Welcome to another issue of the Newsletter from UCL Greek and Latin, for an update on what has been happening in the Department over the past year and what is planned for the year to come. It is a pleasure to see how the study of the ancient world continues to thrive at UCL with a large number of excellent staff and students, who are also able to inspire the world outside.

While the core of the Department is rather stable, there have been a number of staff changes over the last few months. Chris Carey has now retired fully, but, fortunately, remains a member of the Department and continues to supervise PhD students. Jenny Bryan was promoted to Senior Lecturer with effect from this autumn (congratulations), but soon afterwards decided to accept the offer of a lectureship in Manchester (another great achievement and recognition of her excellent work). While we are very sorry to lose Jenny, we realize that this change is best for her personally at this stage in her life; we remain particularly grateful for all she has done for the Department as Departmental Tutor over the past two years. Jenny will be replaced by a new permanent Lecturer from next autumn. In the interim we have been able to recruit Nicolò Benzi (Durham) as a Teaching Fellow for one year; he will be teaching modules on Greek philosophy and literature. Our Leventis Postdoctoral Fellow Rosa Andújar has been offered and accepted the post of Deputy Director of Liberal Arts and Lecturer in Liberal Arts at King’s College London. We are delighted that Rosa has been able to secure a permanent post straight after her time as a post-doc; we are glad that she will be just down the road and we will be able to stay in touch. We owe her a great debt for all her work on the annual Greek Play, conferences and other public engagement events. Since the Leventis Foundation has extended the funding for the Department (which is fantastic for us), we were able to appoint a new Leventis Postdoctoral Fellow: Kenneth (Tom) Mackenzie (Cambridge) joined us in September. In the coming academic year our full-time Teaching Fellows Dimitra Kokkini and Antony Makrinos will continue to replace colleagues on leave and ensure that the Department can offer a wide variety of stimulating and well-taught modules. Further, the administrative side of the Department has also seen some changes: when Ana Higginson noticed her dream job elsewhere in Europe while on her year abroad (see report later on), she could not resist and left us after little more than a year (in which she was a great support). We used this occasion to reorganize the tasks within the administrative team: David Alabaster was promoted and now looks after events, finances, MA students and research projects; we welcomed a new administrative assistant, Stephanie Dutton (joining us from another part of UCL), who is dealing with general enquiries and BA students. Finally, after five years in the role, our Departmental Manager, Mary Moloney, felt that it was time to move on: she started the post of SLMS Executive Officer in the Office of the Vice Provost (Health) in October, and a replacement for her has just arrived. We welcome all new colleagues and wish all those leaving us all the best for their future careers (you can learn more about each individual later on in this Newsletter).

Despite all these changes over the last few months, the Department has continued its various activities in all the usual areas. All academic colleagues have again been very active in teaching, researching and other projects (see their individual staff pages on the departmental website). Both staff and research students organized numerous conferences on Greek, Latin and reception topics (some in collaboration with the “Centre for Research on the Dynamics of Civilisation”), ranging from Greek Poetry, the epic poet Valerius Flaccus, the god Dionysus to Hannah Arendt and the reception of the Classics in Latin America. We have welcomed academic visitors and visiting students. The annual Housman lecture was delivered by Professor Maurizio Bettini (Siena), on cultural images of “translation” in Rome (for an overview of all Housman Lectures to date see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/events/HousmanLecture). The annual Greek Play faced particular challenges this year since the long-standing venue, the UCL Bloomsbury Theatre, was closed for refurbishment and asbestos removal. Thanks to the efforts of the academic advisor, Rosa Andújar, and the students involved, an alternative venue could be found, the Logan Hall in the UCL Institute of Education. The chosen play was an intriguing one: Menander’s Dyskolos, the best preserved of the comic poet’s dramas, which mostly only survive in fragments and are therefore rarely seen on stage (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/classical-play/archive/2016Dyskolos). The audience was very impressed by the play, both by the staging and by the accompanying lectures (for more on the Greek Play see notes from the director and the assistant director). In the coming academic year the Bloomsbury Theatre will still be closed, but with support from other parts of UCL it has been possible to secure the Shaw Theatre (next to the British Library) as an alternative venue, where students will produce Sophocles’ Antigone in early February; preparations are already being made, and we are very much looking forward to the event. There will also be a Housman Lecture on a Greek topic and a range of conferences, which are open to everyone with an interest in the ancient world (check the departmental website for programmes and registration details). We continue to enjoy funding from the A. G. Leventis Foundation for some of these initiatives, for which we are very grateful.

