

AUTUMN 2023

classics

The newsletter of the University of Cambridge Faculty of Classics



4

The Roman York Beneath
the Streets Project

8

Conference Confidential

12

Tim Whitmarsh meets
Natalie Haynes

From the Chair of the Faculty Board

Each academic year brings new challenges and surprises. This year, the Faculty has welcomed new academic staff and, with more appointments on the way in the next twelve months, is going through a period of unprecedented renewal.



The opportunities for new areas of research and new collaborations are really exciting. We are also, of course, still recovering from the pandemic restrictions and helping cohorts of students whose education was affected by lockdown to make their way through the course. 2023–4 will also see the introduction of a new Part 1B to accompany the new Part 1A we inaugurated last year; the course provides more flexibility for students to build a set of papers that best suits their interests while still giving them the foundation necessary for more advanced work. In short, we have all been very busy. I hope you will see some of the exciting developments reflected in these pages where we can share with you in some more detail what we have been doing and what our plans are for the future. In particular, we hope you will be interested to read more about our Faculty archives and the resources they offer for new directions in research as well as news about what our former students are doing to bring Classics to a wide new audience.

We could not manage to do all this without the support of our alumni. In the past two years, we have received nearly a million pounds from supporters and friends as a result of a series of events and initiatives, many of them spearheaded by Mary Beard in her final year before retirement. Thank you to all who contributed. We are sure that we can develop the ties we have forged with our alumni through those initiative so that we can continue to grow and prosper in these challenging times for arts and humanities subjects in universities.

Professor James Warren,
Chair of Faculty Board, Faculty of Classics

CLASSICS
2023 Newsletter

Editorial team:
James Warren, Molly Willett

Design and print management:
H2Associates
(Cambridge) Limited

Photography:
Stephen Bond

Classics is printed with vegetable based inks on paper containing material sourced from responsibly managed forests certified in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council®



Contents



- 3 Fundraising success
- 4 The Roman York Beneath the Streets Project
- 6 Meet our new colleagues
- 8 Conference Confidential
- 10 Opening the Archives
- 12 Tim Whitmarsh meets Natalie Haynes
- 14 Visiting the Bay of Naples
- 16 Stay in Touch

Front cover: Alice E. Lindsell, 'Hoopoe from the Partridge Frieze, copied from Sir Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos at Knossos*, vol. II, Fig. 51, London: Macmillan, 1921', 1930–1931, watercolour and ink on drafting film, GBR/3437/LDSL/1

FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

The Faculty of Classics has enjoyed a long history of giving from supporters and alumni. Ranging from the establishment of a Regius Professorship of Greek by King Henry VIII to more recent gifts by the A. G. Leventis Foundation and many smaller donations, the generosity of friends of the Faculty and of the Classics has allowed the study of Greek and Latin antiquity to flourish in Cambridge for centuries. We look to the future with the continuing support of friends and alumni confident in our ability to drive forward the subject in the twenty-first century.

We are now celebrating a particularly successful period of fundraising. Mary Beard kick-started her retirement by donating £80,000 and from there, she embarked on a mission to secure the future of Classics at Cambridge before her retirement in September 2022. Members of the Classics Faculty and the University's Development Office got involved and through a number of webinars, dinners, events and lectures, we reached out to alumni and friends of Classics to highlight the impact of our teaching and research, share our plans for the coming years and solicit support for our priority projects.

The response was overwhelming and, with your support, in under two years we have received pledges totalling over £1m for Classics at Cambridge. Thank you!

Those donations will help us to provide studentships and scholarships for students who have not been able to study Greek or Latin to A level or equivalent. They study Classics at Cambridge over four years. We are able to offer financial support to those who need it and provide a rich and dedicated set of language classes to help them get to grips with the ancient languages.

Our students will now be able to enjoy guided visits to Greece and Rome accompanied by members of the university teaching staff. And others will be able to take advantage of courses and visits to the British Schools at Athens and Rome.

The future of the subject also depends on producing the researchers of the future. We are now able to support even more of our postgraduate students, particularly those taking the MPhil course which is an essential stepping-stone to the PhD and for which other funding is especially hard to access.

And this support has also allowed us to continue to employ a dedicated Access and Outreach Officer who has been essential to the success of our efforts to bring Classics to the attention to school students through projects such as the recent Lion TV short videos and accompanying educational materials. You may also have participated in the alumni webinars we organise.

Looking further ahead, we continue to do all we can to make Classics a subject that appeals to a wide range of students and a subject that produces not only new and exciting research but also contributes to the most pressing questions that face us all. Please join us on this journey to ensure the future of Classics at Cambridge. More information about our work and vision can be found at <https://www.classics.cam.ac.uk/directory/support>.

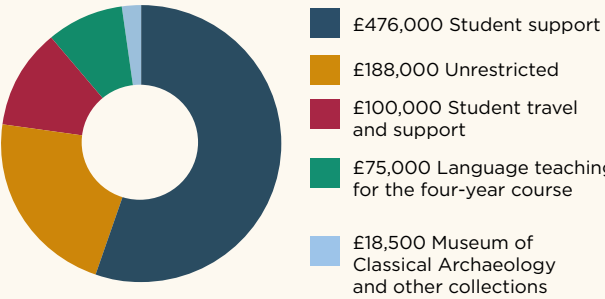
Our deepest appreciation goes to those who donated £100,000 or more within the period:

Brain Buckley, Emma Gleave, Philip Hooker, Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, Anonymous donation to enable production of Lion TV films.

