientific techniques. This past season, the team opened three trenches over a market building (macellum), a domus, and a street-side area along the major road, the via Amerina. Findings revealed the vivacity of the settlement in the Late Roman and early Medieval period, showing strong and persistent connections with markets in Rome and beyond Italy. The team returns this summer as part of a long term project of excavation. Accompanying Prof. Bernard from UofT were Matt Coleman (ARTH), Don McCarthy, Claudia Paparella, and Kate Tandberg. The project is carried out thanks to the permission of the Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la provincia di Viterbo e per l'Etruria meridionale.

CARRIE ATKINS FROM MARONI TSAROUKKAS

Over this past year, work on the Late Bronze Age anchorage and submerged complex at Maroni Tsaroukkas has largely focused on publications, data analysis, and preparations for returning to the site for geoarchaeological analyses. Results from the initial survey were published this past year in the Oxford Journal of Archaeology and an edited volume in honour of Bernard Knapp. Preliminary studies of the LCIA ceramics are being readied for publication in a collaboration with researchers at the University of Cyprus. With support from a Connaught New Researcher award, I am preparing to return to the site to conduct a comprehensive geoarchaeological assessment of the underwater and terrestrial coastscape with targeted excavation. Preliminary research is being undertaken by Sheri Kapahnke (PhD student in Art History), whose expertise is pioneering OSL for interpreting underwater site formation processes. If future grants are successful, I look forward to returning to Tsaroukkas to conduct fieldwork in June 2024.



A map of the archaeological sites in the Maroni and Vasilikos Valleys. Drawing by Maria Michael, 2014. (Digital Geological Data from the Department of Cyprus Geological Survey).



Ceramic artifacts discovered at the site
(Photo: Carrie Atkins)



Sheri Kapahnke at Maroni Tsaroukkas (Photo: Carrie Atkins)

SARAH MURRAY FROM PORTO RAFTI



Elliott Fuller and Taylor Stark surveying on the islet of Raftopoula in Porto Rafti bay (Photo: Rob Stephan)

Since 2019, a team of students and researchers from the Classics department has been conducting archaeological survey around the bay of Porto Rafti in east Attica, bringing to light a rich history of settlement and craft production dating from the Early Bronze Age to the Late Roman period. The Bays of East Attica Regional Survey (BEARS) project adds to a long UofT Classics research tradition in Attica, following in the venerable footsteps of John Traill's pioneering work on Attic demes. PhD students Kat Apokatanidis, Elliott Fuller, and Taylor Stark are founding members of the team, and will be writing up various finds for the final publication.



Kat Apokatanidis clambering up the steep slopes of Raftis islet (Photo: Rob Stephan)

There will be plenty to say, especially after the ultra-productive 2022 season! Fieldwork in 2022 focused on three activities: documentation of a Late Mycenaean and Late Roman artifact scatter on Raftis islet, intensive survey around the town of Porto Rafti, and architectural mapping on the Koroni peninsula. The town survey identified numerous small, previously unknown sites and the architecture team made original observations about phasing and reuse on Koroni. Perhaps our most exciting discovery on Raftis was an extraordinary collection of over 200 Bronze Age groundstone objects, perhaps the remains of a workshop. Amongst the finds were a dozen fragments of tripod mortars, a sort of volcanic-stone prestige item that is rare in the Aegean.

Their presence on this seemingly inhospitable rock adds a new element to one of the enigmatic questions the project is trying to answer: why did people choose to live on islets in Porto Rafti bay following the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces at the end of the Bronze Age, and what was the basis of their prosperity? To find out more, check out the project's recent publications, including a short piece in *Antiquity's* project gallery and longer 2019 and 2021 preliminary reports in *Mouseion*.



Groundstone all over town on the northeastern slopes of Raftis (Photo: Sarah Murray)

While we got a lot of work done, there was also plenty of time to relax by the blue, blue sea and enjoy being in Greece! The students organized a great weekly Friday party, complete with signature cocktails and archaeology-peculiar games. It was a genuine joy to have the whole team together again after the disruptions to travel and research in 2020 and 2021. We are looking forward to the study season in 2023, when we'll get back to the grindstone and start churning out new analysis and insights for the publication mill, which we hope will bring further glory and fame to UofT Classics!



