

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear colleagues, students and alumni,

Well, this has been quite a year. This time last year we were hoping against hope that the pandemic would be contained by the end of the summer and we would return to normal operations in the fall. That did not happen, of course, and I don't have to recount the myriad challenges of the year. But I am happy to say that the Department of Classics has come through the storm — which now happily seems to be abating — as strong as ever. Our instructors, both faculty and graduate students, responded to the difficulties of online teaching with amazing energy and creativity, getting quickly up to speed on synchronous and asynchronous meetings, breakout rooms, video editing software and meeting owls. Our undergraduate and graduate students rose magnificently to the challenge of online learning, maintaining their focus and good spirits despite the exhaustion and isolation of the pandemic. Although for most of the year we were unable to meet in person, we still managed to maintain a lively slate of lectures and a busy schedule of department and faculty meetings, at which we introduced, among other things, initiatives to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the field. We even held three virtual department parties and chatted with each other's avatars. In short, in this most unusual year we managed to sustain business virtually as usual.

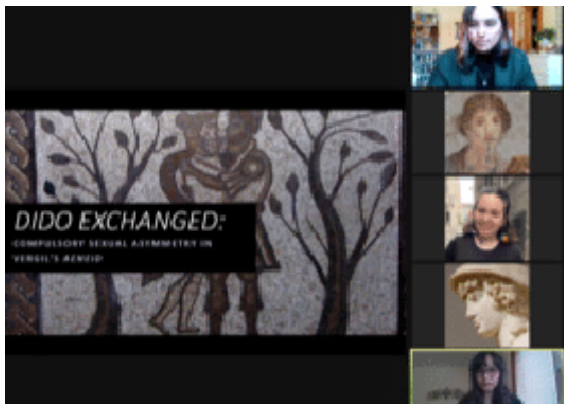
[Read the full message on the Department of Classics website](#)

Victoria Wohl,
Professor & Chair

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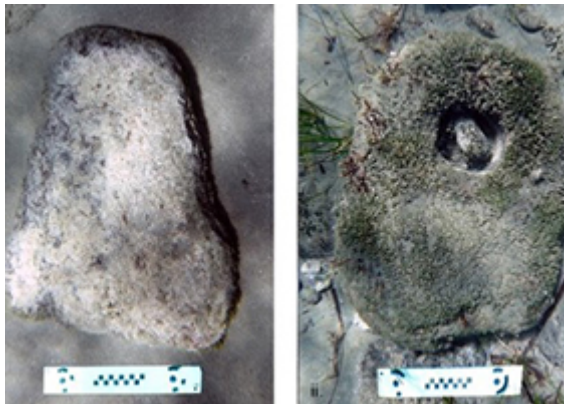


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[Katherine Blouin discusses her fall 2020 graduate seminar, *Spring from the Earth: Indigeneity and the Classics*.](#)

[SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS](#)

At the Department of Classics' [online donation portal](#), you can choose to support a specific fund or contribute to the departmental trust. Our funds honour the memory of illustrious alumni and emeriti and support the research of our graduate students. Donations to the departmental trust support the department's most pressing priorities, including the effort to promote greater diversity, equity and inclusivity in the field of classics. Donations help fund the diversity fellowship for master's and doctoral students and a bursary for the study of introductory Latin and Greek in our summer language program, among other initiatives. Please consider contributing. Your gift will support future generations of scholars of ancient Greece and Rome.

If you have any feedback regarding the Department of Classics newsletter, please contact Victoria Wohl at chair.classics@utoronto.ca



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Chair Victoria Wohl looks back on an unusual year....



Dear colleagues, students and alumni,

Well, this has been quite a year. This time last year we were hoping against hope that the pandemic would be contained by the end of the summer and we would return to normal operations in the fall. That did not happen, of course, and I don't have to recount the myriad challenges of the year. But I am happy to say that the Department of Classics has come through the storm — which now happily seems to be abating — as strong as ever. Our instructors, both faculty and graduate students, responded to the difficulties of online teaching with amazing energy and creativity, getting quickly up to speed on synchronous and asynchronous meetings, breakout rooms, video editing software and meeting owls. Our undergraduate and graduate students rose magnificently to the challenge of online learning, maintaining their focus and good spirits despite the exhaustion and isolation of the pandemic. Although for most of the year we were unable to meet in person, we still managed to maintain a lively slate of lectures and a busy schedule of department and faculty meetings, at which we introduced, among other things, initiatives to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the field. We even held three virtual department parties and chatted with each other's avatars. In short, in this most unusual year we managed to sustain business virtually as usual.

In fact, we did more than that: at all levels, and despite all the impediments, 2020-21 was a very successful year. This newsletter will document many of the successes (and others can be found on the ["Kudos" page on the department website](#)) but let me highlight just a few. This spring, 64 students received their bachelor of arts with majors and minors in classics and classical civilization. We are tremendously proud of our undergraduates, who go on to successful careers in such areas as law, business, public service and academia. Since the publication of the last newsletter, a half dozen graduate students have become doctors of philosophy in classics. The achievement of these students attests not only to the strength of our graduate and undergraduate programs and the dedication of our instructors and supervisors but also to the vitality of the field of classics. Of course, the members of our community also contribute to that vitality through their research and publications. Despite the additional pressures of online teaching and the difficulty of accessing materials, this year our faculty, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows published, in aggregate, an astonishing 40 articles and book chapters; applied for and won major fellowships; and sustained ongoing research projects, including archaeological excavations in Greece and Italy.