In addition, our sincere thanks go to supporters who gave more than £10,000:

Mary Beard, Karen and Peter Ventress, Tracey Hall, Estate of Barry E Goldfarb, Mark Cathcart, James Scott, Henry Stewart, John Holland-Kaye, Sophia Whitbread, The Leverhulme Trust.

This chart shows the areas which have been supported by these donations received so far:



The Roman York Beneath the Streets Project

Thomas Matthews Boehmer and Martin Millett

York is historic. It is one of the few British cities named by classical authors; it was an imperial base, emperors died there; it became the capital for the province of *Britannia Inferior*.

Right: The Mithraic
tauroctony
from Micklegate
recovered in 1747



The *Roman York Beneath the Streets Project* (RYBS) – a collaborative AHRC-funded scheme run between the Faculty of Classics (Cambridge), the Department of Archaeology (Reading), and partners within the city of York (York Archaeology, York Museums Trust, the City of York Council) – has sought to answer crucial questions that remain unsolved despite centuries of research. For example, we have little understanding of how York developed as both a military establishment and civilian settlement (1). We also know very little about large swathes of its Roman-period history, and the relationship between York and the frontier space in which it located is still little explored.

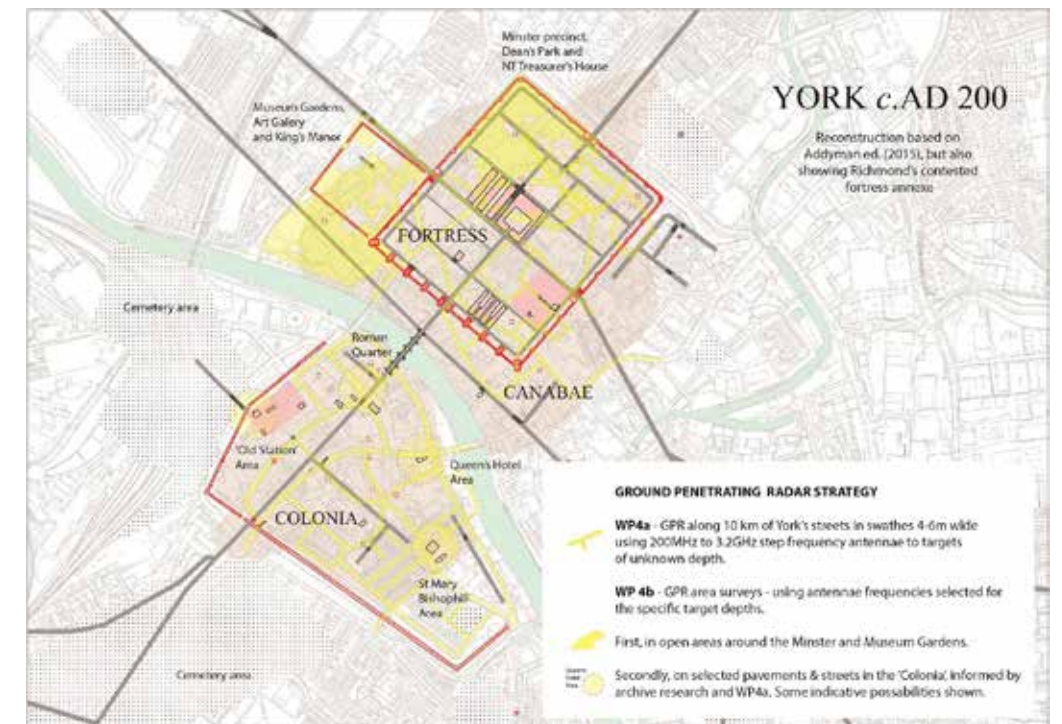
Over the course of the last year and a half, RYBS has begun to investigate these issues given the broad range of data that is available. Melding current and recent archaeological field research plus antiquarian observation, the teams at Cambridge, and Reading (Professor Martin Millett, Dr Thomas Matthews Boehmer, and Dr John Creighton), have been creating a new appreciation and synthesis of the urban landscape. This is an ongoing, live investigation. Its results demonstrate how we should seriously question the extent to which

York followed pre-destined routes during its imperial history. Clearly, the fortress founded c. 70 CE was laid out according to somewhat conventional, late-1st century lines; but these may not have been as ordinaire as had previously conceived. Its latest Roman-period history also needs better unpicking based off the current GIS (Geographic Information System) and database work. Obviously, the *colonia* had achieved its civic rank by 237 CE. Yet there remain serious queries surrounding the function of the west of that space lying to the south of the River Ouse. Could it have been a sanctuary, a *palatium*, or something much more citified, a baths complex, or an imperial Severan retreat? Further sifting of the available evidence – which will be expanded by an ongoing outreach, volunteer programme – might help us solve this particular problem.

