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Front Cover: Cato the Censor
Editorial
Alasdair Matthews

This edition of The Journal of Classics Teaching comes out amid a whirlwind of conflicting news stories about the place of Classics in the current educational landscape. In recent months, the then Education Secretary, Ed Balls, stated with characteristic bluntness that no-one had ever said to him that they wished there were more Latin taught in schools today; the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, took up his equally characteristic cudgel in defence, pointing out the wealth of evidence that, while no-one may have said this to Mr Balls personally, there is a veritable clamour for precisely this. The Classics for All initiative is promoting the subject vigorously and finding fertile ground on which to do so. Meanwhile, barely had Balls and Boris retreated to their corners, when the think tank Politeia published the report by Chris Pelling and Llewellyn Morgan, urging a new Education Secretary to count Latin as a Modern Language so that it could be taught more widely in primary schools; there seems certain to be more on this development in future pages of this organ. The steady run of newspaper stories about ingenious ways of feeding this demand for both classical languages has continued, most recently at the time of writing honing in on a scheme teaching (very traditional) Latin via Skype, a marvellous blend of ancient and modern that reflects well the bridge Classics provides between the modernity of the electronic age of information and the seemingly old-fashioned ethos of educating the mind through a subject combining intellectual rigour with cultural riches. All this can nevertheless seem at times like glimmers amid the shadows; while there are increasing stories about the revival of Classics in schools, it is still under pressure. Classics in universities, meanwhile, can seem to be in more danger than it has faced for a long time, with Leeds the most recent department to face at least partial closure, and it may require some concerted effort amid the impending funding crisis for higher education if more departments are not to be squeezed more than they can reasonably endure. (See the News and Notices section, though, for a wonderful tale from Glasgow that bucks this trend.)

The features in this edition reflect in some way the current optimistic conditions in secondary, and in one case primary, schools. Two articles ostensibly on Latin teaching, but in practice applicable more broadly, begin: Sarah Elliot outlines some approaches to varying the diet of sixth formers beyond purely A Level fare, while the second article explores a way of trying to help GCSE students to perform well in set texts, which can seem to them utterly different in their combination of complex demands from what they may face in their other subjects. The renewed health of Classics in schools is demonstrated by the two following articles, by Peter Reason and Tom Pearson, on Ancient History, almost an extinct creature very recently, but now flourishing in its A Level habitat, and with a new GCSE in tow as well. Nico Vaughan provides a snapshot of the use of theatre in innovative ways to inspire and maintain interest in Greek drama; Alan Beale has provided some excellent pointers, including sample teaching materials, on teaching funerary inscriptions, and the approach here may easily be transferred to the broader use of artefacts in museums or on sites. The features section closes with the results of a survey carried out on behalf of Friends of Classics, giving a valuable overview of just where we stand in that landscape (and inspiring, of course, our cover image of Cato the Censor).

JCT 22

JCT 22: Communicative Approaches to teaching the Classical Languages
(January 2010)

JCT 22 will be edited by Keith Rogers. Contributions, not exceeding 1,000 words, should be emailed to office@jact.org by 31st October 2010 at the latest.

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Extra-Curricular Enrichment for Sixth Form Students

Sarah Elliot

FROM AESCHYLEAN TRAGEDY to Aristophanic comedy, Greek archaic kouroi to the European neo-classical artists, and the machinations of the late Roman Republic to the classical influence upon American political institutions, a Classics degree is characterised by astonishing variety. How can we help our Sixth Form students to look beyond their set texts and sample the interdisciplinary approach and intellectual excitement a classical education should provide?

Current syllabuses go some way towards giving students a flavour of the rich scope of the classical world. The OCR Classics Suite allows students to opt for a more flexible approach to Classics by combining classical language, literature in translation and historical studies, and even on the more traditional route, students explore four different texts over two years. Similarly, the research dossier that forms part of the IB course allows students to research, present and analyse a range of primary sources on any classical topic of their choice. This has encouraged students to follow their own particular interests, e.g. one very fashion-conscious student explored the significance and value of the Roman toga. Others may have their interest piqued by an article in *Omnibus* ('Luxurious Dentifrice in Rome' was the one in question) and investigate a topic entirely new to them. This type of project could be easily adapted for year 12 post-AS teaching provided students have a little guidance at the beginning to help them select an appropriate topic and locate relevant sources, and could be concluded with a presentation of their research findings to the rest of the class.

