

Annual newsletter 2020



The Institute of Classical Studies in a time of Covid



This second annual ICS newsletter is written, and read, in strange times. Like most staff in the School of Advanced Study, ICS staff were largely working from home from mid-March 2020, some in and around London, others further afield. At one point we were dispersed from Canada and Dublin to Finland and Italy. I myself have spent most of the time in Scotland and I am writing this now from my desk in Fife, looking out over my apple trees. When I visited Bloomsbury briefly in the summer it was so eerily deserted that I avoided Russell Square for fear of Triffids. Senate House itself was as silent as a mausoleum. We are very aware of how fortunate we are to be able to do so much of our work from home.

Yet exile is exile all the same. We have missed seeing each other, and also seeing all our visitors, both the fellows, many of whom had to truncate or postpone their visits, and also colleagues from London and around the country too. ICS staff have kept in touch with each other via a bewildering variety of online tools and we occasionally have lunch "together" too. As in all UK universities there has been the gentle background buzz of Microsoft Teaming among the serafim as they plan and replan for whatever next year (or next week's government advice!) may bring.

Meanwhile teaching, training, supervision and examining has somehow worked out, and we have never stopped giving grants or publishing our journal and its supplements. But most of our summer events were cancelled or postponed, and although some will run after Christmas – face to face or online – it feels as if we have had a long dry spell. There have been a few unexpected pluses. The Zoom workshop run in June by Barbara Goff and Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis, 'Towards a More Inclusive Classics', had about one hundred attendees from around the world, a broader and much larger audience than we could ever have assembled in Senate House. This autumn most of our seminar

series also restarted on Zoom, and then there are some events including the major international conference 'Linked Pasts 6' which we cohost this year with the British Library in December.

The ICS-HARL library reopened to readers after several months of enforced closure: Joanna Ashe and her team were among the very few occupants of the building, organizing online resources, sending out postal loans, emailing scans of articles, running the click-and-collect service, answering readers' queries and all the while preparing familiar spaces for what was at first an unfamiliar reading experience for most Library users. We have welcomed a new intake of graduate students in September, at first virtually but we hope soon in person. And we look forward to coming back to Senate House, whenever that may be.

With best wishes,

Greg Woolf, Director.

For occasional e-mail updates about forthcoming events and the like you can subscribe for news at <http://ics.sas.ac.uk/about-us/subscriber-list>

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 the Librarian, Joanna Ashe, describes the unexpected events of 2019-20.

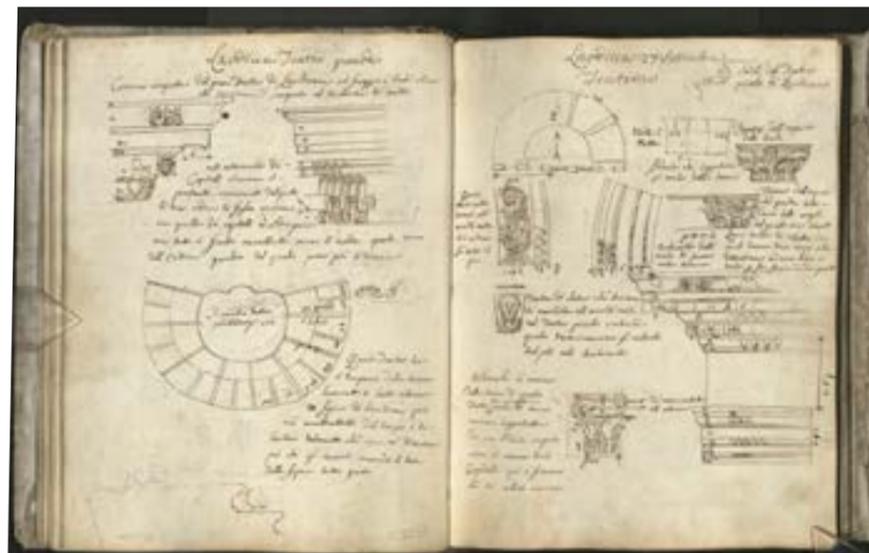
The library began 2019-20 with a large project to convert our book security system to an RFID (radio-frequency identification) system. This involved every single book in the library being re-tagged, which was done over the summer. New hardware and software was installed in the autumn term. This not only provides great security for the library stock, but also allows us to monitor use of library resources with much greater accuracy. Over time, this will help us to make evidence-based decisions about which items we need to relegate from the open shelves as the library fills up. The installation of a large bank of new shelving in the summer of 2019 bought us a little more time before that happens!