The vibrancy of our programs and the excellence of our faculty and students were really driven home to me this year during the self-study the department conducted as part of the cyclical University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process. In the course of this analysis of our undergraduate and graduate programs, we learned that our undergraduate and graduate students are very accomplished. Our faculty have also performed excellently. Most importantly, we learned how well we work together. The process of the self-study demonstrated our ability to work collaboratively to focus on our collective vision of the field and to define and achieve our mission as a department. It is this ability to work together that allowed us to weather this year's pandemic and that will keep us sailing straight into the future.

On a personal note, this has not been the easiest year to be a new chair learning the ropes amidst the constant swells of a global pandemic. But the process would have been infinitely harder without the support and goodwill of my colleagues and our graduate and undergraduate students. My thanks in particular to the outgoing executive committee — Christer Bruun as associate chair, graduate, and George Boys-Stones as associate chair, undergraduate — for their sage advice and tireless work on behalf of the department. Both completed their terms on June 30 and will be replaced this year by Seth Bernard (graduate) and Ben Akrigg and Kevin Wilkinson (undergraduate in the fall and spring, respectively). I thank the incoming executive and look forward to working with them. My thanks as well to the executives of the Classics Students' Union and the Classics Graduate Students' Union. Their energetic advocacy for their constituencies strengthens the department as a whole. Finally, it was my pleasure and privilege to work — albeit remotely — with our outstanding staff, Coral Gavrilovic and Ann-Marie Matti. Working from home was particularly difficult for them, as they were without access to all their files and in isolation from the faculty and students. I am grateful to them both for their hard work and dedication to the department and for their patience and unflagging good spirits during an often dispiriting year.

This leads me to a last note — sad for us but happy for her. On July 31, Ann-Marie retired after more than 30 years as business officer in the Department of Classics. The winner of the [2019 Dean's Distinguished Service Award](#), Ann-Marie has been with the department since 1988, longer than all but one faculty member, and has assisted and advised more than half a dozen chairs. For 33 years, she has prepared the department budget and managed our accounts. She has prepared countless contracts and made sure everyone got paid every month. She has handled the material for the hiring, promotion and tenure of almost every current faculty member and has managed our grant funds with an iron fist. She has also been office manager in three different department offices, overseeing our move from the small, simple building near Hart House (nicknamed the "rabbit hutch") to 97 St. George, and from there to our current home in the Lillian Massey Building. Throughout all this time she has been a consummate professional, competent and efficient at her job but also warm and friendly with a wicked sense of humour, and utterly devoted to the Department of Classics. It is hard to picture the department without her smiling face. She will be very much missed but we wish her all the best for her retirement!

Finally, my thanks to you, the broader community of alumni/ae and friends of the Department of Classics. As we look forward to starting a new year this autumn, to welcoming new students and postdoctoral fellows, to teaching new courses and undertaking new projects — all, we ardently hope, in person! — your continued support means the world to us. Please stay in touch, and if you are in the area, please do stop by and say hello.

Victoria Wohl,
Professor & Chair

Report from the Classics Graduate Students' Union President Taylor Stark



We need not dwell on the surreal and difficult year that we as a department have had. Like everyone, the grad students have been burdened with isolation, overwhelming screen time, and barriers to research. Despite this, as a group, I'm immensely proud of the sense of community we've maintained and all that we've accomplished. We're also grateful to the Department for all the Covid-related support that has been provided throughout the year.

On the community front, despite our physical isolation, we've managed to retain a semblance of our old Woodbury sociability through an online group chat appropriately titled "The Woodbury," created by 2019/20 Social Chair Rachel Mazzara. Rachel also organized many online events at the beginning of the pandemic, including a [scavenger hunt](#), while current Social Chair Kat Furtado has organized distanced walks, online Zoom hangouts and games, and even the first international Secret Saturnalia gift exchange at Christmas. We look forward to more distanced outdoor gatherings, featuring our new Spike Ball set, this summer.

Our union has been passionate in pursuing a number of initiatives this year (some may even say we have been overzealous). In February, we voted to rename ourselves as the Classics Graduate Students' Union, or the CGSU. We have established a cloud database for all grad students in order to share pdfs, list material, and teaching resources. (If anyone has any documents they'd like to add, let us know!) Finally, this year we pushed hard for the establishment of a rubric for the Greek and Latin qualifying exams, something for which this union has been advocating for a number of years. Thanks to the excellent work from the Rubric Committee, we now have a rubric in place for our qualifying language exams. We are very happy with this outcome and are confident that rubric will benefit both the exam committee and students alike.

Much of the union's energy has gone into supporting the cyclical review process this year through many meetings, emails, and a grad student town hall. I want to thank both the self-study committee and the Department Executive for always bringing themselves to the table through some sometimes tense but ultimately very productive conversations. The CGSU executive feels that the graduate students' concerns have been heard and recognized. We are sincerely grateful to the self-study

committee for taking our concerns to heart. Additionally, I want to thank the Chair in particular, who in a year of utter administrative chaos has worked tremendously hard to establish lines of communication with us and has made herself available to truly listen. I look forward to more conversations as we work towards solutions and changes recommended by the cyclical review and towards building a community of care within the department.