Riding alongside this strand of the RYBS have been two others. The first has involved the mapping of subterranean features with GPR (Ground-Penetrating Radar). This state-of-the-art technology reveals buried landscapes and has novel applications over both concreted and ‘green’ surfaces. During summer 2023, Dr Lieven Verdonk (Ghent) will be using the latest GPR technology in order

Figure 1 (right):
Plan of current
knowledge of Roman
York, with the
GPR Strategy

Figure 2 (below):
CAT survey carrying
out GPR work near the
present Minster



to bring to light the hitherto unknown features that continue to underlie Deans Park (around the medieval Minster), and the extramural spaces to the Southwest of the fortress (the York Museum Gardens). This follows on from the surveys conducted in 2022 (by CAT surveys) that examined the terrain beneath the current streets of the historic core of the city of York (2). The results from the latter are currently being researched by Dr Creighton and we hope that both surveys will help us assess the extensive remoulding that the terrain underwent in the course of the Roman occupation. The second further strand, run in collaboration with Kristina Krawiec (York Archaeology), draws on the evidence from past archaeological works, as well as civil engineering, and geological boreholes, in order to produce of a new model of the sub-surface topography of the city. This is of fundamental importance. It not only helps us comprehend the landscape on which the Roman settlement was constructed, but also allows us to assess the potential impacts that future development may have on the buried, Roman-period deposits.

Knowledge and understanding of *Eboracum* have been stuck in something of a bind. Present narratives about the history of Roman York have continued to rely heavily on Sir Ian Richmond's thinking from the 1960s. Roman-period York was divided into three parts in his account, the legionary fortress (to the northeast of the Ouse), with an associated *canabae*, and an apparently

civilian *colonia* (on the southwest bank of the Ouse) (3). This spatial separation was always hypothetical and based on preconceptions about the nature and organisation of imperial society. Key assumptions onto which Richmond built his account have been thrown into doubt by recent fieldwork (at sites like Aldborough, Castleford, Catterick, and Stanwick), in addition to broader re-evaluations of cities along the borders of the Roman West (e.g., Nijmegen). Large numbers of excavations in the city over the past sixty years have already shown that York calls for a new appraisal. What RYBS is doing is already illustrating that mixed-method approaches realise real results when exploring even our most beloved historic centres.



MEET OUR NEW COLLEAGUES

In 2022 the Faculty welcomed five new permanent members of the teaching staff.
Here they reflect on their first year in post.

What has been the most surprising thing in your first year in the job?

Laura: I was surprised by the amount of attention that each student gets. It's quite incredible and entirely unimaginable at most other universities. And interdisciplinary discussions are a part of everyday life. This is quite extraordinary, but it feels very much ordinary here.

Michael: Yes. I've noticed the personal care invested in nurturing individual students, not least at undergraduate level: the real pride taken in their success, and the combined academic/pastoral support through the challenges that can arise. That's something really special about the combined Cambridge College and supervision system.

Lea: For me, the Faculty has been home for some years now, but I have always seen it as a graduate student first and, later, as an early career researcher. This year was my introduction to the undergraduate teaching system. I was impressed by how much planning and care is dedicated by my colleagues to reflect on how we can improve on our teaching.

Henry: I'm surprised at how incredibly good the students for A4 textual criticism are—it's embarrassing to think how much more they know than I did when I was an undergraduate.

Laura: I've also noticed that the public debate and the debate internal to the Faculty about the future of Classics in the UK seem to be polarised around promoting inclusion on the one hand and preserving excellence on the other hand. Coming from a country where Greek and Latin are taught in publicly-funded schools on a regular basis, it is very difficult for me to see these two goals as mutually exclusive. A personal challenge for me will be that of keeping on informing my teaching activity and my own research with my core belief that inclusion and excellence are not opposites.

Shushma: Like my colleagues, I was struck by the care and attention the Faculty gives to each individual student. This is facilitated by the supervision system, something that many

other institutions I have worked at do not have. This requires extraordinary commitment, but it's also a real joy to see students progress through their university careers.

How do you imagine the Faculty changing in the next 10 years?

Lea: I like to think that we will be coming up with new collaborative ideas, making the most out of the range of expertise that the faculty currently offers and that, hopefully, will expand even more in the future. But also, I hope that we will become always better at involving others, not only by establishing connections with other faculties but also by reaching out to a wider audience and devising events that might appeal to schoolchildren.

Henry: We will be admitting more students without prior experience of either language, and it will be imperative to teach them well.

Michael: Well, we're in the midst of a seismic shift in personnel and personalities which will spur much collective thinking about how the Faculty defines itself and the discipline. But I'm optimistic. The major challenges are those faced by Arts and Humanities subjects more generally. But there's opportunity here too – and I think philanthropy will play an increasing role in sustaining our work in teaching, research and impact.

Shushma: Like Michael, I'm optimistic and excited about what the Cambridge Classics Faculty can do over the next 10 years. I'm excited to continue teaching new subjects that consider the global context within which ancient Greece and Rome were situated. This opens up opportunities to work with colleagues in other Faculties and stimulating possibilities for collaborative research.

What are you currently working on in your research?

Lea: I am now studying how politicians and leaders in the later Roman empire seeking self-assertion through cultural engagement sought to advertise their approach to culture and philosophy as valid and authoritative.



Michael: I'm trying this summer finally to send off a book that's been ongoing for over 15 years – on the *Imagines* of the Elder Philostratus: it's about an Imperial Greek text ostensibly describing an imagined gallery of paintings, but also exploring the essential parameters (and challenges!) of art history as academic discipline.