The library held two small exhibitions in the lobby outside the entrance over autumn and winter. The first was on classical monsters and their reception, and included items from the Ehrenberg collection as well as 3D printed copies. The second was on Troy, and included items from the library's special collections.

In March the realities of the global pandemic struck us rapidly, and we moved in a few days from thinking about reduced capacity and opening hours to realising that it would be necessary to close completely. Accordingly, the library closed to readers on the 19 March, and Senate House closed to staff on 20 March.

Library staff focussed their energy on making available electronic resources wherever possible, negotiating extra remote access to some resources, and signing up to the various temporary offers from publishers. We quickly created a web page identifying available open access resources (<https://library.ics.sas.ac.uk/open-access-resources>), and soon found this page appearing in similar lists from other libraries and institutions! During April-June we provided as much remote support as we could, making use of an international scanning collaborative, and conducting online research support where we were able to. From 6 July, library staff were able to get back into Senate House. We started to offer a postal loan and scanning service, as well as operating a 'click and collect' point three days a week for loans. All of these services were quickly taken up by our readers.

Our focus then turned to reopening our reading rooms. We opened in mid-September with a reduced number of spaces available in the library, which need to be booked in advance by readers. We have established cleaning schedules, PPE requirements, book quarantining, and distanced seating arrangements to keep readers and staff safe. As the capacity of the library is reduced, we will continue to offer the click and collect, postal loan and scanning services.



Wood 16, c1750-51: Theatre at Laodicea

The Library in lockdown and on re-opening

- Books requested by post in July: 147
- Click and collect loans requested in July: 180
- Items requested for scanning in July: 141
- New Twitter followers since lockdown: 628

Library stats

- Number of items in the collection: 159,037
- Current periodical titles taken: 701
- Registered library users in 2019-20: 5,072
- Pages scanned for readers and other libraries: 6,398

Leventis digitisation project

Work has continued this year on the digitisation project funded by the Leventis Foundation. The work had to pause over the months of the first full national lockdown, but started up again over the summer. The prolonged period of time when we were not able to access the library served to emphasise how much value this digitisation programme will bring.

Key statistics for the project:

- 2.24 TB of data
- 144 Volumes, 1,522 chapters (120 tracts, 24 manuscripts)
- 77,411 pages (72,578 tract pages, 4,833 manuscript pages)
- Approximately 21,288,025 words
- If it were one scroll of paper it would be roughly 1,703,042cm (1,703 kilometres)

Research students & associates

ICS staff supervise PhD students in their areas of research expertise, as well as teaching MA modules on Roman history and digital classics. There are also a cluster of ICS postdoctoral Research Associates, who are attached to the institute for 2-3 years. Here, two PhD students give us an insight into their research.

PhD researcher



Jordon Houston is a third year PhD research student studying at the Institute of Classical Studies under the supervision of Professor Greg Woolf and Dr John Pearce. Jordon's research project "Putting on a Show" focuses on the organisation and financing of Roman entertainment between the first and third centuries AD, making use of epigraphic, visual and literary sources. More specifically he analyses how the organisation and cost of gladiatorial combats, beast-hunts, chariot racing and agonistic festivals compared throughout the Empire. His aim is to show how entertainment being hosted outside of Rome was highly regionalised and often took advantage of infrastructures that were put in place to supply the city of Rome. It also demonstrates how these processes were refined over time as entertainment became a common gift to the public. His thesis aims to put prices on the necessary resources to host these games in terms of gladiators, exotic animals, racing horses and monetary prizes; and then to deconstruct the overall budgets often quoted in inscriptions. Jordon is also involved in the postgraduate journal *New Classicists* as a Senior Editor and Submissions Coordinator since its creation in 2018.

Research Associates

The ICS supports junior postdoctoral researchers in all areas of Classics. Our research associates are appointed in open competition and pursue their own projects as well as organising events and other activities at the ICS.

