Happy New Year! 2018 was another good year for the School of Classics. Our undergraduate intake continues to be very strong, with about 50 students on average arriving every year to study for a degree in the School. We also welcomed more than 20 students in September 2018 to study on our redesigned MLitt course. We continue to have a flourishing and internationally diverse postgraduate research community of more than 30 PhD students overall. We also welcomed several new colleagues, who are profiled below: Andrea Brock, Matthew Skuse; also Nikoletta Manioti, returning to St Andrews after a year away. One other exciting initiative is a new honours module, to run for the first time in 2020-21 (subject to funding) that will take students to Rome for ten days for a series of site visits, to parallel our very popular ‘Footsteps of the Ancients’ module to Greece.

Side by side with their busy teaching schedule my colleagues have published and presented research on a huge range of different topics. It has also been another busy year for conferences in the School, with nine events in 2018, including among other things workshops on the culture of Pergamon in Republican Rome, on Visualising War in the ancient and modern world, on Imperial and Local Citizenship in the Roman Empire and on Aspects of Platonism. The highlight was the Celtic Classics Conference, held this year in St Andrews in July 2018, which included more than 250 delegates and nearly 20 separate three-day panels.

Two other new initiatives are outlined further below. The first is our new Centre for the Public Understanding of Greek and Roman Drama (now one of four research centres in the School). We’re working on a range of different projects involving collaborations with schools and theatre companies. If you are interested in doing some work with the Centre, or if you know of anyone who might be, we would love to hear from you!

The other is a series of new international partnerships. St Andrews has always been an international place, from the medieval world onwards. Our students and staff have a strong sense of being part of a distinctively Scottish community of classicists, while also being strongly linked to the wider world. We are doing our best to use the current political situation as a spur to build more links and more collaborations beyond the UK. We are delighted among other things by our new joint-PhD scheme with the University of La Sapienza in Rome: the first student on that scheme started earlier this academic year.

Please do keep in touch and drop in and say hello if you are ever in St Andrews. Best wishes for 2019.

Jason König
Head of School
Our new academic staff

Nikoletta Maniotti

I am a Latinist interested in epic, myth, women, family, and landscape. My research encompasses Augustan and Early Imperial Latin poetry, and follows a cultural-historical approach, which is interested in close readings of the texts against their wider background. My PhD (Durham, 2012) examined the representation of familial interaction among epic women, from sisters, mothers and daughters, to aunts and nieces, and even sisters-in-law. In particular, I was interested in the epic expression of kinswomen's feelings for each other, and in the extent to which this reflected Roman ideals and attitudes. Since then I have published papers on Catullus, Ovid, and the Flavian epic poets, and edited the volume Family in Flavian Epic. I am currently preparing a monograph on sisters, focusing on Latin epic but effectively tracing their literary history across genres from Homer to the Flavians, and taking into account all evidence of their ‘real-life’ Roman counterparts. My next book will present the findings of a three-year project funded by the Leverhulme Trust on the topic of the view from above in Latin epic and related genres.

I am very excited to be back in St Andrews where I previously held a Teaching Fellowship and a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, before moving to London for a year to teach at King’s and Birkbeck. This year I am involved in teaching at all levels, as well as being the Postgraduate Teaching Mentor and offering academic support to our amazing cohort of MLitt/MPhil students.

Andrea Brock

I am a Roman archaeologist and historian. My research focuses on early Rome, particularly the city’s pre-urban landscape and development of the river harbour in the Forum Boarium. As a doctoral student at the University of Michigan, I conducted a coring survey of Rome’s river valley, employing a combination of environmental analyses and a critical approach to the literary record on early Rome in order to facilitate a reconstruction of the region in the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE. This project has helped to shed light on the impact of environmental stress (particularly flooding and sedimentation) during Rome’s urbanization process.

After earning my PhD in Classical Archaeology in 2017, I was excited to join the faculty in the School of Classics and gain more experience in the classroom. In addition to teaching a variety of sub-honours courses on Roman history and archaeology, I am offering a new Honours module in Semester 2 entitled “Floods, famines, plagues and volcanoes: Roman adaptation to the environment.” I also have plans to return to Rome in the summer of 2019 (hopefully with some St Andrews students), in order to conduct the next phase of my coring survey. I will incorporate this new dataset in an interdisciplinary monograph on the Environmental History of Early Rome.