Apart from staging the Greek Play, our students have been busy studying (we hope), most of them at UCL and some at universities elsewhere in Europe while on their year abroad (see report later on). At any rate our undergraduate finalists again finished with excellent results, several were put on the Dean’s list in recognition of their outstanding results or received departmental prizes. We wish them Continued overleaf...
good luck with the next steps of their lives and are keen to hear back from them once they have settled into new roles. The Classics Society remains active in organising events for undergraduate students and representing them; results of student surveys remain positive. Plans to improve the appearance of the common room by putting up more posters and changing furniture are under way and there will be some additions to the departmental library, partly as a result of bequests. There was also a good group of eager MA students, who have just handed in their dissertations on exciting topics from archaic Greece to different forms of reception in the modern world. Each year a number of our BA students go on to do an MA (at UCL or elsewhere) and some MA students move on to do a PhD. It is encouraging to see the passion for the subject that drives students to carry on despite economic challenges. PhD students have made important contributions to the Department’s undergraduate teaching, for instance, by allowing us to run intensive language courses, and have organized conferences and run their own research seminar. Again, several research students completed their PhDs, and a considerable number of those managed to get posts in other universities immediately, which is a remarkable achievement in the current competitive climate.

In addition to more narrowly defined academic endeavours, the Department regards it as important and as part of its mission to promote Classics not only by lectures and public events, but also to school children, who otherwise may not have the chance to learn about the ancient world and might thus be motivated to study it at university. As Peter Agócs, the Department’s Widening Participation and Schools Liaison Officer, and Antony Makrinos explain elsewhere in this Newsletter, we again ran our now well-established summer schools (Ancient World, Homer), including a number of special events, as well as Taster Days and Open Days.

It has been another good and busy year, in which all members of the Department, each in their own way, have made progress with their personal projects and contributed to the overall success of the Department, which altogether turns the Department into the pleasant and flourishing place that it is. We hope that things will continue to thrive in the coming academic year despite the uncertain political situation and ongoing developments of UCL structures and buildings. As far as we are concerned, we are not planning any further changes, but rather intend to enhance and improve further what we have been doing. We are always open for enquiries and welcome everyone at our events. So we hope to hear from you or see you over the coming year!

Gesine Manuwald
Head of Department

Ancient World Summer School

This year, for the fourth time, the Department of Greek and Latin organised an Ancient World Summer School for secondary-school students interested in studying the ancient world. The aim of the Summer School, which is funded by the UCL Widening Participation and Undergraduate Recruitment Office (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/widening-participation/wp-home), is to give participants a clearer idea of what is involved in studying our subject at University level. It also provides them with a taste of the complex patchwork of the ancient Mediterranean world, from Egypt to the Near East, the Greeks and the Romans, in an environment that is hopefully stress-free, fun and intellectually challenging.

The programme this year included talks from Departmental faculty (Stephen Colvin on the Roman alphabet, Maria Wyke on Cleopatra, and Marigold Norbye on ancient literacy and the transmission of texts) as well as postgraduate students (including Luke Richardson, Trinidad Silva, Emily Lord-Kambitsch, Vasileios Boutsis, Oliver Schwazer, Victoria McVicar and Liz McKnight) who spoke on topics close to their ongoing research. The Summer School was organised by our PhD student Tzu-I Liao, who submitted her thesis on Greek oratory this summer; her work and that of our several student helpers, who accompanied the students, got to know them, answered their questions and organised various activities to break the ice, deserves great thanks from all of us.

As well as lectures and seminars, there were two museum visits, one to the Petrie Museum and the other to the Greek and Roman galleries of the British Museum. The atmosphere was light and stimulating, and the students made friends and enjoyed their time at UCL. Widening participation is a particularly important aspect of these events: they are designed to encourage students from more economically deprived backgrounds to apply to university courses, and to expand the social range of our undergraduate student intake, which they have arguably done to a degree. This work is both essential to the health of Classics as a discipline in the modern world and to our Department’s ability to realise the real aims of the university as a place of learning and free enquiry open to all.

We hope to repeat the Ancient World Summer School again next year. Anyone interested in attending or with ideas for programmes that could encourage more students to study the ancient world can write to Dr Peter Agócs (p.agocs@ucl.ac.uk), the Department’s Outreach Officer.

Dr Peter Agócs
Lecturer in Greek Literature and Outreach Officer
“Homer in Modern Poetry” and “Homer Re-Imagined”

Yet again, the Summer School in Homer 20016 proved to be a great success, not only teaching classes dedicated to the Homeric Epics and its reception but well-complemented by several events and lectures engaging with the role of Homer in the modern world. Thursday evening in particular held host to two fantastic artistic interpretations: “Homer in Modern Poetry” and “Homer Re-imagined”.

