Welcome to the first issue of the Institute of Classical Studies newsletter!

For those who don’t know us already we are a small research institute dedicated to supporting every kind of research in the Classics. We were founded in 1953 by the University of London and the Hellenic and Roman Societies. The Combined Library that we have built together since then now has more than 150,000 volumes in it and remains at the heart of our operations. The Institute has for years been a place where London-based classicists, from the colleges and the museums and lay members of the societies, worked together. Now, along with the other Institutes of the School of Advanced Study, we are centrally funded by the UK government to provide resources for researchers from all over the country, and of course beyond. We do this with seminars and conferences, with publications and public engagement, by organizing research training and most of all by providing a space for collaborative work. We are happy to be the physical home for many of our learned societies and we are building a virtual home for some of them too.

So why a newsletter and why now? Because most of what we do involves partnerships and collaboration. That makes communication vital, and we want to do it in different media. We already have a website and now also a blog; a facebook page; we use twitter; and of course there are the formal annual reports. But not everyone likes social media or formal reports, and sometimes a few pages tell the story better in any case.

This newsletter picks out a few highlights from the past year:

- There is some news from the Library about how we are improving services for readers with the aid of a legacy from the late John Casey, a big figure in Roman Britain and an expert on late Roman coinage (p.2).
- There is news too on some of this year’s visitors, and on an event about Thucydides that one of them organized (pp.3-4).
- Dr Liz Potter writes about some of our latest publications (p.5).
- Dr Gabriel Bodard introduces our programme in Digital Classics (p.6).
- Dr Emma Bridges writes about her work building a public engagement programme (p.7).
- Finally, a few words about FIEC 2019, a world Classics conference that took place in London in July. Like the Saecular Games it doesn’t come around often, but it was a splendid and uplifting gathering (p.8).

We hope you will find this interesting. If there is something you would like us to cover in future issues, please do write to me at Director.ICS@sas.ac.uk.

With best wishes, Greg Woolf, Director.
The Library

The Combined Classics Library is jointly owned and managed by the Institute of Classical Studies, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies and the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies. It is open for postgraduate students and academics in Classics, as well as members of the Societies. Here we focus on some of the development work we undertook in 2019.

In 2019 the library has been fortunate to receive generous funding from both the Leventis Foundation and the Classical Association. The Classical Association has funded us to continue and extend the COACS (Cataloguing Open Access Serials) project. Please see p.6 for further details about this work.

The support from the Leventis Foundation will pay for a digitization assistant for two years. We have appointed Aaron Fordwoh to this role, and in June he began the work of scanning items from the library’s collection. We are focussing on creating scans of rare and out of copyright works held by the library, as well as our manuscript collections. As we progress, we will make these available online for all to consult, broadening access to some unique parts of our collection. So far Aaron has made scans of 44 tract volumes and 16 manuscripts from the library’s collection. This is the equivalent of 34,000 pages or 10 million words! If it were one scroll of paper it would be roughly 712 kilometres long. Some of the challenges he has faced so far include faint text and crumbling paper, and in the case of some of our tracts we are very relieved to be able to preserve the content digitally before the paper falls apart!

Over the summer the library embarked on a significant project, funded by the Casey bequest, to convert all our books to RFID (radiofrequency ID) tags. A team of professional re-taggers worked in the library in August to retag every single book in the collection. This work raised a lot of dust, so afterwards the library had a much-needed deep clean!

This conversion will not only act as a complete inventory of our collection, but when completed will also make it easier for library staff to find mis-shelved items and to evaluate how the collection is being used. The new system will also enhance the security of the library books.

In July the library had a temporary exhibition on display, focusing on the Wood Collection held by the library. The Wood Collection contains a number of notebooks and sketchbooks from Robert Wood’s expedition to the Levant in 1750-51, much of which contributed to his publication The Ruins of Palmyra. The exhibition thus tied in with the summer issue of BICS, Remembering Roman Syria (see p.5 below). The accompanying documentation from the exhibition can still be seen on the library website: https://library.ics.sas.ac.uk/news/palmyra-london

The Digital Loeb Classical Library

This is now available both on-site and remotely for all library members. To access the resource members should log in to the library catalogue page with their credentials, search the catalogue for ‘Digital Loeb Classical Library’ and click to connect to the resource.