The ICS had 10 Research Associates during 2019-20: Drs Erica Angliker, Rhiannon Easterbrook, Andreas Gavrielatos, Elisa Groff, Ellie Mackin Roberts, Beth Munro, Janet Powell, Holly Ranger, Julietta Steinhauer and Polly Stoker.

Congratulations to Victoria Leonard, (an ICS RA in 2018-20), who now has a Research Fellowship at Coventry; and to Federico Ugolini (RA 2020), now a postdoc at the Haifa Centre.



PhD researcher



Lucia Vanini is a PhD candidate in digital papyrology, and is currently writing a dissertation on the digital collections and tools available for papyrological scholarship. She has always had a broad interest in the ancient world, and especially in written objects unearthed in archaeological sites and in how we can restore the texts preserved in them. She became particularly interested in the many ways in which digital approaches are assisting papyrologists in their challenging work on fragmentary material. After an MA in Digital Humanities at University College London, her PhD aims to evaluate papyrological projects within a Digital Humanities framework. She is trying to understand the characteristics of these projects, their underlying structure and their implications for users, while taking into account their historical development. By identifying and describing types of papyrological resources, her research will cast light on the ways in which digital resources are a natural development of papyrological tools and publication, and it will consider the extent to which they have contributed to and changed the practice of papyrology and other philological and historical disciplines.

Visiting Scholars at the ICS

Every year the ICS welcomes visitors at all stages of their academic careers. During 2019-20, we welcomed more than 20 visiting scholars and fellows from 12 countries before the pandemic compelled some to postpone their visits. Here, one visiting fellow tells us about his research.



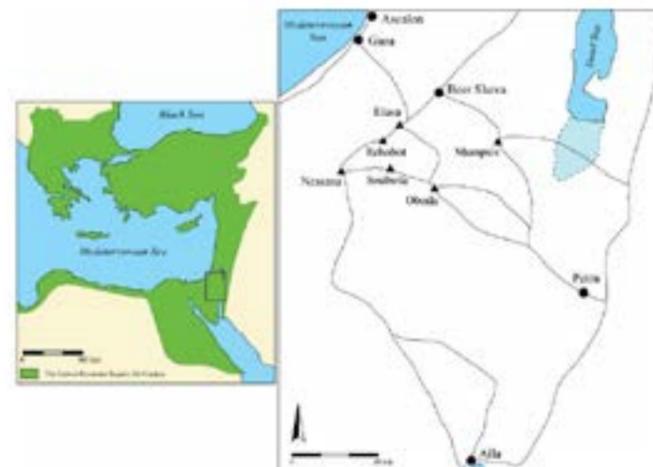
Gil Gambash is a classical historian, studying the ancient Mediterranean. He is the co-founder and director of the Haifa Center for Mediterranean History. Until recently he was the chair of the Dept. of Maritime Civilisations and the head of the Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies at the University of Haifa.

He spent the year 2020 at the ICS as a Leverhulme visiting scholar, working on ecological perspectives of Mediterranean societies. His current project focuses on arid areas and their interaction with the maritime sphere, seeking to explain modes of primary production, habits of consumption, and economic dependencies. The launching point of the project is the southern Levantine Negev, and its dominant late-antique wine industry, which relied on carefully devised runoff farming and was famous throughout the Mediterranean basin. This and other significant choices made by the local society, such as the importation of fish for elite consumption and marble for Christian architecture, suggests that a key for understanding the late-antique Negev's rise and fall may be found in its close relations with Mediterranean networks of knowledge and distribution, perhaps even more than it does in aspects of climate or empire.

During his visit Gil organised, with the Director, a highly successful seminar series on Deserts in Antiquity which ranged from the Sahara to the Syrian Steppe and from the Bronze Age to Early Islamic societies.