The 2022 BEARS team (Photo: Sarah Murray)

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ALUMNI NEWS

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: WILLEM CRISPIN-FREI



Willem Crispin-Frei received his BA in Classics, Classical Civilization, and Urban Studies in 2017, his MA in Classics (Ancient History stream) in 2018, and his Juris Doctor/Certificate in Aboriginal Legal Studies in 2022 from the University of Toronto. He is currently a member of the Legal Services team with the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman. The views expressed in this article do not represent the views or opinion of the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman.

What have you been up to since you left UofT Classics? Where are you now and how did you get there?

Towards the end of my MA program at UofT in 2018, I was looking at applying to go to teacher's college or law school to start in the 2019-2020 year. While I was studying for the LSAT and looking for jobs, there was a sudden opening for a high school Latin teacher position at Toronto French School. After teaching for a year, I accepted an offer from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, where I got my Juris Doctor/Certificate in Aboriginal Legal Studies in June 2022. Since then, I've written the two Ontario bar exams and started a position as an articling student with the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman in August 2022, and was called to the bar of Ontario in June 2023.

KEEP IN TOUCH!



Stay involved in the UofT community! Update your contact information on the Faculty of Arts & Science Alumni page (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/alumni>) to receive news updates and event notifications, and find ways connect with current students, recent graduates, and fellow alumni.

Have there been any interesting ways that your experiences as a Classics student shaped or contributed to your subsequent career path(s)?

For my first job out of university, having degrees in Classics was obviously essential for being a high school Latin teacher! But it was my work with mediaeval Latin manuscripts that first got me thinking about law school—trying to decipher dense and complex texts made me think I could apply those skills to law. But I think the best thing studying Classics can do for a student is to teach them to think about issues from a multidisciplinary approach—from looking at texts from linguistic, historical, literary, and other perspectives to incorporating understandings of geography, sociology, economics, and other disciplines helped prepare me to examine legal questions from multiple angles and different viewpoints. Additionally, being familiar with Latin does provide some assistance when dealing with technical legal language in English, since you can guess what new terms might mean based on their Latin roots. Knowing Latin also meant I was the go-to person in law school when reading old cases that had Latin quotations!

Can you tell us a bit about the work you do as an articling student at the office of the Ombudsman?

As a member of the Legal Services team, my work varies depending on the type of complaints the Ombudsman receives. As an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the Ombudsman can receive complaints about services provided by public sector organizations, including provincial organizations and agencies, municipalities, school boards, children's aid societies, the provision of French language services, and also universities. The Legal Services team assists staff by providing research and support on complex files, and also conducts investigations into complaints about municipal councils' compliance with the provincial open meeting rules when they hold meetings *in camera*. We also conduct legislative and other legal research to support the Office's operations. Also, as a funny coincidence, the Ombudsman's Office used to be located in the Lillian Massey Building until the mid-2000s before it was home to the Department!

Do you still find any time to read Latin or Greek, or otherwise pursue your interest in Classics? What are you reading these days when you find the time?

I still keep my dictionaries close by for whenever I come across something in Latin or Ancient Greek in my academic or legal research, and I always stop to read any Latin I find out on buildings or plaques! I'm also looking forward to a trip to Italy this summer and putting my Classics knowledge to good use visiting a number of museums and Classical archaeological sites.

ALUMNI BOOKSHELF



PhD alumnus David Wallace-Hare launched his edited volume *New Approaches to the Archaeology of Beekeeping*. David Wallace-Hare is specialist in Roman environmental history and Latin epigraphy whose research concerns the history and archaeology of Roman and Medieval beekeeping.



PhD alumna Jessica Westerhold, Assistant Professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, offers new perspectives on Ovid's recurring interest in the Attic tragic heroines Phaedra and Medea in *Ovid's Tragic Heroines: Gender Abjection and Generic Code-Switching*, published Summer 2023 through Cornell University Press.



PhD alumna Emilia Barbiero, now an Assistant Professor of Classics at New York University, published *Letters in Plautus: Writing Between the Lines*, a study of the epistolary motif in Plautus as central to Plautine metatheatricality, through Cambridge University Press in December.



PhD alumna Melanie Racette-Campbell's *The Crisis of Masculinity in the Age of August* (UW Press, 2023) examines the consequences of Augustus Caesar's ascension on the performance and understanding of Roman masculinity. Melanie is presently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Winnipeg.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JESSE HILL



Jesse Hill earned an MA in 2016 and a PhD in 2021. He is now pursuing a postdoc at the University of Edinburgh.