Lastly, I want to give thanks to the graduate students, who have all had a brutal year. It's hard enough being in grad school without all of this, but I think we've made the best of it, and I'm very proud of all of us. Huge congratulations to our completed PhDs, Rachel Mazzara, Jesse Hill, David Wallace-Hare, Matt Watton, Joseph Gerbasi, and Ted Parker! Also big congrats to Anass Dakkach and Jack Hase, who have received SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships, Vittorio Bottini, who is the recipient of the CAMWS Benario Award to attend the London International Paleography Summer School at the School of Advanced Studies at the University of London, and Jesse Hill and Gianmarco Bianchini, who were recipients of the 2021 SCS Outstanding Student Awards, and to Tiphaine Lahuec, winner of the 2019-20 James William Connor Prize in Greek Composition

Look for Jesse Hill's article on Catullus 116, forthcoming in TAPA 151.1, spring 2021, and read Gianmarco Bianchini's latest publications: "The triclinium of the 'Casa del Moralista' and its inscriptions: CIL IV, 7698 = CLE 2054," in SEBarc 18. 85-105; "CLE 1109 (Roma): un sogno in forma poetica," in Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Revista de la Facultad de Geografía e Historia. 213-232; "La réception épigraphique d'Ovide à Pompéi: CIL, IV 1595 = CLE 927," in Présences ovidiennes. Caesarodunum 52-53 bis. Clermont-Ferrand. 115-127; and "Quod peto, si colitis Manes ... Nuove proposte di integrazione ad AE 1982, 69 (Roma)," in ZPE 213. 105-107.

Also look for post-doctoral student Flavia Vasconcellos Amaral's two new published papers: "Pequena poética dos 'autoepitáfios' e dos epitáfios para poetas" [The poetics of Self-epitaphs and Epitaphs dedicated to Poets] in: F. Rodrigues Jr./B. B. Sebastiani/ B.C. Silva (edd.) A Poética Calimaquiana e a sua Influência na Poesia Epigramática. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2021, p. 59-78. Available at: <http://monographs.uc.pt/iuc/catalog/view/211/466/821-1> and "A Ekphrasis nos epigramas fúnebres enigmáticos gregos" [Ekphrasis in funerary enigmatic epigrams] in: W. Grizoste/F.B. dos Santos (edd.) Recepção e Ekphrasis no Ensino de Letras Clássicas. Parintins: Editora UEA, 2021, p. 11-33. Available at: <https://latinitates.com/gallery/Recepção-&-Ekphrasis.pdf>

And check out Kat Apokatinidis' guest post "When Greece is not Ancient: Colonialism, Eurocentrism and Classics" on the blog Everyday Orientalism.

I also want to express my gratitude to the other members of the CGSU executive, Adam Barker, Kat Furtado, Tiphaine LaHuec, and Vittorio Bottini. This has been a tough year to be on the exec and it doesn't help that they had the misfortune of being shackled with a president with some big ideas and few qualms in pursuing them. You've done a great job, y'all.

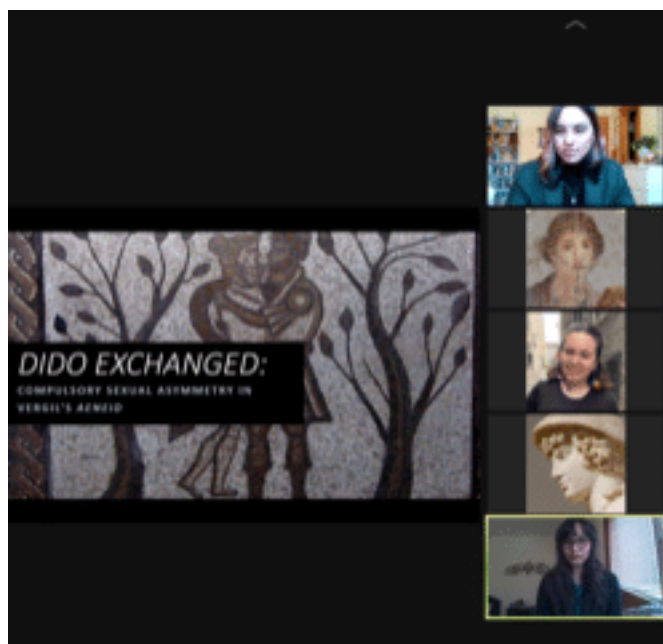
There are still challenges that face us once the world reopens. We hope that a more collaborative working environment and a more open line of communication between faculty and students will increase morale in the coming year. But it is worth appreciating, before we move on, how much we have accomplished together, in all our respective fields. So ends my rather wordy and sentimental report. I think the isolation is getting to me.

-Taylor Stark, President of the CGSU, 2020-21.

The breadth and depth of our undergraduate programs remain excellent.

