Classical Association Annual Conference 2017: Call for papers

The Annual Conference of the Classical Association, in association with the University of Kent and the Open University, will take place on 26-29 April 2017, in Canterbury (UK).

We welcome proposals for papers (twenty minutes long followed by discussion) from graduate students, school teachers, academic staff and others engaged with the ancient world, on the themes suggested below or on any other aspect of the classical world. We encourage papers from a broad range of perspectives. We are particularly keen to receive proposals for coordinated panels (comprising either three or four papers on any classical topic). Closing date for proposals or abstracts: 31 August 2016. Contact: CA2017OpenKent@kent.ac.uk.

Suggested conference themes are:

**Livy’s Bimillennium**

Once considered little more than an elegant compilation of source material, Livy’s history has been rehabilitated as a sophisticated and original work of literature. Scholarship in recent years has demonstrated the complexity of the relationship of *Ab urbe condita* with its sources and other classical literature, explored its didactic functions and its use of *exempla*, and shed new light on its narrative techniques. At the bimillennium of Livy’s death, however, many aspects of his work remain to be (re-)examined in light of these new approaches. The relationship of the history to its author’s present still raises many questions, and it is perhaps worth revisiting the extent to which the work can be regarded as ‘Augustan’ or ‘Republican’. Given the literary focus of most recent treatments, it may also be time to reassess *Ab urbe condita* as an historical source, and to discuss the significance of the new literary understanding for ancient historians.

**Classics in the Contemporary World**

Classics and Classical Studies form part of the contemporary world. How does that world respond to Classics, and Classics to it? This is not just an academic or rhetorical question, but a question of the agency of all things classical in the contemporary world. Why has ‘the Classical’ become a target of extremism, and what does ‘the Classical’ know about extremism? The classical world can easily provide examples of those within the state who threaten security, through its endemic wars, revenge tragedy and peace-seeking, but do these *exempla* have an agency in the contemporary world, and *vice versa* does contemporary extremism shape our understanding of the Classical? Another characteristic of the contemporary world is the ascendance of the digital. Does ‘the digital’ create opportunities for non-canonical receptions? For example, how does archaeogaming relate to established digitisations of classical texts and objects? Do we urgently need new data ontologies to link the classical to the digital and to enable machines to read the classical world? Finally, how are these connections with the contemporary world shaping our pedagogy, as we equip individuals to act or be employed in the world? We invite individual papers, panel sessions
and workshop proposals to explore and debate the interface between the contemporary and classical worlds.

Classical Archaeology as Heritage
Classical archaeology and heritage studies are intertwined with issues of nationalism, identity and politics. How has classical archaeology been used to fight against or build national identity(ies)? How has classical archaeology been represented and how has this impacted on issues of nationalism and identity? Who owns classical antiquities and archaeology and with what consequences? Different approaches to the management, interpretation and representation of Classical archaeology also entwine it with heritage studies. How can classical archaeology be interpreted and who has been entitled and given authority to interpret classical archaeological sites? What are the recent approaches to fighting against illicit trades in antiquities, both politically and academically? What solutions have been found to the issues of iconoclasm or destruction of classical antiquities and archaeology? How has classical archaeology been used for (sustainable) development projects? Why have these projects been implemented? Who has benefited from these projects and what have been the impacts of these projects for different stakeholders? We invite individual papers, panel sessions and workshop proposals to explore and debate the interface between Classical archaeology and heritage.

Experiencing the Body
Experiencing the body invites us to consider a broad range of topics related to the lived body in the Graeco-Roman world. What can the body tell us about life in the past? How do ancient perceptions of the body relate to definitions of age, health, gender and identity? Besides questioning cultural conceptions, is it possible to access an individual’s experience of the ancient world? Can this be found through studies of the senses, phenomenology of landscapes and spaces, and the world created by the artist: that is the writer, painter, or sculptor, for example? Both social and individual experiences of the body can be accessed through a variety of remains: material culture, literature, epigraphy, art and spatial analyses, allowing for interdisciplinary study. We invite individual papers, panel sessions and workshop proposals to explore and debate the topic.

Everyday Life
The theme of everyday life invites sessions and papers which explore the relationship between urban space and the activities and rhythms of everyday life in antiquity (ranging from the Archaic to Late Antiquity). Sessions and papers might, for example, explore the extent to which ritual activities and occasions, such as festivals, funerals and pilgrimage, were part of or separate from everyday life. What made the ordinary and the extraordinary? How was everyday life experienced, and how did it change over time? How did everyday activities, behaviours and perceptions shape individual and group identities? What made everyday
urban and rural life different from one another? What evidence can we use to support our understandings? For example, how did material culture and architecture shape everyday use of urban space? How is everyday life represented in literature, and how is it theorised in Greek and Latin philosophy? What can digital analytical tools add to our understanding? Is it possible to distinguish between elite and non-elite practices, and the experiences of inhabitants as well as visitors to a place?

**Acquiring and Structuring Knowledge**

Nowadays we classify knowledge with a complexity that was unthinkable in antiquity. Advances in technology and scientific methods let us assess the ancient natural sciences from a position of superior understanding. Meanwhile, new light is shed on the past by advances in technical discourse: politics, sociology and literary criticism are cases in point. Another is philosophy, whose agenda has changed little since its formation in antiquity, but has given rise to numerous sub-disciplines, each with its own specialist terminology and conceptual toolkit. By contrast, some histories and archaeologies of ideas are recent inventions, and others still remain to be written. There are also potential advantages to recovering the integratedness of fields of inquiry in the classical past: recent scholarship has highlighted important interactions between astronomy, anthropology, philosophy, medicine and more. We invite papers and co-ordinated panels exploring topics in ancient inquiry. How did disciplines form? What did concepts owe to empirical experience? How were new developments sparked? What, and how, did the Greeks and Romans know?

**Late Antiquity and Byzantium**

Rather than artificially separating the worlds of Late Antiquity and Byzantium from Classical Antiquity, we wish to highlight how the chosen themes of the CA conference apply holistically. Late Antiquity and Byzantium bridge the classical and the contemporary, nurturing the beginnings of Islam and the creation of modern Europe. How might they be re-conceptualised in the light of current debates on extremism, migration, identity and porous borders? Conflict and cultural heritage are also key current issues, for example in the context of the war in Syria. Why is such heritage so important, why does its destruction matter, and what can be done? Spatial studies and the senses have been understudied. How might our understandings of urbanism, networks - social or otherwise -, pilgrimage and visualisation, for example, be broadened by taking a holistic approach? What roles do cognitive reasoning, science and philosophy play? Lastly, literature, performance, dialogue and argument were core features of antiquity and fundamental in Byzantium. How might syntax, rhetoric, revision, rewriting and dissemination conceptually influence our ideas of Late Antiquity and Byzantium? We invite individual papers, panel sessions and workshop proposals to explore and debate these and any other ideas relating to Late Antiquity and Byzantium.