Where has your career been taking you since you received your PhD in Toronto, and what led you on those paths?

My post-Toronto career first led me to Vancouver, where I spent a happy eight months as a postdoc and instructor at UBC. Following that, I took up a two-year position here at the University of Edinburgh, which I'm about half-way through and enjoying a lot (friendly department, beautiful city).

I've been lucky to get these two postdoctoral positions. But I also wouldn't sugar-coat this: in the hope of gaining stable academic employment, I've sent out over 70 applications since my time in Toronto; short-term contracts at Vancouver and Edinburgh are what I have landed. In other words, the academic market and the elusive search for permanent work are what's leading me and my family all over the place.

What exactly is the Marie Curie fellowship? What was the application process like, and what does holding it mean for the development of your research and career goals?

The Marie Curie is a generous and well-regarded two-year postdoctoral fellowship open to scholars in many different disciplines to hold at many different universities; it's awarded and funded by the European Commission (though in my case, because of post-Brexit complexities, UK Research and Innovation is the funder). The application process is very involved: you need to pitch a major research project in pretty granular detail to the specifications of the grant. But it is worth applying for, and I'd be happy to share specific advice/documents with anyone at UofT who is thinking of doing so.

In terms of what holding it means for me, it's more or less the same as it would be for any other early career researcher: the fellowship allows me to focus on my research, which is really useful at this particular career stage; and I'm also gaining experience at a new university in a new context. The department here has also been kind enough to let me design and teach my own research-led honours course for next year -- this is something I haven't had the chance to do before and I'm really looking forward to it.

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Tell us a little about the research you're doing in Edinburgh. What project are you working on now, and where will you be taking it in the future?

I have a lot of different projects on the go and a number of projects on the horizon. Right now, I'm expanding and refining my dissertation into a monograph called *Catullus and the Three Hearts of Quintus Ennius*. I'm starting to draft a paper on the textual criticism of Sebastiano Timpanaro for a conference in Pisa and putting together a chapter for the Oxford Handbook of Ennius. Then I've also recently submitted a collection of essays called *Ennius Beyond Epic*, which Toph Marshall, my supervisor at UBC, and I edited together.

Looking to the future (and beyond Ennius...), I have plans to write a book about the presence of more-than-Roman, Italic identities in post-Social War Latin poetry (tentative title: *Tota Italia: Poetry, Place, and Identity in Ancient Italy*), and I'm hoping to start picking away at a commentary -- the first in English! -- on Varro's *Menippean Satires*, really wonderful and oddly ignored fragmentary texts from the Late Republic. Anyone interested in Catullus ought to read them carefully.

What is it like living and working as a classicist in Scotland? Are there any big differences living and working there after working in Canada?

Day-to-day life is different here in a thousand little ways (it's genuinely disorienting seeing maple syrup sold in the "exotic" food aisle, for instance), and there are some important differences in the way the university functions (e.g., team-teaching is the norm in lots of instances). But as far as my experience as an actual classicist goes, there are far more similarities than differences -- and that's been comforting: I feel "at home" in Edinburgh's Classics department in a way that I wasn't fully expecting.

ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PhD alumnus Jesse Hill won the 2023 Best PhD Dissertation Award from the Classical Association of Canada at their Annual General Meeting in Halifax, for *The Latin Past and the Poetry of Catallus*.

PhD alumna Rachel Mazzara accepted a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Drama and Mythology in the Department of Classics at East Tennessee State University.

Former Loeb postdoctoral fellow Peter Osorio has secured a tenure-track position at the University of Maryland.

Joseph Gerbasi has won a 2-year SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship, to be completed at UofT Classics.

Former lecturer and postdoctoral fellow Fae Amiro has accepted a two-year postdoctoral position conducting research at the Vindolanda Archaeological Leather Project.

7 DONOR SPOTLIGHT

DAVID SUTTON IN CONVERSATION WITH JOHN SPINA

John Spina graduated from the University of Toronto with a B.A. in 1972. He went on to study law at Queen's University, and is now partner at Davies Spina Falquez LLP.

Where does your interest in supporting Latin and Greek at UofT come from? Did you study the languages when you were a student at the University of Toronto, and/or did you have other interests in classical antiquity?