Library stats

- Number of items in the collection: 157,021
- Current periodical titles taken: 702
- Books added to the collection in 2018-19: 2,926
- Registered library users in 2018-19: 5,355
- Number of turnstile counts in 2018-19: 51,478
- Pages scanned for readers and other libraries: 9,694

Exchanges

The library has strong links with other organizations around the world, exchanging copies of the ICS’ and Societies’ publications for publications produced by libraries, museums, universities, professional associations and individual scholars to enhance our collection. Some of those exchanges have been maintained from before the Second World War. In 2018-19:

- Countries with which we have exchanges: 50
- Number of exchange partners around the world: 500
- Number of periodical titles obtained by exchange: 466
- Number of monographs obtained by exchange: 157

Library users in 2019.

A scanned page from Mabel Bent’s diaries.
Dr Maria Fragoulaki was a visiting fellow at the ICS last year, and organized the Thucydides Global workshop in April 2019.

Why is Thucydides so present today?

His name crops up in political speeches, in twitter, in newspaper op-ed pieces and now even on the stage. There have been classicists who idolised him as the perfect historian, “The Master” in Simon Hornblower’s phrase. But much of his modern notoriety comes from the prominence given him by the controversial political theorist Leo Strauss. It is a particular Thucydides who has grabbed our attention today, and a frightening one too. The “Thucydides Trap” attributes to him the thesis that war becomes inevitable when a rising power unsettles an established superpower. The most frequently cited quotation is “The strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must”, words put into the mouths of the Athenian envoys to the Melians when they offered them the choice between surrender and death.

How this modern, global Thucydides emerged was the central question of a workshop organized by Dr Maria Fragoulaki of Cardiff University who was visiting fellow at the Institute last year. Like some of the best workshops it was collaborative and interdisciplinary. Colleagues from Cardiff were joined by a group from the Ruhr University at Bochum, and also by Professor Neville Morley from Exeter, who led the pioneering AHRC-funded Thucydides Project on his reception, and has done more than anyone else to engage a wider public with the historian. The interdisciplinary element was supplied by commentators with a background in political science including one of our Tarrant Fellows, Professor Sara Monoson of Northwestern University.

Classics like Thucydides’ History have various uses. As a shared point of reference they can provide a privileged place for debating the big issues. One of the most gripping contributions was John Lignades’ presentation of staging Thucydides, in a production that was all about the current crisis in Greece. Classics also accumulate authority. We learned about Thucydides’ place in a canon of Great Books taught in US colleges after World War II, and about the labour spend by the legendary Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos to create a Modern Greek translation of Thucydides for the new Hellenic Republic. Classics are also meeting places: the literary theorist Morris Zapp, the historian Nicole Loraux and the Harvard political scientist Graham Allison each offered a radical reading of his text.

The best workshops leave participants not just better informed but also less sure of their preconceptions. Global Thucydides did all that.

Podcasts available!

Many of our lectures and events are available as podcasts from: https://ics.sas.ac.uk/events/podcasts

From 2018-19, you can watch lectures by Charlotte Roueché, Vance Watrous, Martin Revermann, Sara Monoson and Margaret Malamud, and by Phiroze Vasunia and Gabriel Zuchtriegel, which were run with the British Schools in Athens and Rome.
Visiting Scholars at the ICS

Every year the ICS welcomes visitors at all stages of their academic careers. During 2018-19 we had visitors from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, South Africa, the UK and the US. Two are profiled below.

Maria Fernández Portaencasa is writing a doctorate at the University Carlos III, Madrid under the supervision of Dr. Valentino Gasparini and Professor Jaime Alvar Ezquerra. Her visit builds on strong links between UC3 and the ICS: Professor Alvar and the ICS Director, Professor Greg Woolf, took part in an exchange last year sponsored by the Banco de Santander.

María’s research is part of a four-year project on ‘Lived Ancient Religion in North Africa’, which is funded by the Autonomous Community of Madrid. It takes as its focus the personal dimensions and local practice of religion in Roman Africa, rather than the study of religious institutions and collective ritual. During her visit to the Institute of Classical Studies, María was able to use the resources of the Combined Library to investigate conversion and other religious changes during Late Antiquity. Her aim is to show how local religious preferences were strongly influenced by shifting social networks, and changed over time to reflect specific historical contexts. Since her return to Madrid María has been helping to organise an international conference on the topic of the LARNA project which will take place there in May 2020.