Underpinning my research interests and approach to the ancient world is the fact that I am an environmentalist and invested in sustainability education. I am proud to join a University that leads the way on sustainability issues.

Matthew Skuse

I am an ancient historian. My research seeks to understand changes in the culture and society of Greece during the Early Iron Age and Archaic Period, with a focus on material evidence as a reflection or agent of change. My work aims to situate the production, distribution, and use of objects within local socio-political contexts as well as within their regional and Mediterranean contexts. This is especially reflected in my work on the significance of materials and crafts and on understanding Greek connections with surrounding cultures through the study of a broad range of material and textual sources produced in Egypt, the Levant, and Mesopotamia.

Fiona Swift joined the School in January 2018. She works with Sam Dixon and Jo McGinley in the School office, concentrating on events management and the School library.

Claudia Cisneros-Foster joined the School in September 2018, as School manager. She works closely with the Head of School.

Check out all staff profiles at: https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/classics/staff
The School of Classics has traditionally had a world-leading concentration of expertise in ancient drama, boasting scholars of the caliber of W. M. Lindsay, K. Dover, and more recently A. Gratwick and H. Hine. In the past few years this profile has been boosted further by new appointments, and we now an impressive number of research-active staff working on ancient Drama, both Greek and Roman. Also very distinctive is the wide range of our interests, with a research focus unlike those of other key players nationally and internationally, including a particular emphasis on Roman drama, which is normally much less known and understood than the Greek. Jon Hesk, Stephen Halliwell and Michael Carroll all work on classical Greek tragedy and comedy, and Beppe Pezzini and Emma Buckley on Roman drama. Emma Buckley also works on the influence of classical literature on Renaissance drama. Moreover, several members of staff have been engaged in projects aiming to share the results of their research with a wider audience, and to foster interactions between the academic community, the world of theatre performers and audiences, and school education.

All this boost of interests and activities has led to the foundation, in September 2018, of a new Centre for the Public Understanding of Greek and Roman Drama (CPUGRD). The main goals of the Centre are to promote to the general public the beauty and relevance of ancient drama, and to provide a space for dialogue and networking between practice, public and research. The Centre includes more than 20 members from the University of St Andrews, working on ancient drama and/or its reception, a number of partners, national and international, as well as performers and practitioners. Indeed, from January-June 2019, the School’s Centre for the Public Understanding of Greek and Roman Drama will have its first visiting practitioner-scholar, Fleur Darkin. Fleur Darkin is a world-leading choreographer, dancer and director. Fleur will be using her time with us to learn more about ancient Greek and Roman cultures of performance and ritual, and about anthropologies of knowledge, in order to think about how they might inform both her work and how to work. In turn, we hope to learn from her about how our field might make use of contemporary approaches to dance and theatre.

The Centre aims to promote and support a broad range of projects on ancient drama, including research workshops and conferences, performances and school events. These included a project on ‘Greek drama in the community’, led by Dr. Jon Hesk, which established proof of concept via a successful collaboration with Byre Youth Theatre Ltd. Among the events currently scheduled for the coming semester there is a production of Plautus’ *Menaechmi*, to be performed at the Byre theatre (30th April and 1st May) and at the Festival On the Rocks; a conference on ancient comedy in Marsala, Italy (19th and 20th March), in collaboration with the Association Istantanee and the Parco Archeologico of Segesta; a ‘hands-on’ workshop led by Prof. Martin Revermann of the University of Toronto (10th April), exploring different approaches to the adaptation of ancient plays for a modern audience.

Finally, the Centre aims to expand ambitiously the volume and range of our impact collaborations with schools and theatre companies; to this purpose the Centre will offer free consultation on Greek and Roman drama and make available to the public a database of textual and multimedia resources, informed by research carried in St Andrews, for the benefit of students and teachers, and indeed of anyone sharing a curiosity in classical drama.

For more information on the activities on the Centre please visit the Centre Website: https://drama.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk

Alumni Careers Events

We are working hard at the moment to improve our careers planning for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. To that end, the School’s current Careers Officer, Dr Nicolas Wiater, is aiming to re-establish a series of regular careers events in the School involving contributions from alumni. If you would be willing to be share your experience and expertise, and to have a trip to St Andrews in the process, by contributing to one of those events in future we would love to hear from you. If that is something you would be willing to help with please do get in touch on classics@st-andrews.ac.uk, or feel free to contact Dr Wiater direct on nw23@st-andrews.ac.uk if you have any questions.
Through a Glass Darkly: Museum, Memory and Senses

As society and technology rapidly change, museums have seized the opportunity to grow their audiences and enhance learning by providing an appealing range of digital and interactive resources. However, as yet little empirical research has been undertaken on the value of digital displays in the museum for different visitor groups. We would argue that there are many untapped opportunities for museums to connect with their communities and provide a more inclusive and holistic approach.