Our undergraduate majors graduate with some of the highest GPAs in the Faculty of Arts and Science, and our language majors have won 22 awards in the CAC Greek and Latin Sight Translation Competitions in the last 12 years, with 12 honorable mentions. Undergraduate excellence was well demonstrated by 2019-20 Department Award Winners: Sandy Forsyth (All Souls Historical Essay Scholarship in Ancient History), Keating Johnson (C. B. Farrar Undergraduate Scholarship in Classics), Kevin McCart and Jakob Barnes (Chau/Chan Scholarships in Classics), Jennifer MacPherson (Dorothy Ellison Scholarship in Latin), Erica Venturo (Dorothy Ellison, 4T8, Graduating Scholarship in Latin, and W. B. Wiegand Prize in Ancient Greek), Erika Sakaguchi (Eric Trevor Owen Scholarship), and Paul Ionescu (Graham Campbell Fellowship in Memory of Maurice Hutton in Classics). Sheena McKeever was awarded the Harry C. Maynard Scholarship in Classical Studies by the Ontario Classical Association, Jakob Barnes won first place in the 2020 Senior Greek CAC Sight Exam competition, and Yilin Zhu won second place in the Senior Latin.

The Classics Students' Union (CLASSU) provided superb service once again in 2020-2021, under the leadership of President Sydney Miller, Vice-President Sarah Ann Florio, Treasurer Hannah McCarthy, Secretary Karuna Sinha, and Senators Leah Gukathasan, Jacqueline Viner, Jess Dupuis, John Liao, Silas Sobeck, Sheena McKeever, Valen Trofimova, and Ance. The Summer Senate 2021 consists of Sarah Ann Florio (President), Karuna Sinha (Vice-President), and Jessika Dupuis, Saiba Anand, and Sheena McKeever (Senators).



Moving effectively to online platforms, CLASSU provided exceptional leadership in a challenging year. CLASSU energetically represented the department on Campus Day (for prospective UofT students) in October, initiated its own outreach event for interested high school students, sponsored a session for students interested in graduate studies, and organized two academic seminars with two speakers each time (Chiara Graf and Peter Heslin; J. Oliver and Flavia Vasconcellos Amaral).

The annual Assembly of the Plebs 2021, with a half dozen student presentations, occurred in March via Zoom and was attended by about 50 people from all over the world,. The 6th volume of student papers, *Plebeian*, was published, and the 7th edition is in the works. Copies of *Plebeian* and videos of publications can be found at the [CLASSU website](#).

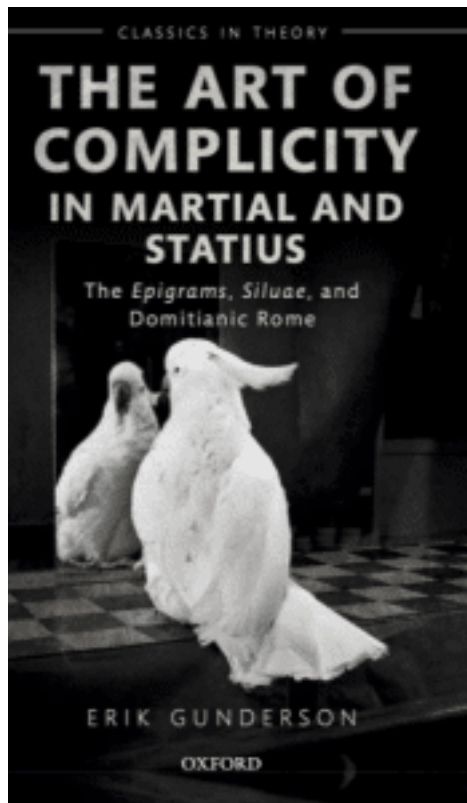
There were also creative social media initiatives. CLASSU TikTok videos found favor with over 40K global followers. Other successful initiatives were a CLASSU podcast (*Sermo Vulgaris*), movie nights, and virtual parties. CLASSU also stayed connected with Classics undergraduate students during Covid, initiating a survey on mental health. Once again, even in the *annus horribilis*, CLASSU demonstrated its essential role in the department.

The faculty of Classics continues a steady rate of excellent achievement.

The recent cyclical review reveals that our faculty ranks #1 in publications among all North American peer institutions and #3 in citations, and that's just for English language publications.

The achievements over the past year are too many to mention, but here are some highlights. Seth Bernard and Sarah Murray were recently awarded SSHRC Insight grants. Seth's project is "An economic history of the Roman conquest of Italy, 500 – 200 BCE" and Sarah's is "Terrestrial and Underwater Archaeological Survey in Threatened Coastal Landscapes: The Case of Porto Rafti, Eastern Attica, Greece."

And there's more for these two. Seth did an [interview](#) on constructing the city of Rome in the republican period on the podcast "Ithaca Bound." He's also won a SSHRC Connection Grant to support his international conference "Climate and the Roman Conquest of Italy." This exciting interdisciplinary event is scheduled for October 1-2. And as for Sarah, she won a highly-competitive five-month NEH fellowship to work on her next book at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens next year, for her project, "[A Social Archaeology of Metal Production in the Early Iron Age Aegean](#)." Sarah was also interviewed on the BBC radio program "The Conversation," on the role of women in ancient history and how modern-day gender biases influence the way we look at women's lives in ancient societies. You can listen to it [here](#).