Margaret Malamud, one of this year’s Dorothy Tarrant Fellows, is Professor of Ancient History and Islamic Studies at New Mexico State University. She is a world expert on the classical tradition and its reception, particularly within the USA. Following on from her latest book, *African Americans and the Classics: Antiquity, Abolition and Activism* (2016), she used her Fellowship to begin a new research project, extending her study of Classics and African American activism into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She has begun exploring how artists, poets and novelists committed to African American equality made use of classical sources in their activism and their creative work. Her Tarrant Lecture focused on uses of classicism in the visual arts, especially the traumatic life and extraordinary work of the sculptor Edmonia Lewis (pictured). Margaret’s lecture is available as a podcast on the ICS website at [https://ics.sas.ac.uk/events/podcasts](https://ics.sas.ac.uk/events/podcasts)

That lecture also provided a kick-start to a new ICS seminar series on Classical Reception co-organised by Dr Emma Bridges, our Public Engagement Fellow, and Dr Joanna Paul of the Open University, in conjunction with the Classical Reception Studies Network.

Research Associates

The ICS had 10 Research Associates during 2018-19: Drs Erica Angliker, Andreas Gabrielatos, Victoria Leonard, Ellie Mackin Roberts, Beth Munro, Emma Payne, Janet Powell, Holly Ranger, Caroline Spearing and Julietta Steinhauser. Congratulations to Emma Payne, who went on to a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship at KCL, and to Caroline Spearing, who got a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at Bristol.

Research Fellows

Dr Ilaria Bultrighini and Dr Camilla Norman were ICS Research Fellows last year. They worked alongside Professor Greg Woolf on the Humboldt-funded Sanctuary project, which explored the ways in which sanctuaries formed human experience and religious knowledge in the ancient world.
As part of its mission to promote and facilitate research, the ICS has published a journal, and associated supplements, since the mid-1950s. Here we focus on some of the work we’ve been doing this year to refresh our publications programme for the 2020s.

Relaunch with Oxford

We are delighted to announce that we are entering a publishing partnership with Oxford University Press (OUP). As of January 2020, OUP will publish all new issues of our journal BICS. OUP will also host the entire backlist of journal issues, as well as digitized versions of most BICS supplements.

Oxford University Press will give the journal worldwide marketing and distribution, alongside an internationally outstanding Classics list and a stable of high-quality humanities journals.

Our aim is that this new partnership will help to enhance the quality, profile and usage of BICS. We intend to extend further the impressive reach that our journal has achieved in the last decade. In the 2000s, BICS was available in print form only and had about 300 subscribers. BICS first went online in 2010 and subscriptions grew to 2,200. By 2015, they had grown to 4,109. The most recent figures show that 5,519 institutions have access to BICS via subscription or licenses of various sorts, with a further 7,939 institutions in the developing world offered low-cost or free access via philanthropic initiatives.

Themed issues of our journal, BICS

In our new partnership with OUP, we shall continue to build on the success of our themed issues. We have been publishing themed issues since 2017: each publication focuses on a particular topic, and is guest-edited by academic colleagues in collaboration with the ICS.

A themed issue of BICS thus combines the advantages of serial and standalone publishing. Each issue is part of an international series with an established readership and subscription base; it is also a distinct publication on a particular theme, which can be purchased on an individual basis. All issues become part of the BICS series which includes both recent themed issues and the journal’s long history of general issues. Subscribers can also link to related material from BICS supplements; and there is scope for promoting some material from each publication in a ‘virtual issue’, which makes a selection of articles freely accessible.

We look forward to collaborating with academic colleagues on future themed issues. Anyone interested in editing a themed issue is encouraged to contact Dr Liz Potter (elizabeth.potter@sas.ac.uk).

Our themed issues to date have been:

- BICS 60-1: Roman History: Six Studies for Fergus Millar, ed. Nicholas Purcell.
- BICS 62-1: Remembering Roman Syria, eds J. A. Baird and Zena Kamash.