In 1994 Mrs Margaret Bridges, a Fife resident, donated a collection of Cypriot archaeological material to the University of St Andrews, which now forms part of the University’s Heritage Collections (A Recognised Collection of National Significance). The artefacts range in date from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period and provide fascinating glimpses into the ancient world – from trade, technology and consumption to burial, beliefs and artistic expression. The collection is used extensively for hands-on teaching within the University’s School of Classics, and in the Museum of the University of St Andrews’ exhibition and learning programme aimed at the wider community and schools. This everyday collection is important because it helps visitors understand ordinary objects from daily life as well as the extraordinary ‘treasures’ so often displayed in museums.

In order to raise awareness of the collection, widening public access and for conservation purposes, the School of Classics and Museum of the University of St Andrews (MUSA) launched a collaborative project in 2016 to create and provide online access to 3D digital models of artefacts in the Bridges collection. A key research component of the project was to test perceptions of material culture as experienced in different formats: in a glass case, 3D digital reproductions, blind touch of replicas and hands on originals (Fig. 1). One of the most striking observations was that with each sensory experience introduced, visitors became more engaged with the experience and discovered new meaning in the artefacts (Fig. 2). Handling original artefacts was by far the most popular activity for the majority of participants, due to its multisensory nature.

To build on these initial results, we wanted to test whether or not there were differences in the way visitors remembered the objects and their stories, depending on how they were presented. This involved collaborating, for the first time, with colleagues in the School of Psychology and Neuroscience to run a number of memory experiments. These involved showing participants a total of 15 objects divided into three different viewing conditions (glass case, 3D digital and handling of originals) (Fig. 3). Each object had a short label giving the name, date and a single piece of factual information. Participants were then presented with 30 images in test conditions and asked to indicate any items they recognised from prior viewing. They were then asked to recall any associated information about the artefacts they recognised. We have thus far focused on adults and the results have been counter-intuitive. Whilst participants enjoyed handling the real objects, virtual manipulation of the 3D digital models led to significantly higher levels of visual recognition than items viewed in the case or handled. However participants struggled more to recall associated information such as name, date and facts associated with the digital 3D models.

These results have helped to consolidate our initial outcomes that the provision of a range of media is likely the most important means of maximising visitor enjoyment and understanding. Importantly, providing a range of media will also enable a more inclusive approach to visitor engagement in museums. Research on dementia has shown the importance of new experiences, interactions and investigations for people with early and middle stage dementia in helping to restrain the development of the disease. We have begun to consolidate our memory and sensory research through the development of advice and training packages for the museum and heritage sector aimed at making museums even more accessible. We hope that this will have potentially significant implications for the role of museums in the health and well-being of communities.

Rebecca Sweetman (Classics) & Alison Hadfield (MUSA)

https://sketchfab.com/bridges
https://thebridgescollection.wordpress.com/
https://www.facebook.com/bridgescollection/

Fig. 1 (left): solitary museum case experience
Fig. 2 (top right): Chatting about objects as they are being touched
Fig. 3 (below right): Memory experiments
Mountains in ancient literature and culture and their postclassical reception

At the start of this semester, at a drinks reception for new MLitt students, one of the incoming postgraduates told me ruefully that when they read my staff page, they thought my research focus couldn’t possibly be real. It’s certainly true that the combination of Classics, seventeenth-century history and, as my staff page puts it, ‘the human experience of mountains and mountainous landscapes’ seems at first glance to be a bit left-field. In fact, this represents a corner of an ever-growing research area and one which not one but two members of academic staff in the School of Classics at St Andrews are dedicating their time to.

Jason König and I make up the small (but, I like to think, pretty well-formed) team on a Leverhulme Trust Research Project dedicated to considering ‘mountains in ancient literature and culture and their postclassical reception’. Mountains are a hot topic in general: one only needs to glance at how large a proportion of the ‘sports’ or ‘travel’ section of any bookshop is taken up by the heading ‘mountaineering’ to appreciate the extent (and wordiness!) of the modern fascination with high peaks. However, historical narratives about mountains have tended to emphasise the exceptionalism of modern experiences, and have implied that mountains were generally ignored or even actively disliked before around the eighteenth century.