Nicole Moy has since met with Elinor Garnett, the female voice that accompanied Dr Antony Makrinos and musician Belinda E.S. in the reading of Homer in Modern Poetry to explore how the piece came together.

So Elinor, when Antony first approached you to be a part of the reading, what aspect particularly appealed to you?

I have always been enthused by poetry recitation and took part in a number of competitions whilst at school, so I was particularly keen to be a part of this project, as I had not had the opportunity to indulge in it previously during my time at UCL. It is a shame to think that it seems to be such a rare art form. But of course, I was also drawn in by the fact that the project took Homer as its root: works which first sparked my love of Classics.

The final script was a compilation of poems, each of which was included in the final performance for a specific aspect of the original text that it highlighted. Yet, I understand that the artistic compilation of the poems was a particularly complex process. How did you initially seek to compose such a piece?

The most time-consuming part of the entire project was certainly deciding on our poems and arranging them to give coherent structure as a collection written across several centuries. We eventually decided to form the poems into a broadly chronological plot chiming with that of the Homeric epics – beginning with the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, and ending with the prospect of a new journey and nostos following Odysseus’ return.

Do you have a favourite poem from the performance?

I was especially struck by Ritsos’ Penelope’s Despair, which predates Atwood’s Penelopeiad in portraying a Penelope who differs from the conventional image of the faithful wife. Ritsos explores a Penelope frustrated and appalled by Odysseus who eventually returns as an old man; she has lost twenty years and the husband who sailed away. I think it shows the vital importance for modern writers to both engage with, and adapt ancient epic to a modern audience. However, if pressed I would have to pick Cavafy’s Ithaca as my favourite. Not only do I find Ithaca greatly powerful and moving, for it speaks to all about life’s journey but I was also pleased with our performance of the piece. Whilst I recited the English translation to the accompaniment of Belinda’s wonderful music, Antony spoke the Modern Greek in hushed tones as an echo underneath. That final performance encapsulated our aim: focus on modern poetry, which draws on and adapts Homer.

The performance incorporated three individuals: the male and female voices, and the composer. Compared to previous years, this piece placed more emphasis on the aural, rather than the physical, aspects of the artistic interpretation of Homer. In the discussion afterwards, several comments were made on how powerful and moving this was. What is it about the poetic style that you think provoked such a strong reaction in the audience?

I believe that voice is a hugely powerful tool, which can affect and move readily if employed in skilful fashion. Of course, much of the poetry that we had chosen – including pieces based on Homer’s emotional climaxes – lent itself to moving performance. Although, it was certainly challenging to balance two voices alongside piano music; not only did we have to find a harmony between the male and female voices but also it was a further challenge to project and recite over the top of the piano. The improvisatory nature of Belinda’s music meant that as a reader one had to make executive decisions about when to speak and when to pause for musical interludes. Yet we hope that we found the right balance with her music, which perfectly captured the tone of each piece and vocal expression.

However, it was not only the spoken word that the events engaged with, as shortly after the recital, the audience were invited to visit an exhibition of works produced by students of the UCL Slade School of Fine Art, who compiled an impressive display of 12 visual artistic creations that drew inspiration from the performance, and/or other aspects of the Homeric epics and their reception. Nicole spoke to Natalie Kynigopoulou and Michela De Nichilo, the two organisers of the exhibition, to see how their creative processes differed.

It was Antony who first approached you and proposed a collaboration between the Department of Greek and Latin and the Slade to create this visual engagement with Homeric epic and its reception, complementing the reading of Homer in Modern Poetry. What aspect of Homeric epic particularly inspired you to organize such an exhibition?

The fact that the Iliad and the Odyssey offer us significant messages in relation to modern morality, psychology and philosophy and a deeper understanding of the human condition renders Homeric epics an exciting and flexible artistic stimulus. Although this relationship is a challenge to us, the timeless and universal messages drawn hold something very compelling, as in our field, we often strive to find broader connections within different historical, political and social topics to establish links between past and present. This was then extended by the artists to explore how these connections link fiction, mythology and our surroundings and how storytelling can be used as a means to talk about broader interests in relation to our practice.

The Homeric epics and ideas have been a consistent
inspiration for artists - what do you think is the particular appeal of these works to modern visual arts? Will this continue to be the case in years to come?