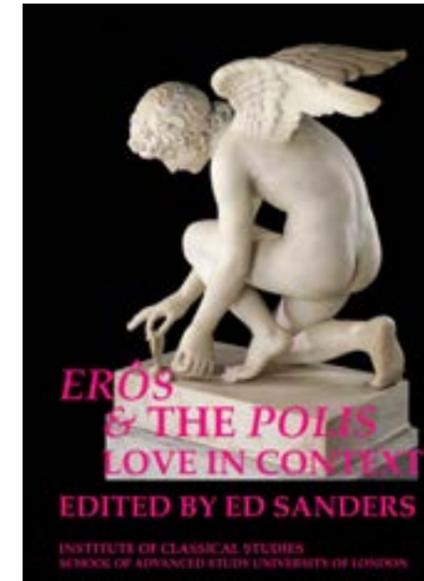


*Kissufim mosaic (above)
Shivta wine press (right)
The Byzantine Negev (below)*

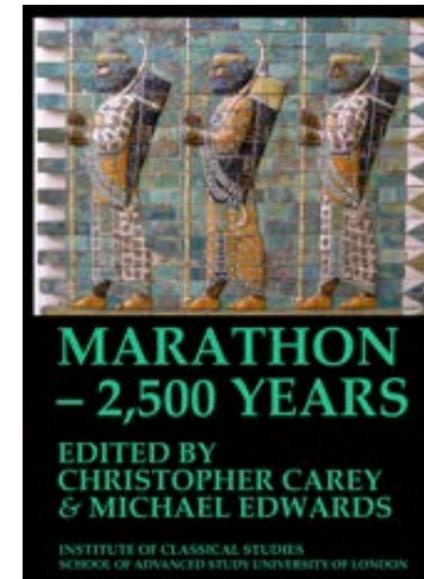


Publications

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 developments of 2020, including our new partnership with OUP and the start of our Open Access publishing programme.



Some of the recent BICS Supplements available Open Access (above & below)



Open Access publications: the ICS and the University of London Press / OA

New and recent BICS Supplements are available at:

<https://humanities-digital-library.org>



BICS 63-1: Summer 2020 saw the launch of our first issue of BICS to be published in partnership with Oxford University Press.

Open Access BICS Supplements

In partnership with other institutes at the School of Advanced Study, the ICS publishes books on an Open Access basis via the Humanities Digital Library: <https://humanities-digital-library.org/>

We are making available as many recent Supplements as possible from the list of those published in book form in the last eight years. Those Supplements will also be available on JSTOR.

Future titles will include our series of titles on the *Afterlife* of ancient authors: these are the fruit of a series of conferences arranged in collaboration with the Warburg Institute. The series covers the afterlives of Ovid, Cicero, Virgil, Plutarch, Herodotus & Thucydides and Apuleius.

The Afterlife of Apuleius, which is being published in the academic year 2020-21, will be the first title to be published simultaneously Open Access and in print. We are fulfilling our mission to make much of our output available OA, and are interested to see what impact it will have on book sales. By February, we shall also have published another book simultaneously online and in print: *Themes in Plato, Aristotle, and Hellenistic Philosophy. Keeling Lectures 2011-18*. Watch this space!

Our partnership with OUP

2020 saw the start of our new publishing partnership with Oxford University Press (OUP). Our first new journal issue to be published via this partnership was BICS 63-1: *The Classical Vase Transformed. Consumption, Reproduction, and Class in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain.*, edited by Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis with Edith Hall. It explores hitherto marginalised working-class and middle-class engagements with ancient Greek vases.

Our next issue (BICS 63-2) be *Didymus and Greco-Roman Learning*, edited by Enrico Prodi and Thomas Coward. Didymus is one of the most important figures in the study of Greek literature in antiquity, who stands at the intersection of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods.

Sign up for email alerts for new issues of BICS!

<https://academic.oup.com/bics>

Register for an account, sign in & use the drop-down list at the top right to select **Email Alerts**. Select **New issue alerts**, and choose **BICS** 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.

The primary role of the ICS Digital team is to provide a point of contact and support for national infrastructure for digital research and teaching in the study of the ancient world: this is part of the research promotion and facilitation role of the Institute and the School. In addition to our own research and teaching, we support individual research projects and encourage good practice in digital classics across the discipline

Over the past year, this agenda has involved giving general advice on funding bids involving digital classics research to several colleagues, often in the form of research training workshops and follow-up questions and consultations. This has involved active participation in events run by communities such as the transnational DHARMA project (The Domestication of "Hindu" Asceticism and the Religious Making of South and Southeast Asia), led by Berlin and Lyon, and the Epigraphy.info initiative started by the Epigraphic Database Heidelberg and the EAGLE project (Europeana network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy), in both cases involving consultation and training.