Henry: Editing the *Cambridge Companion* to Pindar and thinking about penis jokes about the gods in Aristophanes.

Shushma: I am spending this summer catching up on all the nearly-finished book chapters and articles that just need that final bit of attention! But, more excitingly, I'm also developing a funding bid with a colleague at the University of Leicester (Dr Jane Masségli) to work with the National Trust on their classical antiquities. We want to help them create a comprehensive database of their collection and explore the impact these domestic collections had on the conception of the 'classical' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Dr Lea Niccolai teaches ancient history and is a Fellow of Trinity College.

Dr Shushma Malik teaches ancient history and is a Fellow of Newnham College.

Professor Michael Squire teaches Classical art and archaeology and is a Fellow of Trinity College.

Dr Laura Castelli teaches ancient philosophy and is a Fellow of Clare Hall.

Dr Henry Spelman teaches Greek literature and is a Fellow of Christ's College.

Pictured (L to R): Lea, Shushma, Michael, and Laura

Conference Confidential

In honour of the Classical Association's 120th Anniversary, the Faculty of Classics here in Cambridge hosted the annual CA conference, a remarkable gathering showcasing exciting research, interactive workshops, and fascinating exhibitions. Today we head behind the scenes to interview Jess Lawrence – a PhD student in the Faculty and the indefatigable organizer of this year's conference – to find out what it was like to put on such an incredible event.

Q: So this year has been busy for you?

A: Yes, well this academic year was not much academia really. The first term I took some time out for the arrival of my daughter, Persephone, and then in Lent Term, I took a break from studying again to run the conference, which ended up being great but very time-consuming. Two very time-consuming things: babies and conferences! I do like to stack things up nice and high.

Q: How did you get involved in organising the conference?

A: Three to four years ago, I was asked if I'd be interested in helping out with the conference because I used to work for a festival in India, which is a massive event with a footfall of about 250,000 people. I just ran one venue there: I made sure everyone was safe, made sure the speakers were there and happy, and that the volunteers were on top of things. It was quite a small role really—but I think that was somehow interpreted by the Faculty as me having run the entire festival! So, I was asked to get involved with this and I was excited to do it. I knew it would be a good challenge.

I'm also in the somewhat unique position of having both worked for the faculty – I was the Undergraduate Assistant for a while – and being a student here too. It meant that I knew everyone, staff and students, which made running the conference a lot smoother as, luckily, I had a deep well of goodwill to draw on.

Then Covid happened, and by the time we started planning again, Persie had been born. I was given the chance to back out but, as I said, I love to stack things up so I said I'd keep going and here we are.

Q: What was organising the conference like?

A: Where to start? I'll have to say something that doesn't make it look as chaotic as me ironing the faculty logo onto the volunteer T-Shirts just days before delegates started arriving!

But seriously, I think my experience of organising the conference was made by the people I worked with. From the moment I got my team leaders to run the volunteer teams, I knew it would all be fine – they were just angels.

This faculty has so much skill amongst its students. It isn't just 'Are you good at Classics?' or 'Can you parse this Greek sentence?', their people skills are amazing, the way they advocated for themselves and their teams when it was needed, and how they all pulled together was great to see.

I realised that I was working with amazing people across the conference and that made it a fantastic experience.

Q: What was your highlight of the conference?

A: I think it was more a series of highlights strung together: and in a fully hybrid conference that little high you get when Zoom works is like nothing else.

And if I'm allowed to be a little self-indulgent, I guess a high point was when I received a thank-you at the conference dinner. I didn't realise it at the time, but there was a standing ovation. The fact that people felt it was worth doing that was very touching, and showed me that, actually, the conference was going well and the delegates were enjoying it. It was easy to lose sight of that in the midst of it all.

Q: What's next for you?

A: I should really get back to my PhD! I'm working on comparative literature, looking at 21st-century female authors' receptions of Homer, including Madeline Miller, Alice Oswald, and Natalie Haynes, who I actually got to meet at the conference.

I'm part-time now, so I have a good amount of breathing space. I don't feel like I'm doing everything at once for a change and I'm looking forward to having clearer boundaries between when I can work on my PhD and when I can focus on being a mum – not that it will be as easy as that, I'm sure.

Opening the Archives

Dr Rebecca Naylor, Faculty Archivist

Flanked by his companions, the archaeologist Alan Wace, wearing a floral garland and standing at the entrance to the Treasury of Atreus, celebrates his 71st birthday in 1950 at Mycenae. This image, seen here top right, preserves a fleeting moment of convivial festivity, which always featured in some form during every excavation, but never saw print in any published account during Wace's long career.

Archival material places us before the raw, unedited and immediate moment of text or image creation. It enables us to return to source and thereby reevaluate and reformulate the established narrative within new paradigms and fresh academic priorities. In particular, archaeology – by nature a destructive process – depends on meticulous documentation, formerly in field notebooks, photographic prints and drawings, from which inevitably only a small slice of the evidence is ever published. If one wishes to reevaluate the

discoveries and conclusions made at a type-site like Mycenae, the original records of its excavations are essential and irreplaceable.