Sign up for email alerts for new issues of BICS!

https://academic.oup.com/bics

Register for an account and sign in; then use the drop-down list at the top right of the screen to select Email Alerts. Select New issue alerts, and choose Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies from the list.
Digital Classics

The ICS is a national centre of expertise in digital methods in the study of antiquity. We offer both teaching and academic training in digital classics topics, advise on projects nationwide, promote open standards for digital research and infrastructure, and are involved with several major digital classics projects nationally and worldwide. Our recent teaching in digital classics is discussed below.

As part of our contribution to the Intercollegiate MA in Classics, Ancient History, Art and Archaeology, Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and Classical Reception, the ICS offers two one-semester modules: Digital Classics: Linking Written and Material Culture and Digital Approaches to Cultural Heritage: Places, Artefacts and Images.

Digital Classics is taught in the spring by Dr Gabriel Bodard, and focuses primarily on text, art, literature and language, including text encoding, image annotation, translation alignment, morphosyntactic annotation, computational linguistics and programming for text analysis, occasionally including some of palaeography, collaboration, pedagogy, philological tools, or data structuring and visualization. Digital Approaches to Cultural Heritage is run in the autumn by Dr Valeria Vitale, and focuses on material and cultural heritage from the classical world and beyond, and several key methods for studying these areas. Topics covered include geographic technologies (annotation, visualization and GIS), 3D imaging, modelling and printing, network analysis, and legal and ethical issues. This year our teaching has also benefitted from the expertise of British Academy Visiting Fellow Dr Usama Gad from Ain Shams University in Egypt, an expert in digital decolonization of Classics in the Arab world.

For both modules, students prepare a small digital project, which may involve one or more of the methods, tools or materials presented in the course, and demonstrate or assess the academic potential and limitations of the approach. These projects and short reports on the results are assessed for the module, and contribute to the students’ MA results.

These modules contribute to and draw on the international, collaborative Sunoikisis Digital Classics programme, hosted by Dr Monica Berti at Leipzig, that is made up of 25–30 sessions over three semesters, and presented online via YouTube. Scholars from universities and heritage institutions from the UK to Bulgaria, Georgia to Brazil, Iran to Canada, and Finland to Egypt contribute sessions. Two to three presenters in each session offer mixes of lecture, software- or web-demo, overviews of theoretical background, concrete project examples or case studies, and practical exercises.

In recent years, our students have built 3D reconstructions of buildings at Pompeii or other ancient sites, visualized geographic information in mapping software, encoded small epigraphic corpora, assessed the value of translation alignment to language learning, and built and queried small bodies of linguistically annotated ancient text. The quality of work has been very rich, and students have without exception risen to the challenge of approaching new and difficult materials as part of their Masters or later research.

Pelagios Network Association

Dr Valeria Vitale, ICS Research Fellow, has been elected as chair of the Pelagios Network Association, a long-running initiative that develops best practice in linking information online through common references to places. Pelagios is a formal network of equal and independent partners who coordinate their work. Partners—individuals and organizations working with geographic data in humanities disciplines and cultural heritage—agree under a Memorandum of Understanding to contribute to ongoing work that falls under the aegis of one or more of the Network’s activities.

Cataloguing Open-Access Classics Serials

The Cataloguing Open Access Classics Serials (COACS) project, run by the ICS in collaboration with the Hellenic and Roman Library, is working to produce catalogue records for journals, articles, and going forward also monographs that are freely available online. Readers and users of the Library’s catalogue should be able to find resources that are accessible to them whether they are on the physical bookshelves, available via paid subscription, or fully open access. The project employed Simona Stoyanova in the ICS to convert data from listings and web pages to MARC catalogue records, and has consulted with publishers, librarians and other heritage professionals on data standards and other technical needs.
Public Engagement

The ICS works to share current research in Classics with those who might not otherwise have opportunities to engage with academic scholarship. Our programme of public events enables us to reach audiences beyond academia, and we also support colleagues across the UK in developing their own public engagement activities.