Certainly. The simple fact that some of the most relevant themes in the Homeric work are the concept of war, the idea of journey back home or to any safe place (which has probably never been more relevant than nowadays in relation to the refugee crisis) and the human condition in general. These themes make the Homeric poems timeless.

Personally I was struck by the diversity of media and perspectives across various artists from a similar stimulus. How did you draw this group of artists together and select the pieces to be shown?

A call was sent to all first and second year students in the Fine Art Media Group years at the Slade, and some expressed their interest in joining the exhibition. Some works were specifically made for this, whereas other participants used past works that already shared some relation to Homer. Bringing these works together and understanding how they could relate felt more like a collaboration.

The collaborative nature also likely stemmed from the fact that the project came together very quickly. But will there be any afterlife for the project?

Although using different media and approaches, our work is influenced by the surrounding world and contemporary events; it is then very luckily that we will explore the same or very similar themes and concept present in the Homeric poems for future work. However, it is always very exciting to explore contemporary themes starting from a different source and point of view. The main thing that this project demonstrated to us is the importance for different departments to come together and create new and exciting opportunities. We hope that this does happen more often in the future.

Nicole Moy
Secretary of the Summer School in Homer 2016
For one more year the Summer School's afternoon events concluded with an evening performance and a reading of “Homer in Modern Poetry” in English with excellent reader Elinor Garnett, Dr Antony Makrinos and with live piano accompaniment by Belinda É. S. The event was open to the public and the members of the audience were moved by the beauty of the Greek and British poems. For the first time this year, the students of the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL have put together an exhibition called “Homer re-imagined” as a response to the reading event. The exhibition was curated by Dr Antony Makrinos and the Slade students Natalie Kynigopoulou and Michela De Nichilo and was sponsored by the Summer School in Homer. It included video installations, objects, sculptures, performances, photographs and paintings all created by the students and it was open to the public.

The students of the Summer School in Homer have once more stated their support for the Summer School and they praised its organisation, all the events and all the teachers. They have been very eager to support the introduction of the Hittite and they have underlined that they would like to see a new course next year (perhaps a Linear B class). Again there were very supportive comments on the performance of Modern Poetry based on Homer and the audience have openly expressed their enthusiasm for the lively reading, the live music and the wonderful poems. They have also asked for similar events to be repeated in the future as part of the concluding day of the Summer School. Finally, all participants were very appreciative of the high quality of teaching and they have all praised their teachers and reported that they have learned a lot from them. As the Director of the Summer School, I wish to thank the CA for offering 4 bursaries to the students of the Summer School, our speakers for the engaging talks and discussions, the Secretary of the Summer School Nicole Moy for her help, support and professionalism, our charismatic reader Elinor Garnett, our talented composer Belinda É. S. and all those who helped in their own ways and attended the Summer School.

In future we are planning to increase the number of our participants to 100 and we will try to engage more with schools and invite more school children to participate. We are planning to hold a fourth Summer School in Homer (17 - 21 July 2017) at UCL, for which preparations have already started.

For more details about the Summer School in Homer 2016, please visit our website: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/events/summerschoolinhomer or contact Dr Antony Makrinos a.makrinos@ucl.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7679 4576.

Dr Antony Makrinos
Director of the Summer School in Homer

UCL GREEK PLAY – MENANDER’S DYSKOLOS

The Department of Greek and Latin, UCL presented a production of Menander’s Dyskolos at the Logan Hall on 10 - 11 February 2016. In a modern translation by Maurice Balm, the play was a true discovery for many students to whom Menander was hardly known. Despite the numerous practical issues encountered due to the closure of the Bloomsbury Theatre, the creative team of the annual classical play managed to put on stage a production that presented the main features of Menander’s theatre. Selling around 500 tickets, Menander’s Dyskolos succeeded in pleasing both scholars and students.

The aim of the production was to underline the theatrical and cultural value of Menander’s comedies that are rarely performed. The creative team tried to apply a very authentic approach towards the text in order to underline the literary qualities of the play. Music was also an essential part of the production. Various pieces of flute from French composers of the twentieth century such as Claude Debussy and Arthur Honegger gave the impulse of the fast and light rhythm that plays like Dyskolos project.

Costumes and set design included references to antiquity, seventeenth century pastorals and modern times in order to give a timeless dimension to the play.

In February, the cast participated in the festival of ancient drama in Messene to perform in an ancient theatre in front of Greek students. Even if the performance was interrupted by some French tourists, who walked on stage, the actors managed to take advantage of this. Their improvisations met with great success among the audience. They made use of the space-which was extremely different from the Logan Hall- in a very effective way.