Recently published was Kate Cooper's edited volume, [*New Approaches to Ancient Material Culture in the Greek & Roman World*](#) (Brill, 2020). Including chapters by Sarah Murray and Phil Sapirstein (Art History) and former colleague Dimitri Nakassis, as well as Kate herself, the volume explores the breadth and inter-disciplinary diversity of archaeology and art history, museum objects and fieldwork data, ancient texts and material culture, and archaeological theory and historiography. Also just out is Erik Gunderson's [*The Art of Complicity In Martial and Statius*](#) (Oxford, 2021), which examines the relationship between politics and aesthetics in two poets from the reign of Domitian.

Kudos also to George Boys-Stones, who will spend 2021-22 as a Faculty Research Fellow at the Jackman Humanities Institute, where the annual theme is Pleasure. His project is entitled "Pleasure and Personal Identity in Greek and Roman Thought: Rethinking Ancient Eudaimonism."

The Department now keeps track of faculty, student, and alumni success through the year at our [Kudos](#) section of the department website. Send a message to the Chair of any news.

Our alumni continue to be highly successful

There is great news about recent graduates. John Fabiano has received a prestigious Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship to study at Yale for the next two years. Jeff Easton has accepted a 3-year Visiting Assistant Professorship at Southwestern University in Texas. David Wallace-Hare's postdoctoral fellowship at San Diego State was extended by 1 year. J. Oliver has been offered a 3-

year position at University of Guelph, cross-listed between Classical Studies and Gender Studies. And Chiara Graf has taken a one-year position at the University of Warwick. Congratulations to all!!

Our recent department external review allowed us to catch up with alumni from the past several years. Many of our PhD grads are thriving in academic careers. Emilia Barbiero is an Assistant Professor at NYU; Vichi Eugenia Ciocani leads a nationally sponsored research project on medieval Latin in Bucharest; Jody Cundy is a Lecturer at the University of Toronto, Scarborough and the University of Queensland; Alex Cushing is a High School teacher in Washington, DC; Susan Dunning is a Junior Research Fellow at Oxford; Marion Durand is an Associate College Lecturer at Oxford; Emily Fletcher is an Associate Professor (Mellon Chair in Ancient Greek Philosophy) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Nathan Gilbert is an Assistant Professor at Durham; Caitlin Hines is an Assistant Professor at the University of Cincinnati; Sarah McCallum is an Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona; Jaclyn Neel is an Assistant Professor at Carleton University; Tim Perry is Medieval Manuscripts and Early Books Librarian at Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library; Mariapia Pietropaolo is an Assistant Professor at McMaster; Melanie Racette-Campbell is an Assistant Professor at the University of Winnipeg; and Laura Mawhinney teaches ancient languages and history at the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle.

Patrick Hadley is Managing Editor at the University of Utah Press; Jessica Higgins is Strategic Communications Director, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry; John MacCormick is a lawyer; Rob McCutcheon is employed at the Ministry of Advanced Education in Alberta; Eirene Seiradaki is Director, Research Partnerships, Borealis AI in Toronto; and Yuriy Lozynsky is a CPA in Toronto.

MA graduates have also gone on to greater glories. Currently in doctoral programs are Sophia Alkhoury at the University of Chicago; Laura Harris at the University of Washington; Mufei Jang at Berkeley; Sean Karani-Stewart at CMS at UofT; Nicholas Koudounis at Columbia; Andrew Mayo at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor; and Thomas Slabon at Stanford. JD candidates include Willem Crispin-Frei and Sahar Sayyad at UofT Law, and Skylar Oldreive at Western Ontario University.

Megan Campbell teaches languages at Philips Exeter Academy; Nicole Daniel recently earned her JD at Osgoode Hall; Abigail Ferstman has a Postgrad Certificate in Education from Cambridge; Alison John earned her PhD in 2018 at Edinburgh and is currently a Postdoc at Ghent; Alex Kirby is a lawyer (JD UBC) in Vancouver; Janet Mowat is Program Coordinator at ABC Life Literacy in Toronto; April Ross has a MSt from Oxford and is teaching Classics in the UK; and Chris Stait is an English Teacher Upper Canada College in Toronto.

Sarah Murray reports on work in Attica, Greece during summer 2020



Sarah Murray on The Bays of East Attica Regional Survey (BEARS), summer 2020.

Like most everything associated with archaeological research, our carefully laid plans for a 2020 field season of the Bays of East Attica Regional Survey derailed spectacularly sometime around late March of 2020. In Toronto, the spring that followed was cold and grim in pretty much every imaginable way. However, by early July, virus cases had waned to vanishingly small numbers in many parts of Europe, and Canada had gotten the pandemic situation sufficiently under control that Canadian residents were among the few non-EU passport-holders allowed to enter the coveted Schengen zone. Although most folks ended up not being able to travel to Greece at all, or in time, we did manage to get three BEARS team members on the ground to catch up with some cataloguing and study of our finds from 2019 in August 2020 (no Goldilocks, unfortunately).