Nevertheless, within the scope of the examined curricula, no more than four texts/topics are addressed, and there is often little time in lessons to explore outside the requirements of the exam board. My department at North London Collegiate School has therefore found a number of ways to enrich our Sixth Form students' experiences of Classics.

We have a Classics Society that is run by Year 13 students who apply formally to join. Competition for the senior positions is often fierce. We are, admittedly, blessed with a large department and enjoy healthy numbers of students opting for our subjects, but a similar society could be created by appointing students of all ages or by establishing a partnership with another school. The key to a successful society seems to lie in dynamic leadership by students, good organisation and a real appetite for learning. The main activities of our society are twofold: to invite external speakers to address students of years 10-13 on a range of topics, and for students to give presentations themselves. Lynn Gordon in *JCT* 19 identified the potential interest generated by university lecturers speaking on topics of general classical interest, and this has proved to be the case at our school. In the past couple of years students have been introduced to Greece in the 4th century, Nietzsche and Aristotle, and Linear B. It was especially rewarding when one student, faced with a Linear B tablet in the small museum at Mycenae, was delighted that she could identify some of the ideograms herself. Similarly, more than one student made her decision to study Classics upon hearing the breathtaking performance of a chorus of the *Bacchae* by a visiting Oxford graduate.

In November our department runs an after-school symposium to which all Classicists in Years 11-13 are invited. Last year Peter
Thonemann spoke on ‘Amazons and Housewives’, investigating the perceptions of women in 5th century Athens as evidenced by myth, art and historical writings - a topic of great interest in an academic girls’ school. I am always impressed by the quality and quantity of the questions posed by our students, and frequent exposure to academics seems to have engendered in them a quiet confidence in engaging with the subject and the speaker. Our symposium has proved enormously popular, helped in no small part by the superb Greek-themed feast with accompanying quiz that happens afterwards in our dining room which pupils decorate for the occasion. Our school caterers arrange the meal but variants may well be possible, e.g. students could organise their own picnic. Many schools are opening up their conferences and lectures (advertised on www.theclassicslibrary.com), encouraging other, often smaller, schools to attend. Video-conferencing facilities offer an opportunity for schools around the country to access such talks.

The presentations by students have also ensured that they engage in topics outside those met in lessons. At the beginning of the academic year the co-chairs, in discussion with the member of staff responsible for the society, produce a calendar of events. This often begins with a talk delivered by a teacher to model what is expected in terms of length, depth and tone. The teacher may also suggest some reading and give guidance about the key issues to cover, but students are encouraged to take the initiative themselves and gain a taste of the independent learning that is expected of them at university. This year’s titles have ranged from ‘Same-Sex Relationships in Ancient Rome’, to ‘Sophocles’ Ajax’ and ‘Love and Atomic Theory in Lucretius’. When sufficiently publicised to the school, these talks have been well-attended by younger students who take an active part in discussion. Through these presentations, students have become increasingly scholarly in their approach and have gained valuable experience in articulating their research to a varied audience. We have also benefited from links with other schools. Students have debated alongside and against each other, and the fresh viewpoints have challenged and inspired both parties, particularly when a controversial text such as Euripides’ Medea is debated between two single-sex schools. Our IT department has been particularly helpful in this area; video-conferencing has been used to facilitate a debate with a school in Southampton, and our Virtual Learning Environment (Kalidades) enabled History students to communicate with their peers in India.

The Classics Society is responsible for producing a Classics newsletter, Nuntius, which features a variety of articles to interest students of all ages. One of my colleagues meets with the two editors to brief them at the beginning of the year and to proof-read the final draft before the publication of each termly issue. The students manage the content, style, printing and distribution themselves. Aeneas has featured heavily in this year’s Nuntius, alongside an exploration of Roman education and a feature twinining the Classics teachers with Roman deities! The newsletter publicised the Year 12 production of Thesmophoriazusae and could also be used to promote competitions such as the Jowett-Sendelar Competition and the Stephen Spender Translation Prize. The newsletter has a large readership and many students outside the Sixth Form contribute articles, art and poems to each issue. The editors often find that that the experience of researching, writing and organising successful articles develops an interest in journalism that they continue at university.