Dr Elizabeth (Lisa) French (1931–2021), Cambridge Classics Alumna, gave the Mycenae Excavation and Publication Archive to the Faculty in 2013, together with her own professional archive and that of her father Alan Wace (1879–1957), Laurence Professor of Classical Archaeology (1934–1944) and Director of British excavations at Mycenae from 1920 to 1957. This gift was accompanied by generous funds to create a purpose-built archives repository within the Faculty Library's footprint. I was appointed Archivist in 2018, primarily to catalogue extant collections and to appraise potential acquisitions, in addition to providing a readers' service. Scholarly requests to consult material are encouraged and average 150 enquiries a year.

To celebrate the centenary of British excavation at Mycenae, in 2020 "Digital Mycenae" was launched, in collaboration with the British School at Athens, on the Cambridge Digital Library. Since its launch, the digital platform has attracted more than 6000 individual users and 220,000 page views. This project both dramatically widened intellectual access to fragile, often restricted-access, material and re-combined virtually two separated halves of the same original collection. Furthermore, Covid lockdowns and the challenges of climate change have caused many to reassess the necessity of globe-trotting to visit archives in person, if they can be consulted via comprehensive, high quality digital facsimiles. "Digital Thessaly" is another successful project of this nature.

Our collecting remit encompasses material that was created by Faculty alumni and teaching staff, with some important exceptions. The Archives care for the papers of the soldier-spy and antiquarian Colonel William M. Leake (1777–1860), on long term loan to the Museum of Classical Archaeology from the Fitzwilliam Museum. Leake visited Mycenae in 1802 and sketched the Lion Gate and the Treasury of Atreus in his Regency-pocket-sized notebooks. We also hold 8 of the notebooks of the architect, and Fitzwilliam Museum director, John H. Middleton (1846–1896), filled with drawings of sites and antiquities encountered during his travels around Greece. We continue to receive donations of archival material, one of the most recent and largest being the papers of the epigrapher Joyce M. Reynolds in 2022.

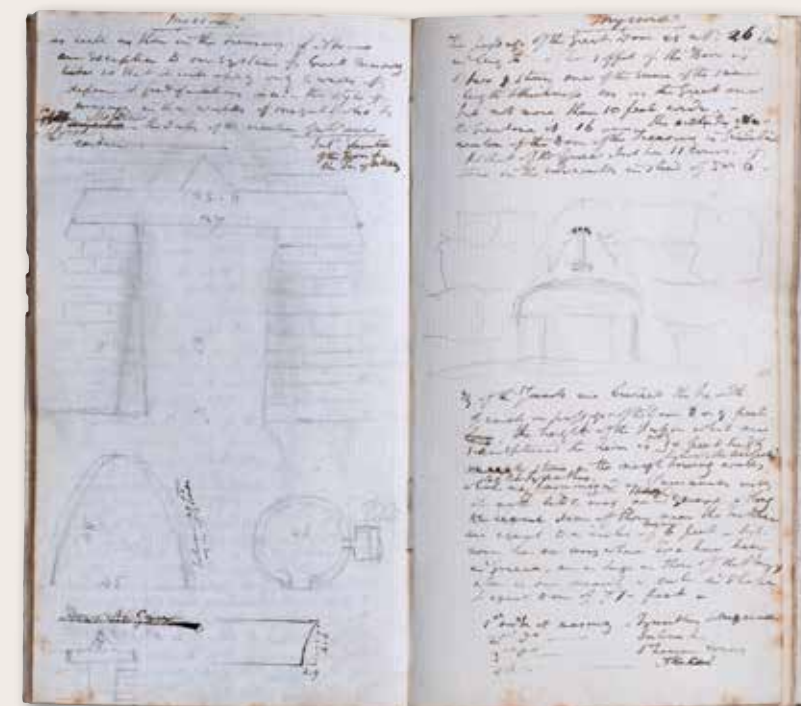
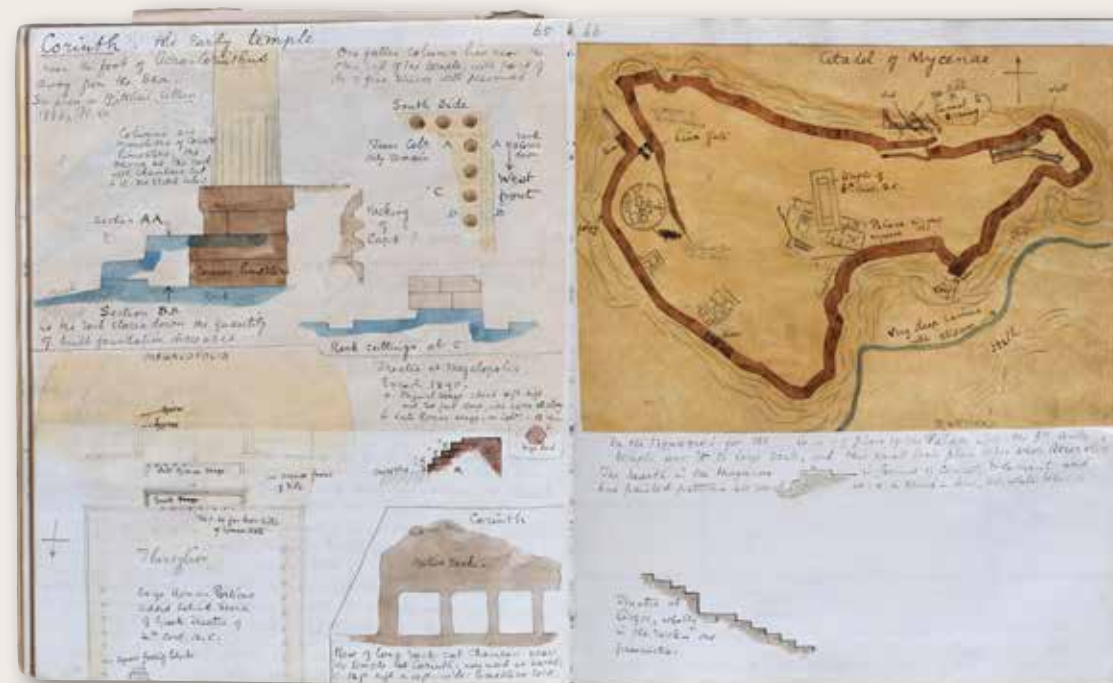