Last year’s Greek play was a great opportunity to perform the play of an author who deserves a central place in the world of Classics. But for the students of the department, it was also an opportunity to experience one of the many strengths of ancient drama: the capacity to create a concrete and powerful representation of nature. As Victor Hugo writes: “A play is someone. It is a voice that talks, a thought that enlightens, a conscience that warns.”

Hippolyte Broud
Director of Dyskolos

For more details about the Summer School in Homer 2016, please visit our website: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/events/summerschoolinhomer or contact Dr Antony Makrinos a.makrinos@ucl.ac.uk +44 (0)20 7679 4576.

Dr Antony Makrinos
Director of the Summer School in Homer

Summer School in Homer 2016

Greek Play 2016

Newsletter 2016
Menander and Modern Productions of Ancient Greek Drama

Menander (342-290 BC) is the best-known representative of Athenian New Comedy (appr. 320-260 BC). He is said to have written 105 or 108 comedies, though supposedly winning only 8 recorded prizes for his plays. Besides the considerable number of publications during the past 40 years, theatrical productions have not exceeded 40 worldwide, mainly due to the fragmentary state of Menander’s comedies. As a result, only three of his comedies have been put on stage: Dyskolos, Epitreponotes and Samia. These three plays are more complete, but still are not available in their entirety. They have been produced by theatrical organizations, broadcasting companies, philological societies, schools and colleges in Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, America and Australia. Nevertheless, the 19 productions of Dyskolos since 1959 seem insignificant compared to hundreds of productions of Aristophanes and tragedy every year.

Papyri and artistic monuments indicate the great popularity of Menander in antiquity, from the end of the fourth century when Menander produced his comedies until the sixth or seventh century AD. Although Menander was still extremely popular with later generations, with the scholar Aristophanes of Byzantium (c.257-180 BC) placing him second only to Homer, his plays were becoming continually less available, and they were eventually lost in the eighth and ninth centuries. Short passages were cited in anthologies, grammarians and lexica, and in other surviving authors of antiquity; some further extracts have come down to us in Plutarch’s Comparison between Aristophanes and Menander, in an anonymous comparison between Menander and Philistion, through the adaptation of Menandrean plays by Terence and Plautus, and through a collection of famous quotations attributed to Menander, the Sententiae Menandri. The rediscovery of Menander in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries put the great playwright back on the map of scholarly interest and modern theatrical productions. Indeed, the twentieth century was called “The century of Menander” by Arnott due to the spectacular papyrological discoveries. As a result, a great number of new publications are now available. Dyskolos came to light in 1952 almost in its entirety, together with Aspis and Samia, when a papyrus codex of the third century AD (the ‘Bodmer Codex’) was found in Egypt. It was first published in 1958.

Sadly, Menander and New Comedy are hardly known to theatregoers and even to theatrical practitioners. Aristophanes and the three great tragedians (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides) dominate modern productions of ancient drama in Greece, Cyprus and worldwide. In light of this, we were delighted to have the opportunity to showcase Menander’s Dyskolos at UCL for the first time in UCL’s history.

Kyriaki Ioannidou
Assistant Director and Academic Advisor of Dyskolos

The UCL Greek Play in the Festival of Greek Drama at Messene, Greece
"From Song to Book: Performance and Entextualisation in Ancient Greek Literature and Beyond"

This summer the Department, with the kind support of UCL Institute of Advanced Studies, the UCL Octagon Grants Fund and the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, hosted a three-day conference (29 June – 1 July) on the role and conceptualisation of text as a cultural object in epic, drama and lyric from Homer to the Hellenistic age. Our speakers focused on questions like the relation of traditional oral to written narrative, on modes of allusion in what was still substantially an oral performance culture, on the relationship of text to performance and on the questions of authenticity, voice and the history of genres. The conference was organised by Naomi Scott, who two weeks later defended her PhD, supervised by Chris Carey, on the genre-poetics of Aristophanic comedy (“Defining the Comic Plot: Genre and Storytelling in Aristophanes”) and its success was a tribute to her hard work and ambition.

The conference was well attended and attracted speakers from the United States and the United Kingdom on a wide range of genres and authors that extended beyond Classical Greece to include a paper on medieval French vernacular poetry and song. On the first day, Richard Janko (formerly at UCL and now at the University of Michigan) gave a moving, rich and exciting paper on the legacy of Milman Parry and Albert Lord and their comparative study of Homer and South Slavic epic, as it was been redefined in the neglected work of the Bosnian scholar Zlatan Colakovic (1955-2008). Lawrence Kowerski (Hunter College) spoke on elegy arguing for a much later date for the collection of Theognis’ elegies on the basis of stylistic comparison with other poetry-collections.