In 2007 I piloted a Sixth Form scheme to teach Minimus as an after-school activity in a local primary school. The Sixth Form students work in pairs, using a work scheme I devised, to tailor activities to their group of six to eight primary school pupils. Here the students learnt the benefit of the ancient adage, docendo discimus as they were reacquainted with topics that they had not studied since CLC Book 1 while also exploring life on Hadrian’s Wall for possibly the first time. Even their knowledge of the Latin language was extended by the book which introduced them to words such as curriculums, cases and capillamentum! They were significantly challenged by the experience of teaching a group of enthusiastic and demanding children and, faced with a plethora of searching questions on every topic, ensured that they researched thoroughly to equip themselves sufficiently. The creativity of the students was impressive. They devised a multitude of ingenious games and songs to teach vocabulary and verb endings and used a variety of props, ranging from plasticine to a papier-mâché Cyclops, to explore the myths with their pupils. The primary school reports that it is one of their most popular clubs, and I am always inundated with applications to join the teaching team.

When we seek to kindle an interest in the classical world through enthusiastic and creative lessons we are frequently restricted by the demands of the examined curriculum. Enrichment activities that go beyond the syllabus motivate students to explore the breadth and depth of the classical world for themselves.

Sarah Elliot  
North London Collegiate School

Using Peer Assessment to Improve Responses in GCSE Latin Literature  
Alasdair Matthews

The aim of this article - and I should confess at the outset that what follows will focus unashamedly on exam technique rather than the skills of literary criticism - is to share an approach I tried in the last academic year to help pupils to improve their answering technique in GCSE Latin literature questions. The problems mine have faced are, I’m sure (or at least hope!), familiar to many, and indeed experience as an examiner suggests that these are common difficulties. Students can be wonderfully enthusiastic about the texts they are studying, and full of ideas, but fail to get marks because they don’t address the question properly. Sometimes this is because they write too much, or too little; sometimes they don’t read the question closely enough and give information that isn’t required in place of what is; sometimes they give English instead of Latin, or vice versa, and so on. In particular, they can have difficulty with style questions, being unsure how to search through what they know about a piece of Latin to structure a clear and well-supported answer that is relevant, and doesn’t rattle on for several pages. With the possible exception of this last example, these can seem like simple enough problems to correct; surely they just need to read the question properly? Yet these mistakes are made repeatedly, and by the same pupils, even with plenty of practice aimed at giving them familiarity with the types of questions they may face: the advice, however patient and encouraging, to read the question more closely simply doesn’t stop them making the same mistake. Another problem that
the method below has gone some way to addressing is the temptation for pupils to put down an answer that is 'good enough', not understanding exactly why an answer might not quite get all the marks (and that we aren’t just being overly fussy and ‘unfair’). I decided to address this problem by extending my use of peer assessment - essentially jargon for the pupils marking each other’s work, but with emphasis on putting themselves in the position of the examiner and learning to look at their own answers as the examiner might. The idea is that they should think less along the lines of simply getting an answer down, and more along the lines of what the best possible answer is, looking more critically at what they think in response to a question, and in particular what they write down and how. If all this sounds a bit airy theoretical, hopefully the illustration that follows should help. It’s nothing earth-shattering, but, like all useful methods for improvement, simply seeks to take the best bits of what happens in teaching and learning and extend and improve them a little.

Once the pupils had sat their mock prose literature exam (in our case using the Cambridge Latin Anthology prescription on Druids and Boudicca’s Revolt), I marked the exams in purely summary form and returned them to the pupils without comments or feedback. But before I returned them, I went through them again, looking for a range of answers to each question: some good, some nearly there, and some wildly off the mark. I then produced a handout taking them through the paper they had just sat, providing composite answers for each question by pasting together bits and pieces of what the students themselves had written (but crucially not revealing who had written what to avoid embarrassment and maintain anonymity - obviously students tend to respond better to constructive criticism when they don’t feel they’re being singled out!).

I gave these ‘mash-ups’ to the pupils and, in our hour-long lesson following the exam, we proceeded to work through the paper with the mark scheme converted into a slide show on the IWB. (Although a photocopy would work just as well where a computer and projector aren’t available, it does then mean a lot of bits of paper to look at.) For each question, the pupils had to look at the composite answer, not just what they wrote, and we would then discuss which they thought was the best answer, or how many marks they would award. Where the right answer wasn’t immediately obvious, they weren’t always unanimous in what they selected, which made the process much more valuable, as they were already engaging critically with these anonymous answers and approaching them as an examiner. Only then was the mark scheme for that question revealed (hence the advantage of the slide show), and then they could reassess how they would mark that answer, and, importantly, reflect on why mistakes had been made or all the marks not awarded. Occasionally the discussion could get quite animated, even where students weren’t defending what they recognised as their own actual answers; this was all the better, as the more they took charge of the discussion, and the more engaged in it they became, the more they were practising assessing and improving their answers, rather than listening to what could otherwise be quite sterile, if in theory very useful, model answers.