If you know of precious papers with a strong connection to the Faculty that require a permanent home, then do contact us!

The Faculty's online archive can be found here:
<https://arcspac-pub.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/30>

Digital Mycenae:
<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/mycenae>

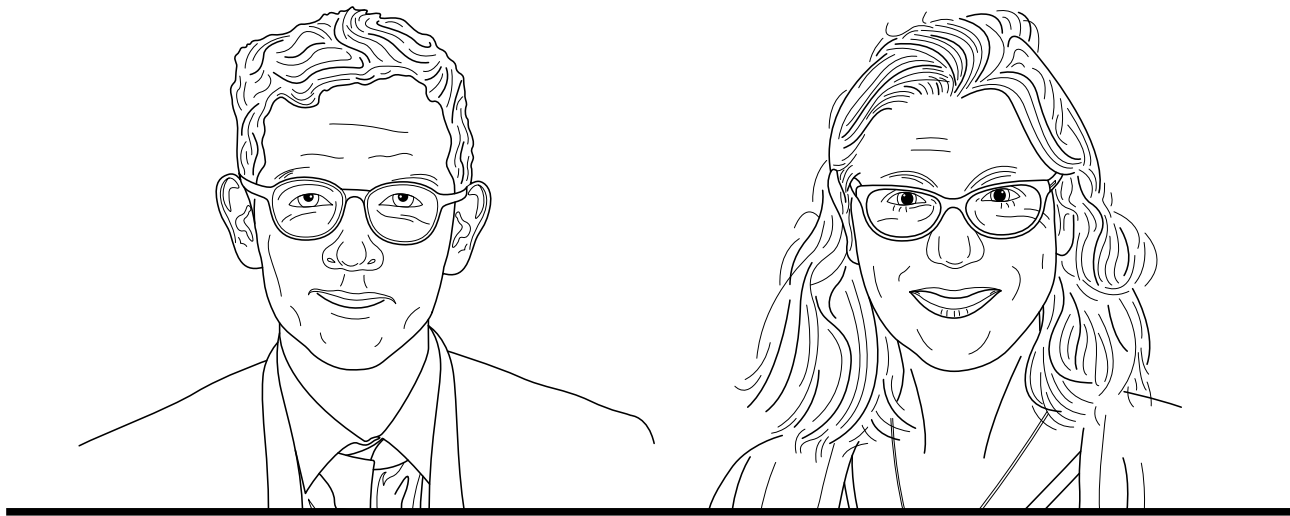
Digital Thessaly:
<https://digital.bsa.ac.uk/collections.php?collection=2807>
<https://www.bsa.ac.uk/2022/05/26/magoula-hunting-or-the-romance-of-excavation/>



Above: Wace with B.H. Hill, Sp. Marinatos, I. Papadimitriou, Nomarch of Argolis, C. Blegen, Ph. Petsas, at The Treasury of Atreus, Mycenae, 13 July 1950, photograph, GBR/3437/AJBW/3/44

Opposite: J. H. Middleton, Sketches from Corinth and Plan of the citadel of Mycenae, 1880s, pen and gouache on paper, GBR/3437/JHMN/3

Left: W. M. Leake, Sketches of The Treasury of Atreus and The Lion Gate, Mycenae, 1802, pencil and ink on paper, GBR/3437/WMLK/4/1



Tim Whitmarsh meets Natalie Haynes

Natalie Haynes is a Classicist, broadcaster, stand-up comedian, and author of several bestselling novels on Classical themes, including *A Thousand Ships* which was shortlisted for the Women’s Prize for Fiction and her recent release *Stone Blind*, a retelling of the Medusa myth.

T: You studied Classics at Christ’s in the 1990s. I stalked you on CamSIS, our electronic system, to find out what papers you took: Plato, Aristotle, The Construction and Deconstruction of the Image of the Roman Emperor, and a thesis on the ‘Heroics of Infanticide’ in Euripides...

N: Just to be clear: I don’t have any children ... nor did I ever!

T: That’s a relief! But what struck me about that profile was that there was quite a lot of philosophy. Were you a philosopher as a student?

N: There was a lot of philosophy. That’s because my Director of Studies was David Sedley and he is an astonishing genius. You’d be in a supervision and say something vaguely witless and he’d say “Ah, I think you’re offering me Aristotle’s argument” and you’d be like “Yeah, let’s say I am doing that...”. Some people are quite clever and they use that to diminish others and make themselves feel smarter, but he’s so clever that he raises you up. So, of course, I was going to do a lot of philosophy: he was just such a joy.