Skeleton season BEAR #1 was me. I flew to Athens on July 11. Coming on the heels of 4 months of barely leaving my apartment, the trip felt majorly miraculous. After some hiking in the mountains and a bit of time working in Athens, I settled into Porto Rafti to work on cataloging finds from our 2019 field season. In addition to a whole series of forms containing information about survey units, the project database integrates two finds catalogues: one for inventoried finds and one for bulk finds. The idea is that every single object collected in the survey is represented/accounted for in the bulk finds catalogue and given a bulk finds number, while only select objects (say, sherds that are very well-preserved, very datable, etc.) are pulled out, given an inventory number, and described or analyzed in more detail.

Our finds experts are the ones who will ultimately go carefully through the pottery from each unit and make the decisions about which finds should be inventoried, since they are the ones who are trained to know which sherds might be especially informative or important. Cataloguing bulk pottery is not quite as sensitive a task. The idea is to produce a comprehensive log of finds from a unit, so that someone can look at the form for any individual survey unit and get an immediate sense of its finds: how many krater rims or kylix stems, what distribution of sherds from different periods, fine wares vs. coarse wares, etc.

In practice bulk cataloguing involves trying to impose some kind of informational order on the chaos of a bag of unsorted sherds: sorting coarse and fine wares, separating out different kinds of feature sherds (bases, handles, rims, etc.) or sherds that all come from the same vessel shape, that kind of thing. Then each sherd or group of sherds is given a lot number and entered into the bulk catalogue, along with basic information: shape, fabric description, etc. Since our small 2019 lab team was overwhelmed just keeping up with basic processing of all of the finds we brought in from the field, no bulk cataloguing was done in 2019. In a way, then, it was really helpful to have 2020 “off” from fieldwork so that there was time to catch up.

During the first week of August Skeleton Crew BEAR #2, Bartek Lis, arrived in Brauron after driving/ferrying down from Poland. Bartek knows more about pottery, especially LH IIIC pottery in our region, than pretty much anyone. He’s also been restudying the pottery from the neighboring Perati cemetery, so he is definitely the Mycenaean ceramicist that we need to have studying our Late Bronze Age material. He found some amazing and surprising stuff; we have lots of really interesting new insights and questions about the Raftis assemblage just from his short visit this summer, and there are still many units he did not have time to get through

Finally, I was joined for the last two weeks of August by BEARS Skeleton Crew member #3, Melanie Godsey. Melanie is a PhD candidate at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill who is studying our Classical and Hellenistic pottery, especially the Koroni finds, amidst a multi-year stretch of living and working in Athens at the American School of Classical Studies. She worked on Koroni for her MA thesis and study of the pottery from old excavations on the site will form part of her PhD thesis.

By the end of the season, our tiny team of three accomplished quite a lot – after one more week of photography and data entry in early September I’d completed the bulk pottery catalogue, which now includes every single sherd collected in 2019, and Melanie and Bartek had inventoried over 400 objects from our sites of Raftis and Koroni.

Another great development this summer was that we began seeding closer relationships with some other colleagues and projects working nearby in Attica, especially the Belgian/Greek project currently underway at Thorikos. Nikos Papadimitriou hosted Melanie, roving tile consultant Phil Sapirstein, and me for an incredible tour of the site, and also showed us some of the cool finds they’ve been pulling out from Stais’ leftovers the Lavrio museum. We all learned a lot. The following week I recruited our friend and boat captain Vasilis Miliotis to take some of us on a sail from Porto Rafti to Lavrio and back so that we could get a sense of the maritime route between the two sites. Of course, there was some afternoon boat swimming as well. This is an excellent method of forming collegial relationships. I recommend it to everyone!



Melanie Godsey in the office...



Porto Rafti



Bartek Lis with a find...



Carrie Atkins on underwater finds off of Cyprus, summer 2020



Carrie Atkins on underwater finds off of Cyprus, summer 2020

Several publications are forthcoming that contextualize the ceramics and anchors within Late Bronze Age trade networks. Based on the location of LCIA ceramics (including that of a Tell el-Yahudiyeh juglet) and the location of unfinished anchors, part of the submerged area was likely a terrestrial workshop or storage area while another part was an active LBA anchorage. The Tell el-Yahudiyeh juglet (this style was from Egypt) is the first found within a trade context on Cyprus, as primarily this juglet was found in mortuary assemblages. Work is continuing to compare recording methodologies, in particular identifying cultural remains from the 3D model of the seabed. An MA thesis by Sheri Kapahnke examined sediment movement at the site, employing Optically Stimulated Luminescence as a way to understand whether artefacts were in situ, which is often difficult for researchers to determine in such a dynamic nearshore environment. Funded by SSHRC, National Geographic, the Honor Frost Foundation, and UTM, the project is a success due to the hard work of an international team of collaborators and UofT students, especially Naomi Neufeld (PhD, Classics) and Stepan Popov (undergraduate, UTM).



Tell el-Yahudihey juglet

Katherine Blouin discusses her fall 2020 graduate seminar, 'Sprung from the Earth: Indigeneity and the Classics.'

Kat Furtado (KF): Can you tell me about your fall course 'Indigeneity and the Classics'?