So, here are some specific examples (I haven’t included the questions, which are from OCR’s GCSE Prose Literature paper for 2009). First of all I’ve given the introduction to my handout, followed by what I put together for one of the shorter questions, for which I tended to give a selection of responses of varying quality for them to judge between.

**UV Latin Prose Literature Mock: guide to answering well**

Below you will find a selection of hints on how to answer these questions better, using answers actually given in the exam. The aim is to look at these alongside the mark scheme, so that you are acting as if you are the examiner. Try to see why answers do or don’t get marks. No-one except me knows who wrote what, and even I can’t remember most of the time, so no-one is being picked on!

(b) (ii) Use the mark scheme and consider which of the following best answers the question:

- they sacrificed a lion as their victim

- the Druid’s sacrificed living men whilst the Romans sacrificed animals

- the Druids sacrificed living men whilst the Romans only went as far as to sacrifice animals. Also the Druids sacrificed the worst of men, who were criminals while the Romans sacrificed only the best.

- they either sacrificed men as their victims or promised that they would sacrifice them

The first of the answers I’ve given them to think about is obviously wrong, and a bit odd; in fact, the pupil had intended to write ‘man’ but the handwriting was so bad it looked most like ‘lion’, and the exercise of trying to work out what was meant was in itself useful in getting them to think about how their answers would be read by someone else.

The next extract again looks at answering short, factual questions.
(c) (i) What is the difference between these answers, and would you give the mark to all of them?

- the Druids were used as assistants at these sacrifices
- the Druids looked after these sacrifices
- they used the Druids to supervise all of their sacrifices

(ii) How many marks would you give the following, and why?

- the Druids believe that unless the life of a man is returned for the life of another man then the immortal gods will not be appeased

For the first of these questions, the mark scheme simply required that the Druids were assistants; all the responses would likely have got a mark, but the pupil’s discussion drew out that the middle answer expressed this idea least well, and they began to think more about how they were putting the information they were trying to get across. For the second, the mark scheme was quite clear about the ‘will/power of the gods’, focusing on the Latin word numen in the passage; many of the pupils initially suggested this answer would get all four marks allocated, but when told it might only get three, they were able then to work out what detail had been missed, and thus why it is important to be clear and specific in answers, working in all the relevant detail and not simply giving an approximation.

Here is an example of what I gave them for longer questions requiring comment.

(e) Read the question carefully, noting particularly ‘choice of words’ and ‘quote the relevant Latin for each’. Then look at the mark scheme. Now read the answers below, and in pairs discuss how many marks you think each one is worth.

- Caesar’s choice of words helps us to understand the nature of the barbaric sacrifices of the Druids. He uses the word ‘pereunt’ - they perish and ‘flamma circumventi’ - surrounded by flame, to tell us that they don’t just die, they are literally burnt alive. The repetition of the word ‘homo’ (man) is also used the reinforce constantly that these sacrifices were human, which is also barbaric. Caesar goes on to tell us how they use people caught in crime + robbery or any other offence as they are more pleasing which is understandable some what but he continues to say that when a supply of this type fails the Druids even ‘descendant’ (stoop) to the sacrifices of innocent men. The word ‘descendant’ shows just how desperate they were and Caesar is clearly unimpressed by this.
- ‘simulacris incensis’ - when they burnt the images they burnt people, this shows that they had no respect for the men that they were sacrificing. Don’t appreciate life or anyone but themselves. ‘hominis flamma circumventi’ - the men surrounded by flame die. I think this is particularly barbaric as the men can’t escape they just have to sit their in agony as they are burnt alive. It was very inhuman. Caesar makes the sacrifices seem barbarous by repeating the word ‘homo’ - ‘hominibus’ ‘hominis’ to keep it in the readers mind that these are men. ‘flamma circumventi’ is also the last phrase in a tricolon, so the tension is built up to the final, horrific moment. It is an increasing tricolon as each part gets worse and worse. He uses the paradox of how innocent men are executed (innocentium, descendant).
- ‘circumventi’, line 11, creates a vivid image of the flame surrounding the men. By using this word it emphasises the actions taking place on these images and how severe it is. He uses the word ‘vivis’, alive, which is very vivid to illustrate the ruthlessness of these sacrifices. Then Caesar uses the word supply - supplicia - as if their objects, saying that the immortal Gods find this kind to be more pleasing. These men have lost all their rights and have become objects to the Druids and nothing more. He uses the alliteration of aut aliqua to emphasize that the gods prefer it when criminals are sacrificed.