T: But there’s been a swerve in the kinds of Classics you have done since. With *Stands up for the Classics*, and in your books, it’s been Greek literature all the way.

N: Well hang on. We do try very hard to balance it out. We have two Roman authors per season, and I did a whole series called *Ovid Not Covid*.

T: But you do have a sort of running joke of mocking Roman authors.

N: Well yes, Pliny is the absolute pits isn’t he? If you want to create a generation of people who don’t go on to study Classics, you’d have them read letters about frickin’ drains, wouldn’t you? I would pick someone more exciting personally. But having said that, I spent years of my life mocking Pliny for staying home to read Livy when Vesuvius erupted and the world was ending. But then when the world was ending with Covid I stayed at home and read Ovid so what do I know? I am him, so no wonder I hate him.

T: How did you go from university to stand-up?

N: I started doing stand-up while I was in Cambridge. It just took a while – about two years – to scratch a living doing that without having to have another job. It was difficult. Stand-up is a really gladiatorial experience, actually.

Then I made a move that with hindsight was perfectly timed, but I didn’t know it then. I started cutting back on stand-up gigs and started writing. I did an op-ed column for *The Times* and eventually wrote *The Ancient Guide to Modern Life* in 2010. It was when I was doing book festivals for this that I combined stand-up with Classical topics – mostly because it was cheaper for festival organisers not to pay an interviewer!

In 2014 Radio 4 finally agreed to *Stands up for the Classics*, which I had been pitching for years. The radio show is huge because the BBC

has such great reach. We have an audience of 1.6 million so whoever said there was no appetite for Classics is just wrong.

T: Tell us about your latest novel, *Stone Blind*.

N: I wrote a non-fiction chapter on Medusa for *Pandora’s Jar*. Before I had simply taken on board that she was a monster who could kill people with her stony eyes. But when I looked at the sources to find out who she killed, it was no one. Not one single person. After she’s dead she is used as a weapon, but of her own volition, she doesn’t kill anyone. I should have known that.

In her myth, she is monstered, quite literally, for being sexually assaulted. The things that happened to her were awful and the things that have happened to her story are awful, separately and differently awful. I was just so angry when I finished writing about that. Generally, 9,000 words would cure me of that kind of rage but by the end, I was still furious.

I thought “Man do I ever owe you a novel.”

T: What was your writing process like? You wrote it during lockdown, didn’t you?

N: It was a strange book to write. I had Covid early because I’m fashionable that way, but then I suffered from really bad neurological Long Covid, so I had crippling migraines. There are some fantastic headaches in that book. They are all mine.

It was also a very solitary experience. I couldn’t travel anywhere it was set because of lockdowns and the fact I was sick. But luckily, it’s a story full of isolated people.

T: The Gorgons themselves are a very intimate bunch, though, aren’t they? The three sisters and their relationship, it’s very un-monstrous.

N: They aren’t the monsters in the story, not the way I tell it.

T: Has it been your most successful book? It seems that way.

N: Yes, it has been in the UK and in a lot of countries where it’s been translated. It’s also the quickest one to be published in multiple languages: the Italian edition came out about twenty minutes after the UK one. I think Pandora is probably my biggest seller in the US.

T: Have you bought a yacht? I bet you have. Or a castle?

N: I grew up in Birmingham, reading the Odyssey, so I am deeply suspicious of the sea. A castle sounds nice, but I live in London, so I would accept a second bedroom.

T: So what’s the next project?

N: The next book comes out in September, and is called *Divine Might: Goddesses in Greek Myth*. It’s a loose sequel to *Pandora’s Jar*. I’m also writing the ninth series of Natalie Haynes *Stands Up for the Classics*, which will go out on Radio 4 in the autumn.

T: Sticking with Classics then! Can you imagine a time when you’d do something different? (Please don’t.)

N: Well, I already ran away and joined the circus, when I became a stand-up comedian for a decade. Then I ran away from the circus and joined the library. So what else is left? I’d hate not to be writing, and the pandemic showed me that – even though it can be very tiring – I really missed performing when I couldn’t do it. I might try working a bit less intensely, because I’ve had about 5 days off so far this year. So if you have any suggestions for what I could do with the extra time, feel free to drop me a text.

T: I’ll get thinking! Thanks very much for your time; it was great to talk.

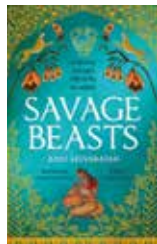
You can find out more about Natalie Haynes and her publications here:

<https://nataliehaynes.com/>

Episodes of the BBC’s Natalie Haynes *Stands Up for the Classics* are available here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b077x8pc>

Rani Selvarajah (Fitz 2009) is another alumna working on retellings of stories inspired by Classical myth. Her novel is a historical retelling of Medea called *Savage Beasts*, set



during the rise of the East India Company in the 18th century. Using this historical context, the book’s narrative draws on themes of colonisation, xenophobia and injustice already present in the myth to examine how these issues echo in our past and continue to resonate today.