On the second day, Niall Slater (Emory University) gave a stimulating reconstruction of why and how the texts of Athenian Old Comedy were entextualised as part of theatrical practice, and of the relation of text to performance and reperformance. UCL PhD student Naomi Scott spoke on “Text, Intertext and Performance in Aristophanes”, arguing that the plays contain allusions not only to comic texts, but also to the stagings and theatrical techniques of other Aristophanic plays and to Aristophanes’ Athenian rivals. David Fearn (Warwick) gave a very interesting comparison of the encomiastic language and tropes of Gorgias’ “Encomium of Helen”, one of the earliest surviving influential texts of Greek rhetoric, in comparison to those used by lyric praise-poets, especially Pindar. Iwona Wieżel (KUL-John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) spoke on “Clash of Worlds: Orality and Textualisation in Herodotus’ Narrative” discussing the application of “natural narratology” to the performed historiographical prose of Herodotus.

On the third morning, Max Leventhal and Valeria Pace, both Cambridge PhD students, spoke on different aspects of voice and entextualisation in Hellenistic epigram and epic, respectively. In the afternoon, Thomas Hinton (Exeter), gave his talk on medieval French vernacular poetry, which was very exciting, particularly for those Classicists in the room who knew nothing about the possibilities for comparison between early Greek and medieval literature.

In general, the conference was particularly notable for the high quality of the discussion and dialogue, both after the individual papers and in the closing session, where we tried to draw the threads of discussion together. Naomi and her co-organiser Peter Agócs wish to thank our generous sponsors, our speakers, and also those who attended and who agreed (often at the last minute) to chair sessions: particularly Phiroze Vasunia (UCL), Nick Lowe (RHUL) and Ahuvia Kahane (RHUL). We learned a lot from our discussions with you and from your contributions.

Dr Peter Agócs
Lecturer in Greek literature
Revolutions and Classics

Revolutions and Classics, hosted by The Classical Reception Studies Network and the Legacy of Greek Political Thought Network with the support of the UCL Department of Greek and Latin and the Department of Classics at the University of Reading, was held at UCL on 22 July 2016. Inspired by recent trends in classical reception research, particularly on the political significances of antiquity for subsequent cultures and societies, this one-day workshop explored the manner in which classical texts and artefacts are deployed in modern societies undergoing radical change. The event brought together seven speakers from a range of academic disciplines, including Classics, French, and History, which resulted in a fruitful variety of theoretical and interdisciplinary perspectives. The audience of about 50 people included a healthy mix of established international scholars in Classical reception and postgraduate students from the US and UK. Papers analysed various revolutions from the seventeenth century to the present day in various national contexts, including England, France, the USA, and Mexico. A portion of the day was also devoted to discussion of teaching across classical reception, classics, and politics. Two sessions, one featuring early-career researchers and the other more seasoned scholars, featured five further papers addressing a range of important teaching issues, from incorporating classical reception within a wider context of liberal arts pedagogy to covering sensitive subjects in today’s classroom.

This one-day event thus combined important discussions of pedagogical matters with a timely research interest in the intersection between Classics and politics. One participant wrote the following of the experience: “I was there to hear most of the papers, and was impressed by their quality, variety, and overall coherence. I learned a good deal, in the course of the day, about classical aspects of the English, American, French and Mexican Revolutions, as well as about a twentieth century revolutionary movement. The talks on teaching provided a good moving picture of experiments with the curriculum.” Another participant commended the “intellectual and friendly atmosphere” that the workshop had created. The event was live tweeted, which can be accessed at https://twitter.com/hashtag/classicsrevns?src=hash.

Revolutions and Classics was organised by Rosa Andújar (UCL) and Barbara Goff (Reading). The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of the A. G. Leventis Fund at UCL, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the Classical Association, the UCL Institute for Advanced Studies, and the Council of University Classics Departments (CUCD).

What is Latin about Latin America?

Why are the diverse modern nations created from the overthrow of Iberian rule in the Americas known as Latin America? This public cross-disciplinary symposium, held at UCL on 21st May 2016 and organised by Rosa Andújar (UCL Greek and Latin), Nicola Miller (UCL History) and Andrew Laird (Warwick/Brown), aimed to engage members of the public in a discussion about the role of Graeco-Roman classical legacies in the history and culture of the Americas. The event brought together eight speakers from across Latin America, the United States and the UK from a range of disciplines including Classics, intellectual and international History and Latin American Studies. Across two panels, speakers debated the unifying label “Latin America” and explored the manner in which the world’s first modern Republics found non-colonial analogues and precedents in re-imaginings of European classical antiquity. In particular, speakers sought to draw attention to the multiple references to the Graeco-Roman classical world that appear in the art, architecture, literature, history, politics and public spaces of the Iberian Americas, which tend to be ignored in contemporary debates about the varying geo-political causes of the term.