Katherine Blouin (KB): I wanted us to reflect on what it means to be classicists here, so really being 'on the land,' and in a more concrete way. What does it mean for us to be classicists here, and to study other lands, often in areas that have also been colonized. These things are kind of given, and I don't think many people in the field really stop and think about them. And I have been kind of on a journey to think more about my own positioning here in the past few years, from about 2018. So this course was a sort of starting point.

I wanted to do it through a variety of themes. The first part of the course was focusing more on the context of the land we are on, so that we can, as a group, have a better sense of our place here, of our positioning. I wanted us to discuss the relationship between classical education and classical references, so the reception of classics and settler colonialism here in Canada and North America. We know for instance that the Jesuits were really infused with classical knowledge, and they read the landscape and their encounters with indigenous peoples through a classical lens. That was the first theme I wanted to explore, and we did that for a few weeks.

I also invited students who were outside of North America or who were here but from elsewhere to think about this in terms of their own home, where they're coming from. So these students were able

to engage both with learning about North America, whether they were here or abroad, but also they really each brought in very potent reflections about the place and land they came from, and did research on the histories of these places and the different peoples who lived there, all the way back to antiquity. That was interesting – it kind of opened it up, because I knew from the start that not everyone would be able to be here. And they certainly had different perspectives.

Then we moved to antiquity and ancient history. What can we say and what do we know about ancient indigeneities? And how have they been interpreted and instrumentalized in modern times? And this can take so many shapes! I opted for regional case studies, and ended up covering almost the whole spectrum of the Mediterranean, and covering different types of indigeneities: from obviously the Athenian conception of autochthony, to Numidians, Gauls, Iberians, Jews and Egyptians, and it also posed questions about the very curated nature of the traditional classical studies curriculum.

I wanted us to think about some of the ways of knowing, teaching, and learning that come from indigenous peoples here, what they can teach us about how we make history or how we are classicists, and how their practices of storytelling can help us access ancient stories or ancient voices in a way that so-called Eurocentric education cannot.

I was also lucky enough to have several guests come into the class, including indigenous speakers (who received honoraria): Craig Williams, Hilding Neilson, Rebecca Futo Kennedy, Alejandro Paz, and David Wallace-Hare all visited our classroom, and John Crutch offered an indigenous cultural competency training.

KF: What were some of the different ways of knowing, teaching, and learning that you encountered in the seminar?

KB: I tried to take a more embodied approach to learning, inspired by indigenous ways of learning and teaching. Including the work of Lee Maracle and my colleague Karina Vernon at Scarborough, who also taught a course on Indigenous Literature in Canada/Turtle Island (ENGC01:). Karina allowed me to borrow and adapt some of her assignments. What does this mean concretely, and through Zoom? The idea was to disrupt what Lee Maracle calls the “knower’s chair” model of European education, which is where you have the teacher on the pedestal in front of everyone, and all the students are recipients of the knowledge, and you test them to make sure they have absorbed the knowledge well. Instead, Indigenous ways of teaching and learning are more collaborative and embodied. And it’s about learning not only from the head, but also from the heart.

During class time, we would offer the format of a talking circle. It’s a circle, there’s no hierarchy, and everyone would talk in turn (and since it was a group of 11 students, we would have time for everyone to talk every week). Everyone would start by saying ‘I was struck by’, and I found it transformative. Some students found the format unsettling at first, but by the end of term, the feedback was very positive. What the talking circle does is it really leads to a more trust-based environment, and it worked on Zoom very well. Students have been telling me they didn’t have to fight for speaking time or worry about having to ask a ‘bouncing’ question or having to ‘destroy’ someone’s argument. I think it also led to a deeper learning that was also affective, because a lot of the material really triggered deep feelings of discomfort and guilt, and as we progressed through the term, students were able to articulate that, and they felt comfortable enough and safe enough to do that.

That was the first activity, and then we had more experiential learning assignments. One was called ‘learning from the outdoors’, which I copied from Karina Vernon. Students would go outside for

twenty minutes: you go outside, you do not engage with technology, you do not talk to anyone. You can sit, stand, walk, lie down, your choice, and then after we would come in and do free writing. The idea is to process the learning, but to do so on the land we were each on at the time. The students really loved that; some said it actually saved them during the term. And I loved doing that too, so that was good for all of us.

We also did what is called a '[Monument Field Trip](#),' which was developed by a group in New York called the Monument Lab. This assignment requires of students to reflect on classical resonances in our landscape, whether in Toronto or elsewhere. There was also a museum exhibit review assignment. And then at the end of the seminar, students had to propose a work of art and interpretive essay on any topic linked to the course. You [can see their work online](#).

Overall, the difference was really that we were learning together, and learning from the head *and* from the heart, which is generally not valued or seen as professional or serious. But this lack of value is culturally constructed.

KF: Did these different ways of knowing and learning with the heart as well as the head change the way you approached texts? Were there any methodological takeaways you would want to carry forward, or would want others to know about?

KB: I would maybe mention three things: story, the land, and oracy. Indigenous knowledge is typically transmitted orally. As Doug Williams shows in his wonderful book *Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg: This is our Territory*, Indigenous conceptions of time, history, and who counts as historical subjects, are different than ours. So I've really been asking myself, what happens when we think of ancient works or what we call 'myths' as indigenous stories? I think it can really help us understand how they [myths] might have been received by people in antiquity.