Through the specific expertise of several members of the ICS Digital team (including research fellows and graduate students as well as the Reader in Digital Classics), we also offer expert training and support in:

- EpiDoc: standards for encoding epigraphic and papyrological

texts for electronic publication and interchange;

- Linked Open Data (LOD) for sharing prosopographical and onomastic materials, through the SNAP:DRGN standards and Prosopography of the Byzantine World project;
 - LOD for exchanging and visualising geographical data, especially through participation in the Pelagios Network and Pleiades Gazetteer.
- We have also taken leading or supporting roles in several grant applications for new, collaborative projects, in particular:
- Connecting Late Antiquities, a meta-project bringing together multiple prosopographical datasets;
 - Language of Greek Religion, a lexicographical study of religious vocabulary using computational linguistics and digital humanities methods;
 - SigiDoc – Digital Edition of Byzantine Seals, which builds on both EpiDoc and the EFES publication tool that was built at the ICS;
 - Epigraphic Corpus of Georgia, a component of a multi-part and multi-language corpus of both ancient and mediaeval texts.

Colleagues anywhere in the country (or the world) are welcome to get in touch if they would like to discuss training, consultation, advice or any other collaboration on any areas of digital research in classics or ancient studies.

Digital Classicist London

The Digital Classicist community has run seminar series in London every summer since 2006, and from 2014 videos of the seminars have been posted on Youtube to be accessible to an audience outside central London. The Youtube channel has over 500 subscribers, and the videos have received over 14,000 views. For the summer 2020 season, the seminars were of course entirely online. Viewing figures increased radically in this period, and the seminars were therefore able to attract a more diverse, national and international audience. Discussion and Q&A between the speaker, a small studio audience, and viewers using the live chat feature on Youtube has been lively and effective. We are likely to adopt a hybrid model of live seminar broadcast and discussion in the future, to build on this positive experience.

The Digital Classicist Wiki

The ICS now hosts the Digital Classicist Wiki, a community-edited database of information, questions and commentary on projects, tools, methods and other resources relating to the digital or quantitative study of the ancient world. The site includes nearly 3000 pages edited by 250 registered users, and receives frequent, irregular contributions as well as an organized monthly editing sprint, when editors gather to improve the coverage of specific themes. Since the site moved to its new home at the ICS in 2020, a larger editorial board has been convened, with a brief to manage engagement and strategy for the Wiki.

Linked Pasts 6: Linked Open Data for the ancient and historical world

Linked Pasts is a practice-based conference relating to communities and activities around the use of Linked Open Data and the Semantic Web for sharing and linking historical information. The sixth instance of this conference was hosted by the ICS and the British Library in December 2020, and was held entirely online. Linked Pasts activities,

involving geographical data, prosopography, archaeological objects, texts or other historical entities, tend to focus more on problem solving, coding sprints, ontology development or theoretical discussion, rather than traditional presentations and Q&A. Several activities and interest groups ran in parallel on the LP6 programme.

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. Dr Emma Bridges outlines some activities from 2019-20.



Making Medusa for the Being Human festival, November 2019. (Image credit Emma Bridges.)

Public Engagement goes online during the pandemic

We have adapted to global events, and the fact that many of our plans for further in-person activities in 2020 were curtailed. In particular we have been hosting online training sessions for public engagement and are delighted to share news of a brand new online self-study course. This provides an introduction to public engagement, and anyone may access it for free via the School of Advanced Study's online training portal: <https://port.sas.ac.uk>



ICS small grants

Our grants scheme supporting public engagement work around the UK remains popular, and in 2019-20 we provided seedcorn funding for 9 projects, including:

- the performance of a reconstruction of Euripides' fragmentary Melanippe Wise, led by Dr. Andriana Domouzi;
- Dr. Patty Baker's floristry workshops exploring Roman floral design;
- a new graphic novel inspired by Dr. Matteo Zaccarini's research on the Thirty Tyrants;
- a compilation of modern 'victory odes' written by contemporary poets and co-ordinated by Dr. Helen Eastman.



Poster design and graphics by Sinjin Li.

Our mission to share research in Classics with the wider public, and to support colleagues elsewhere in doing the same, continued this year. Once again we were part of the Being Human festival in November 2019: in partnership with puppeteer/storyteller Tinka Slavicek and Islington's Little Angel Theatre, we put together 'Making Medusa', a full day of family craft activities and storytelling which resulted in the creation of a giant animated Medusa puppet.