Even Cerberus made the trip from the underworld for the Making Monsters book launch. (Image credit Simona Stoyanova)

Weaving Women’s Stories for the Being Human festival. (Image credit Emma Bridges)

The year opened with a launch event for *Making Monsters*, an anthology of speculative fiction and accessible academic essays themed around monsters from the ancient world. Edited by Emma Bridges and Djibril al-Ayad, the volume takes a creative approach to sharing academic research with a wider audience. Many attendees at the launch had embraced the monster dress code!

Halloween was a further opportunity for a costume party: on 31 October around 150 people attended our *Ancient Magic* event, which featured a series of short talks by colleagues whose research focuses on magical topics, along with hands-on activities themed around ancient magic. These included making ‘curse tablets’ and ‘curse dolls’ and a digital activity turning men into beasts with our very own Circe.

For the first time this year the ICS also organised a series of events as part of the Being Human festival, the UK’s only national festival of the humanities. Our *Weaving Women’s Stories* programme, hosted by St Margaret’s House in Bethnal Green, explored the connections between textile making and storytelling in women’s lives in the ancient world and beyond. It featured readings of new work by a group of performance poets, a drop-in event where families could try weaving, spinning and making clay loom weights, and a workshop led by a textile artist.

We also support public engagement work around the UK. Our small grants scheme, for example, supports projects designed to share research with the wider public. Projects funded in 2019 included: Athena’s Owls, led by Manchester-based students Kat Mawford and Matt Ingham, who run ancient-world themed craft and literacy workshops in public libraries; By Jove Theatre Company’s new work exploring a queer version of the myth of Orestes and Pylades; Susan Deacy’s project developing activities based on classical myth as a way of supporting autistic children; and Zofia Guertin’s graphic novella sharing research at Roman Aeclanum with visitors to the archaeological site.

Visit our blog to find out more about our public engagement work and other ICS activities: https://ics.blogs.sas.ac.uk/

Listen to a special episode of the Classics Confidential podcast about the research behind Weaving Women’s Stories: https://classicsconfidential.co.uk/2018/11/08/weaving/

Watch the talks from our Ancient Magic event online: https://www.sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/classics/ancient-magic

New visitor engagement materials at Aeclanum. (Image credit Zofia Guertin)
London Welcomes FIEC

This summer, the ICS was involved in a special event: the combined London meetings of the UK Classical Association and the Fédération internationale des associations d’études classiques (FIEC). Around 500 delegates attended, including speakers from nearly 40 countries, with strong representation from Eastern Europe, the Far East and Latin America.

ICS Summer School

In July 2020 the ICS will run a week-long summer school on 3D imaging and modelling methods for classicists and archaeologists. It will offer a mix of practical and theoretical sessions, and hands-on practice in imaging outdoor monuments and objects in local institutions.

Chair of ICS Advisory Council

Professor Catherine Morgan (All Souls College, Oxford) became Chair of the ICS Advisory Council in 2019, and will serve until 2022. We are delighted to be working with her.

Our warmest thanks to Dr Andrew Burnett (British Museum, pictured below) for having served as Chair previously, from 2014-2018.

Planning for the 2019 conference of FIEC had been going on for nearly a decade! The idea to bring the Fédération internationale des associations d’études classiques to the UK was that of Dame Averil Cameron, when she was President of the body that brings together about 80 classical associations from around the world. The local members of FIEC are the Hellenic and Roman Societies and the Classical Association: all contributed. The hosts were the entire London Classical community in the widest possible sense.

Now it is over, and we can count the success. We had around 500 delegates attending 87 panels on which around 35 countries were represented. There were seven plenary lectures, a movie night with live music, a boat trip down the Thames, an opera and quite a lot of partying.

Around the main events there was an exhibition of children’s art, a wikithon run by the Women’s Classical Committee, a display of replica writing by LatinNOW, a workshop run by the ERC and much else.

Getting everything ready took a lot of work, especially for the conference secretary Dr Dimitra Kokkini. By Sunday it was all running so smoothly she could leave us to it, and go and have her baby!

During four days we learned a lot about global Classics. Every panel was multi-national. We had many delegates from South America and the Far East as well as Europe, North America and Australasia. Involving more African classicists is the big challenge for the future. It has been an inspiring event and one that bodes well for Classics in the Twenty-First Century, the subject of our opening panel (pictured).

Sign up for email updates about ICS events at: https://ics.sas.ac.uk/about-us/subscriber-list