By contrast, our project seeks to emphasise both the complexity and nuance of the ancient experience and representation of mountains, and the ongoing connections between ancient and modern responses to them. Classical literature may not feature book-length adventure narratives of mountain climbs, as modern mountaineering literature does, but the mountainous landscape can be found everywhere you look: in tragedy, novels, and didactic writings, and in the travel accounts of post-classical visitors to the ‘classic ground’ of the Mediterranean.

Working on this project has certainly had its significant rewards. I noted above that mountains represent a growing research area: nowhere is this more evident than in the triennial, interdisciplinary ‘Thinking Mountains’ conference organised by the University of Alberta. Jason and I attended the 2018 iteration of this event, which had the terrible downside (!) of being hosted in Banff National Park, nestled in the Canadian Rockies. There are worse things than listening to a fascinating keynote whilst sitting in a room with a panoramic view of snow-covered peaks, and certainly worse things than getting to spend the day before a conference enjoying the local hot springs at 1,585m above sea level.

I also had the opportunity to indulge my love of beautiful books in December 2018 when I collaborated with Special Collections to put on an exhibition of ‘volcanic treasures’. Although all of the volumes on display were produced from the seventeenth century onwards, their depictions and understandings of the ‘fiery mountains’ of the world were frequently informed by classical antecedents. Many were lavishly illustrated, including books such as William Hamilton’s 1776-1779 Campi Phlegraei, with 54 plates which were hand-coloured under the eye of the author himself. It was a real privilege to be able to share such rare items with visitors, even if breathing around them was a little terrifying (a copy of the Campi Phlegraei sold in 2012 for almost $100,000).

Looking ahead for the project, Jason and I are currently working together on an edited volume, which will be bringing together research from scholars across the classical and post-classical spectrum, and will also be producing two independent monographs detailing our own work on mountains. We also maintain a blog, a plug for which seems like an apt place to finish: so, if you’d like to find out more, please visit mountains.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk!

Dawn Hollis
Global Classics

No one would disagree that one of the great strengths of the School of Classics is its international character. Whether we are thinking of our student body, staff, or our research connections, Classics at St Andrews have traditionally had wide horizons. It is not a coincidence, therefore, that our school should have an active role in the University’s recently established international committee. The committee is made up of representatives from the Sciences and the Humanities, as well as different departments within the University, such as the Dean of Sciences, the director of Admissions, and Vice-Principal for Research - under the direction of the Vice Principal for International Strategy and External Relations. Its aim is to advise and provide feedback on St Andrews’ strategy for cooperating and expanding its links with institutions across the globe. This is particularly important in a context of increased international competition and when the relationship between British and European Universities is experiencing great transformations - and not only because of Brexit.

The School of Classics is playing a central role in these initiatives. In the last few years, we have expanded the number of initiatives towards internationalisation, establishing new Erasmus partnerships with the University of Heidelberg and the University of Rome La Sapienza. Our School is playing a leading role in expanding the presence and reputation of the University globally, be it through the Distinguished Visiting Scholar programme, the joint degree offered with the College of William and Mary, or sponsoring academic visitors from Cyprus, Italy, and Brazil, among other places. In January 2018, Classics established a new joint PhD programme with Rome, in which students will be fully funded and spend half of their course (18 months) in each university, benefitting from the material resources and academic expertise of two world-leading departments in the field. The success of this programme has been such that it is considered a model for future international partnerships in the University, and the University of Rome has been made a strategic partner of St Andrews. Other ambitious programmes are being planned: we are preparing a series of yearly workshops for PhD students and post-doctoral researchers with the University of Tübingen, offering to our students the opportunity to discuss their research with colleagues in Germany, establishing contacts with a different academic culture and different approaches in their scholarship.

Being a member of the University’s international committee, I have had the opportunity to appreciate St Andrews’ initiatives to play a more decisive role in the world of science and education; but more importantly, I’ve had the chance to witness the importance of Classics in an increasingly globalized planet. There are growing efforts to make Classics more inclusive, both in terms of its recruitment but also in terms of its intellectual scope, taking into full consideration different cultures in Europe, Africa, and Asia, while maintaining a focus on the Greco-Roman world. In this sense, it is only natural that our School (and our field) should play a key role in these initiatives.

Carlos Machado