And this is linked to the question of land as well. Because a lot of these stories really center, in addition to humans, non-human beings. What I've learned from indigenous knowledge-keepers is that what is central to indigenous peoples in North America is relations and kin. And humans have a duty to care for the land, and that is a relationship, a give-and-take. There isn't this Abrahamic notion of the hierarchy of beings; we are all kin, and we are all in relation: the sun is a being, trees are being, animals and so forth. It was very much like that in antiquity too, in the antiquities that we study — I work on Egypt, but it also applies to the polytheistic Greek and Roman world at large. What happens, for instance, in the story of the she-wolf and Romulus and Remus? What happens if we look at the Tiber as a being, the she-wolf as a being, the tree as a being? It changes the way we understand the story. It forces us to de-center, or rather embed, the human within a more complex array of beings and relations. I think this is something we can really learn from, and that ultimately will kind of complicate and disrupt a lot of the stories conveyed by traditional classical scholarship.

And the last thing is oracy, or oral tradition. Indigenous teaching and learning really occurs in and through oral practices. It doesn't mean that there were no written traditions in North America prior to European colonization, because there were. But oracy is very important, and once again there is no [explicit?] hierarchy. In the European enlightened system of knowledge production and reproduction, there is this dominion of the written word, which is also tied to Judaism, Christianity, and even Islam. I've been thinking a lot about the orality of the ancient world lately, and how we are very dependent on written sources, especially literary ones. How can we find traces of the oral in the non-oral texts we're using? And how can this change our understanding of certain textual traditions, or even the whole area of cultural and religious practices?

KF: So what do you think are some of our responsibilities as classicists, here in Tkaronto and elsewhere?

KB: I'm a huge fan of Lee Maracle, and she once said at a meeting something along the lines that we "Euros" (as she and many indigenous people call settlers) have a very short memory, that we've been kind of uprooted and disconnected from our land and stories. I've been thinking a lot about that. I myself am a French settler. My family arrived 400 years ago on what is now the Île d'Orléans. I've been reflecting on how I've been able to carry myself here, and go to Europe, and come back and find a job, all of this without having to be confronted — truly, deeply — with whose land I'm on and why I'm here. I was able for almost 40 years to go on like this, and most of us carry ourselves that way, with a kind of collective amnesia. And obviously this amnesia allows settler colonialism to continue. And we are in a settler colonial state that has committed genocide. The Indian Act is still in effect, residential schools only closed in 1996, and they've been replaced by far too many indigenous children being put into foster care. My understanding is that our responsibility, as individuals who live here, is to really make the effort to learn the truth. The fact that we are able — most of us who are settlers, anyway — to go on without even bothering with this is in itself a sign of how privileged we are. I think we have a responsibility to acknowledge the truth and process it properly, which comes with a lot of uncomfortable feelings.

And if you add on the classicist layer, well, we must acknowledge that classics as a field is an instrument of white supremacy. And I'm aware that a lot of people in the field, when they hear 'white supremacy' think 'Nazi', and I thought that five years ago, so I'm not virtue signaling. But we have to acknowledge this, and we cannot fully do that if we don't take the time to think about why it is a given and why it is unproblematic to have a classics department in Toronto, in a neo-classical building downtown, and why it is absolutely unproblematic for me to be here, and then to fly and work on ancient Egypt at the French School of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo, and for others to go to the British School in Athens or the American School in Rome, and so on and so forth. I think our responsibility is to be honest with ourselves and to acknowledge the histories and the power relationships that have led us here.

KF: Is there anything important you'd like to add, an important takeaway for the field?

KB: I think it's important for the next generations — and as a teacher teaching students, both at St. George campus and in Scarborough — that students be allowed to really be aware of who they are, where they are, whose voices they work on, and why this is all coming together. I think that as a field established in settler colonies, classics has traditionally been surfing on a mix of [colonial aphasia](#) and [settler innocence](#). For me, it's an ethical choice, as a teacher and a historian, to complicate things by researching and teaching the field's history and political positioning.

That being said, I'm optimistic to see how much of a growing interest there is among Classicists for questions that pertain to the intersection between our discipline and settler colonialism. There is also a push for more engagement with scholarship and content from Indigenous scholars and knowledge keepers. This is notably visible in the work of Aven McMaster, Dan-el Padilla Peralta, Lisa Pieraccini, Emily Varto, David Wallace Hare, Craig Williams, and Zachary Yuzwa, and it was at the core of the latest [RaceB4Race conference](#).

As for the takeaway of my seminar, I don't know, you'd have to ask the students. For me, I wouldn't go back to the more traditional 'knower's chair' model of teaching except in a big lecture course, and I'd especially maintain going outside and the talking circle. It really works, including on Zoom. I suppose the other takeaway is that, together, with the students, we have been able to sit with our discomfort for twelve weeks. That was the most powerful, rewarding pedagogical experience I've had in my teaching career, and I owe it to them.

Katherine will be teaching [this course at an undergraduate level in Scarborough next term](#). She has also composed "Doing Classics on Indigenous Land," which she presented at the 2021 CAC. [It contains relevant resources and links](#).