CIRCUMVESUVIANA

Nigel Spivey, Associate Professor of Classics (Classical Art and Archaeology)

Modern Classical archaeology began in the mid-eighteenth century with exploration of the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum – where trapped magmatic gases made torch-lit investigation painfully exciting.

The area was also a laboratory of modern tourism: in the late 19th century, for example, Thomas Cook and Son played a key part in developing the funicular railway designed to take visitors up to the rim of Vesuvius. As Goethe observed, of all the world's disasters, none has given so much subsequent pleasure as the eruption of this volcano in 79 CE. Archaeologists are still busy around the Bay of Naples: here is a personal selection from many possible outings.

1 Ischia

While the island is frequented by hedonists, its archaeological museum at Lacco Ameno also rewards itinerant scholars with precious testimony to early Greek settlement in the West, including 'the Cup of Nestor' (*Museo archeologico di Pitheculae, Villa Arbusto*).



2 Cumae

Destined to become a vast *parco archeologico*, the city is currently under excavation – and best viewed from its acropolis, where carved citations from Aeneid VI set the scene for visiting the Cumaean Sibyl's cave.

3 Naples Archaeological Museum

Ample, but not to the point of exhaustion, the museum retains the ambience of courtly grandeur intended by its Bourbon founders. Colossal pieces, such as the Farnese Hercules, are comfortably accommodated; somehow it is also the right place for those modest yet enchanting still-life vignettes that once made guests in a bourgeois Roman house feel welcome.



4 Pompeii

Under the dynamic direction of Gabriel Zuchtriegel since 2021, Pompeii is a site revitalised: newly-excavated parts are on view, and reopened areas include the wonderful House of the Vettii. Go with plenty of stamina and fortifying supplies: upgrading of visitor facilities is work in progress. Be sure not to miss the standing display of frescoes from Moregine in the portico of the Palestra Grande (picnic spot nearby).

5 Herculaneum

At last the museum at Herculaneum is open, plus an illuminating display of a scorched boat lately retrieved from the ancient harbour-front. Start your visit from that lower area, where morbid curiosities are satisfied by replicas of the skeletal remains of people overwhelmed while awaiting rescue. *Viva Lo Re* on Corso Resina in Ercolano is the place to cheer up if the Schadenfreude becomes too much.

5 Herculaneum

Two related villa sites exist at Oplontis, near Torre Annunziata; one, 'Villa A', appears to be a residential retreat connected with Nero's wife Poppaea, and is accordingly spectacular. The more economy-focused 'Villa B' is currently only accessible virtually, but well worth it: see [Oplontisproject.org](https://www.oplontisproject.org). Those in search of the *realia* of ancient agriculture and local ecosystems might alternatively make for the villa-museum at Boscoreale (*Museo del Parco Nazionale del Vesuvio*).

6 Oplontis

The villa of Tiberius has little to offer beyond its view. More satisfying – and with an equally testing approach by stairs for whoever craves the step-count – is the Villa San Michele. Built on Roman ruins, and incorporating many of them, it comes with a narrative (Axel Munthe's *The Story of San Michele*) that makes good holiday reading. www.villasanmichele.eu

7 Capri

The villa of Tiberius has little to offer beyond its view. More satisfying – and with an equally testing approach by stairs for whoever craves the step-count – is the Villa San Michele. Built on Roman ruins, and incorporating many of them, it comes with a narrative (Axel Munthe's *The Story of San Michele*) that makes good holiday reading.

www.villasanmichele.eu



Shape the future and preserve the past with a gift in your Will

Remembering the Faculty with a gift in your will is a wonderful way of making a significant and lasting impact.

A gift in your will to the Faculty of Classics could help the Faculty flourish far into the future. This support could open up a world of opportunity for future students, researchers and academics or help to protect our exceptional collection for future use.

For further information about the impact of a bequest and guidance on how to leave a gift to the Faculty of Classics, please do contact us.

If you have already remembered the Faculty in your Will, please do let us know. We would be delighted to thank you for your generosity and foresight.

Amanda Lightstone

Senior Associate Director of Arts and Humanities
University of Cambridge Development and
Alumni Relations

E: amanda.lightstone@admin.cam.ac.uk



Stay in touch

Keep in touch with the Faculty of Classics through the Alumni page on our website:

www.classics.cam.ac.uk/directory/alumni

There you can read and sign up for our Alumni e-newsletter. This will also make sure you receive details of our webinar series.



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



Shape the future and preserve the past with a gift in your Will

Remembering the Faculty with a gift in your will is a wonderful way of making a significant and lasting impact.

A gift in your will to the Faculty of Classics could help the Faculty flourish far into the future. This support could open up a world of opportunity for future students, researchers and academics or help to protect our exceptional collection for future use.

For further information about the impact of a bequest and guidance on how to leave a gift to the Faculty of Classics, please do contact us.

If you have already remembered the Faculty in your Will, please do let us know. We would be delighted to thank you for your generosity and foresight.

Amanda Lightstone

Senior Associate Director of Arts and Humanities
University of Cambridge Development and Alumni Relations
E: amanda.lightstone@admin.cam.ac.uk



Stay in touch

Keep in touch with the Faculty of Classics through the Alumni page on our website:

www.classics.cam.ac.uk/directory/alumni

There you can read and sign up for our Alumni e-newsletter. This will also make sure you receive details of our webinar series.



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