This symposium thus not only offered an opportunity to explore the significance and impact of European classical antiquity in Latin America, but it also debated what the implications for our understanding of the idea of civilisation. The talks stimulated a wide-ranging general debate, among an audience of about 45 people, about one third of whom were native Latin Americans. The event was filmed and the video will be posted online on a dedicated Wordpress site for wider dissemination. The event was largely made possible thanks to a Small Research Grant from the UCL Centre for Research on the Dynamics of Civilisation (CREDOC).

Dr Rosa Andújar
Deputy Director of Liberal Arts and Lecturer in Liberal Arts at King’s College London
Teaching as a PGTA in the Department of Greek and Latin

The Department of Greek and Latin provides students with the opportunity to gain valuable teaching experience as Postgraduate Teaching Assistants throughout their PhD programme. In addition to the subject-specific induction training organized by the Department, UCL’s Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) offers PGTAs further training sessions for teaching through the scheme called UCL Arena One.

Working as a PGTA on Beginners’ Greek under the supervision of Dr Antony Makrinos has offered me a unique opportunity to explore different teaching approaches and techniques for active learning. Beginners’ Greek involves learning grammar rules, memorising lists of vocabulary, completing exercises and translating from ancient Greek into English. From this description the course appears to be very demanding and a little overwhelming but it is actually made very enjoyable by the inductive-contextual teaching method employed. From the very beginning learners are exposed to the ancient language: they are asked to read texts in ancient Greek which gradually become more complex and which are always followed by footnotes giving information about the context of the readings. Students can then extract the meaning of words and phrases from the context and inductively assimilate recurrent grammatical forms.

The integration of reading, grammar and cultural materials inspires a constructive sense of enthusiasm in the classroom and stimulates curiosity in the students. I was pleasantly surprised to see how lively a language class can be: learners had questions not only about grammar rules but also about Greek life and civilization, which stimulated an open discussion.

Finally, thanks to what has by now become a tradition for Beginners’ Greek, namely the special class at the Petrie Museum at the end of the course, the students were able to engage directly with ancient artefacts from Roman Egypt and to use their knowledge of Greek to decipher inscriptions, identify grammatical phenomena learnt in class and even detect and correct ancient spelling mistakes. Object-based learning is an innovative teaching method, which makes ancient Greek language come alive to modern students.

It goes without saying that the Beginners’ Greek classes have been extraordinarily stimulating for me as well: they have enhanced my communication and presentation skills and, above all, they have helped me deepen my intellectual grasp of the subject.

Should a PhD student read this article, I would give them the following piece of advice: the opportunity to teach as a PGTA during the course of your doctoral studies is definitely worth taking not only because it adds to your CV and helps you enter the academic job market but also because it is an extremely rewarding, enjoyable and formative activity to do alongside your thesis work.

Angela Paschini
PhD Student

Object-Based Learning and Greek for Beginners at the Petrie Museum
A year abroad as a UCL Erasmus student in Siena

For my 2015-16 Year Abroad placement, I studied at the University of Siena. I had chosen Siena because it is a small city and because of its location in Tuscany (how difficult can it be to spend a year in Tuscany?), and with the hope I would see the world famous Palio at the end of my placement.

I moved out in mid September. Having totally failed to navigate the Italian university website I had therefore no idea when term began. On arrival I found out I was a week ahead of international induction week and so set out to find a flat inside the city walls! Siena is a gorgeous medieval city, complete with medieval ramparts and traditional narrow streets converging at the centre in the Piazza del Campo, the largest medieval square in Europe.

With induction week arriving so did a language course, Erasmus Student Network nights out and attempts to follow my first Italian lectures. I remember writing down at the top of my notepad “IT’S TOTALLY OKAY IF YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING” and left the room dazed, with my respect for anyone studying in a second language at least quadrupled. Over the following weeks, classes became easier to follow, the variety of accents easier to distinguish and academic vocabulary finally began to sink in. I made a network of international and Italian friends and we often met in the Campo for a slice of pizza and a beer or gelato. The highlight of ERASMUS for me was the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of Siena combined with the welcoming and hospitable Italian culture which has left me with friends for life, both Italian and international.