I was a student at University College from 1968 to 1972. My studies in Classics concentrated on the historians, such as Tacitus, Livy and Sallust, but I also read a lot of literature and poetry. Among my favourite authors were Catullus, Horace, Vergil, and Juvenal. Then, in 1972 I made the decision to cross the Rubicon, so to speak, change course, and go to law school. At law school, I soon discovered that a number of the professors were Classics graduates who had become very well-known authorities in their legal fields. Classics studies had prepared them well for success in their legal careers.

Are there any particular ways in which your experience as a Classics student affected or enriched your subsequent life and career?

My classical education prepared me to think critically, to decipher complex texts with facility, to analyze the complexities of various arguments and ultimately to synthesize and distil their essence in a few easily communicated words. My law studies were not a walk in the park, but the skills acquired through the Classics were the tools I needed to find my way through the labyrinth of common law jurisprudence, with its multitude of judgements and decisions, many *prima facie*, irreconcilable but still needing to be reconciled. These same tools served me well in my law practice, later in business, and generally in life. The ability to think clearly is the biggest ally one can have wrestling with the vicissitudes of every day living.

So would you say that value holds true today?

We have witnessed in the last fifty years a swing towards science and away from the humanities. I am predicting a correction. The pendulum will swing back. The world today is challenged on many fronts. The solution to these problems require critical thinkers. Classics graduates are well prepared for the task. They will be the leaders of tomorrow. We can look to them with confidence as they will tackle thorny issues such as AI, climate change, pandemics, global poverty and on-going warfare. They have the training to delve deep and connect the dots. They will steer humanity in the right direction.

It's interesting how many ancient thinkers thought about and talked about ethics as everyday concerns, as practical things for everyone to think about and reflect on.

A lot of things have changed since ancient times, value systems, religious beliefs and so on, but the ancient philosophers questioning and debating about day-to-day life events should never go out of style. We should never turn our backs on it. For example, the search for innovation may satisfy our innate curiosity; but, we are human, and the things we create should always be in harmony with human nature. And what is more difficult than trying to define human nature? The debate should always be on our daily agenda. What can be more important than understanding who we are?

Lastly, your donation to the Classics Department will provide support and encouragement specifically to undergraduates who are enrolled in ancient language study. Why do you think that fostering language study is important for today's students, and what do you hope to accomplish with this program?

The study of Classics promotes, generally, an appreciation of language and linguistic structure. Western European vocabularies owe a large debt to Latin and Greek. Understanding the origin and histories of words we use in every day parlance brings us closer to their meaning and makes us aware of the evolution and the different nuances we attach to them. Aside meaning and word nuances, sentence structure is also in focus, and the study of the Classics gives it its due importance and proper recognition. Simply, matters such as subject/object distinctions, transitive/intransitive verbs, proper use of adverbs and prepositions do make a difference in writing and speaking clearly. Ultimately the purpose of language is not just to communicate but to communicate clearly and succinctly, and avoid the misunderstandings and ambiguities which are the cause of the plethora of emails exchanged through the course of a typical day.

Anyone who studies Classics will come away with a greater understanding of the components of language, and that leads to greater clarity in expression, better communications and ultimately better relationships at the personal level, in business, or on the world stage. We need to mean what we say but we first need to say clearly what we mean. Aside enhancing language and communication skills, for me, classical studies functioned as a true "time machine." It was a joy to be able to travel back in time two thousand years or more and walk the path to the Roman Forum or feel the presence of Socrates teaching in the ancient agora. No train, no plane ticket needed, but simply a few hours well spent in the company of an ancient text. There is no better way to immerse oneself in a culture that existed long time ago than using the imagination to savour the flavour of its art, literature, and history as you watch the lives of its people unfold on the screen in front of your very own eyes. A transporting cinematic experience reserved exclusively for students of Classics!



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The Department of Classics is seeking your support to continue its mission of educating and inspiring the next generation of scholars, researchers, and enthusiasts.

Your donation will enable us to enhance our educational programs, provide resources for groundbreaking research, and offer valuable scholarships and fellowships to deserving students.

With the goal of increasing the participation of historically underrepresented groups in the study of Ancient Greek and Latin, the Department of Classics offers bursaries to cover tuition for summer language courses. Your support has a direct impact on the future of our students, the Department, and the entire discipline.

WAYS TO GIVE



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