You can read reports from recipients of our grants and other news about ICS activities on our blog: <https://ics.blogs.sas.ac.uk/>

ICS Awards for Public Engagement

This year we were fortunate to receive a generous gift from an anonymous donor, which allowed us to make two special awards for public engagement. The awarding panel was impressed by the range of projects which were nominated, and by entrants' commitment to sharing their research with wider publics. Our congratulations go to the winners:

- Dr. Ersin Hussein (Swansea), for 'Egypt and Its Neighbours', a partnership with Swansea's Egypt Centre to engage local communities with issues relating to cultural identity and diversity;
- Dr. Sally Waite and Dr. Susanna Philippo (Newcastle) for 'Greece Recreated', which builds on collaborations in the North East of England involving museums, schools, and the English Heritage property Belsay Hall.

The winning projects each received £1100 to spend on the future development of their public engagement activities.

London, the UK, the World

The ICS has been part of the School of Advanced Study for the last 25 years. As such, it is an important part of the University of London, and has both national and international remits. Here Greg Woolf points to continuities and changes in the history of the ICS and in the structures in which it has been embedded.

3D Imaging and Modelling for Classics and Cultural Heritage

Postponed from summer 2020 due to the lockdown, we hope to run a 3D Summer School in July 2021. Hosted by the ICS in collaboration with the British Library and British Museum, it is planned that the school will offer a mix of hands-on and theoretical sessions including photogrammetry and computer-aided design, for the imaging and modelling of ancient artefacts and buildings, as well as discussion of academic, practical, social and ethical implications of 3D methods in cultural heritage research.

ICS Advisory Council

Professor Catherine Morgan FBA OBE has taken on the vital role of Chair of ICS Advisory Council.



For the last 25 years the ICS has been part of the School of Advanced Study, based in the University of London but with a mission to support research in the humanities across the United Kingdom. The Institute itself is much older than that. It was founded as a partnership between the University and the Hellenic and Roman Societies in 1953 in the heady era of New Elizabethans. Much has changed since then.

The University no longer hosts a great array of small research institutes, and the Colleges are in effect autonomous universities. Learned societies still play a vital role in our discipline, but there are new megafauna roaming the Research Ecosystem. One of them, Research England, is now the main funder of the School of Advanced Study.

When I arrived in London in January 2015 I inherited some very nice furniture and a vast number of box files which contained papers and minutes of committees that had long ceased to exist along with carbon-copies of important typed letters sent around the University and the Societies. They included details of University lecture series in classical subjects (these no longer exist) and readers' reports on prospective publications (which are still core to what we do, but no longer come only in hard copy). There was also a good deal about the library including two boxes marked 'Papers from the Crisis'.

One of the striking features of these documents was how many of the names

of those involved I recognised. During the seventies and eighties most of the work seemed to have been done by the Professors of the University (then a much smaller group than now) and the editors and presidents and council members of the Societies were very largely drawn from the so-called Golden Triangle.

Now, if anyone were insane enough to try and print out all the corresponding documentation for today's ICS, it would look very different. London colleagues still play a vital role in supporting the library, our publications and our seminar series, but they do so alongside colleagues from all over the UK. Classics is taught in many more UK universities than ever before, and the number is growing. Our visiting fellows now come from Brazil, Egypt, Poland and South Africa as well as from France, Germany, Italy and North America. Classics in the UK is less middle-class as well as less Oxbridge, it is much less male and even a little less white. The ICS has adopted an international remit and tried to promote diversity and inclusion. It will continue to work to enshrine those values.

Tradition is a good place to rally around, but it often provides more inspiration than guidance about how to go forward. New technologies and new funding arrangements are likely to change how we do our business in the near future. The Institute of Classical Studies will need to balance its local, its national and its global roles. There is every sign it will be up to the challenge.

Greg Woolf, ICS Director 2015-21.

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

Institute of Classical Studies

School of Advanced Study, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU
E: valerie.james@sas.ac.uk | W: ics.sas.ac.uk | T: +44 (0)20 7862 8716



[twitter.com/
@ICSDirector](https://twitter.com/ICSDirector)



[facebook.com/
ICSnews](https://facebook.com/ICSnews)



ics.blogs.sas.ac.uk