Of course, it was not all sunshine and gelato. Studying away from home in a second language is hard, academically and emotionally and the whole experience taught me to be a more flexible and capable problem solver! Siena is not well connected, but with my problem-solving skills in use, I managed to plan weekend adventures away, exploring Tuscany, Rome and beyond. Many international friends left after first semester and taking trips to visit them in their homes opened up even more travel opportunities.

The year culminated in summer exams and the Palio. But with the stress of those over, the city erupted into colour, with drumming and contrada flags on every street. The city is split into 17 districts, 10 of which compete in a medieval horse race (called “il Palio”) around the edge of Piazza del Campo, in July and August every year. I stayed long enough to experience the parades, which saw 60,000 people packed into the Campo. The atmosphere was incredible and the Lupa Contrada won (for the first time in 36 years!).

To sum up, my ERASMUS experience was 10/10 and I would definitely do ERASMUS all over again!

Hayley Russell
YA Student
Nicolò Benzi has joined the Department as a Teaching Fellow in Classical Philosophy. He was born and educated in Bologna, Italy. After completing a BA in Electronic Engineering, he took a BA and an MA in Philosophy at the University of Bologna. He then did a PhD in Classics at Durham University, where he graduated with a dissertation entitled “Philosophy in Verse: Competition and Early Greek Philosophical Thought”. Before coming to UCL, he spent one year at Trinity College Dublin as the Newman Research Fellow in the Trinity Plato Centre. His research focuses on the intersection of Greek philosophy and literature. In particular, his work explores the complex interactions between philosophy, drama and epic, by situating these genres in the context of their cultural production.

Kenneth (Tom) Mackenzie has joined the Department as the new A. G. Leventis Teaching Fellow. Originally from London, he completed his undergraduate (2009) and Master’s (2010) degrees in Classics at Oxford. He then spent two years as an English teacher in London at Pimlico Academy, as part of the Teach First programme. After realising that his thirst for Greek literature had yet to be quenched, he returned to Oxford in 2012 to embark on a doctorate, which he completed in 2015. He then spent a year as a Teaching Associate in Greek Literature at Cambridge before coming to UCL. His main research interests focus on the intersection between Greek literature and philosophy. He intends to spend the fellowship completing two monographs: one, arising from his doctoral thesis, will be a literary study of the Presocratic philosopher-poets, Parmenides and Empedocles; the other will investigate the relationship between poetry and the theories of poetics developed by philosophers during the Hellenistic period. He writes: “I am delighted to be returning to my hometown to conduct this research in such a dynamic department at one of the world’s great universities.”

After four years as the first A. G. Leventis Research Fellow, Rosa Andújar will be leaving UCL Greek & Latin for a permanent lectureship at King’s College London. Rosa says about her time at UCL: “My time at UCL has been particularly fruitful: not only have I been able to expand significantly my research on Greek tragedy but I have also developed a second major research strand on Hellenic Classicisms in modern Latin America. In both these areas, I have benefited from the wisdom of brilliant colleagues and the enthusiasm and intellect of Greek & Latin students.” One of her proudest achievements during her tenure at UCL has been her role as academic adviser to four brilliant productions of ancient Greek tragedies and comedies, whose successes have led to reperformances elsewhere in the UK and in Greece. Rosa writes: “I am grateful for all these opportunities, and especially for the warm support and friendship that I have received from everyone at Greek and Latin. I will miss everyone dearly, but luckily I will be only a mile away!”

Jenny Bryan joined the Department as a Lecturer in Classical Philosophy in 2010. She had read Classics at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. She remained in Cambridge for her graduate and postdoctoral work. She works on Ancient Philosophy, with a focus on Presocratic and Platonic epistemology. At present, she is working on articles on several topics, including Xenophon’s Socratic writings and Parmenides’ physics, and collaborating in a project on the Platonic Epistles. After five years Jenny will be leaving UCL Greek & Latin for a permanent lectureship at Manchester.

Mary Moloney joined the Department as Departmental Manager in November 2011 and will take up a new post on 17 October 2016 in the Office of the Vice Provost (Health) in the UCL School of Life and Medical Sciences. She writes: “Although I am excited about the new challenge ahead, I shall really miss the wonderful staff, students and alumni in Greek and Latin. However, I hope often to return for the Greek Play (unmissable!), the Housman lecture and other alumni events. It has been an eventful five years and I would like to wish everyone in the Department and my successor all the best in the future.”

Bright Beginnings

Fond Farewells