What do you think is the best point in each answer?
Pick one point from each answer that doesn’t get a mark and improve it so that it does.
Approaching Ancient Egypt

(Setting the context for the GCSE controlled assessment)

Peter Reason

The CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT of the new Ancient History GCSE gives the opportunity to study one of six diverse societies, including that of Ancient Egypt. The culture and history of Egypt are well-known to many through the work of television documentary makers and primary school history projects. The striking visual images of Egypt, from the pyramids to the mask of Tutankhamun, have become iconic. This obviously helps to make the topic engaging and spark the imagination. So, when approaching the study of Egypt for the controlled assessment there will be much that may seem familiar; however, as the unit is based on the study of original sources it is essential to go beyond a general appreciation to focus on specific detail of Egypt’s history and culture. A suggested way to approach the unit is to start with a study of the distinctive character of Ancient Egypt through examining its geography and history. This should give a context for studying the set themes.

Geographical Setting
The geography of Egypt was unique in the Ancient World. The topography of the land had a great influence on the development of the world’s first unified state and the character of the civilisation it produced. The Ancient Egyptians described their country as the two lands, referring to Upper Egypt (the Nile valley) and Lower Egypt (the delta area). These two parts have very different geographical features, but are linked by their dependence on the Nile.

Herodotus acknowledges the importance of Egypt’s geographical setting and states that Egypt is the gift of the river. It is certainly true that no significant life could have survived in this desert land without the presence of the Nile and especially its annual inundation. The Nile valley, like the Saharan area to its west, receives little rainfall; however, the waters of the Nile were swelled annually with the melting snow of the Ethiopian mountains. This flood gave the inhabitants of the valley a supply of water, but also had other benefits. The power of the inundation washed silt, rich in nutrients, over the valley floor, making the ground extremely fertile. The Egyptians acknowledged the fecundity of this dark soil when calling their country Kemet, which means ‘the black land’.

The fertility produced by the annual flood allowed the early settlers in the valley to form a stable agricultural economy. Not only could the Egyptians feed themselves with ease, they also developed a surplus that could be used to trade with neighbouring countries. This wealth was enhanced by the minerals and precious and semi-precious stones present in the cliffs either side of the Nile valley. These provided an almost limitless supply of materials for Egypt’s elaborate building works, as well as producing another source of wealth to be traded.

Another feature of Egypt’s geographical situation that helped to shape the society was the relative security given by its natural boundaries. No significant force could be deployed against Egypt from any direction. To the north the Mediterranean Sea provided a useful gateway for trade with the Phoenicians and Minoans, but naval technology had not advanced sufficiently to allow a maritime attack. To the west and east of the valley, Egypt was protected by the inhospitable conditions of the surrounding desert. To the south the original boundary was the first cataract of the Nile, which also prevented any concerted attack on Egypt. So, Egypt enjoyed peace for most of the period of study which, like the natural wealth already mentioned, created a society which had a relative life of ease compared to most in the Ancient World.

Historical Setting
This Egyptian option covers 3000-1000BC, a longer period of study than Europe in the Christian era, so it is difficult to present a single picture of the civilisation over the whole period. It is useful therefore to start with an overall historical framework and then to focus on specific times. The conventional way of viewing Egyptian history is based on the king-lists from antiquity. This basic structure has three sections known as kingdoms, when Egypt was united under one ruler. These are separated by periods of relative instability known as intermediate periods (for the controlled assessment it should be sufficient to focus on the kingdoms and leave aside the complexities of the intermediate periods). This structure is further divided into dynasties (the ruling families).
The Old Kingdom (3150-2200 BC), which included Dynasties 1-6, was based at the capital city of Memphis. This was the meeting point of Upper and Lower Egypt, where the valley met the delta. The early kings reinforced their image as all conquering rulers by using the plains of the area to erect grand burial monuments, leading to the Pyramid Age. Most important among these buildings were the Step-Pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara and Khufu’s Great Pyramid at Giza.

The Middle Kingdom (2040-1674 BC), which included Dynasties 12-14, was a time when the Egyptians started to look beyond their borders and began to expand, in both trade and imperial ambition. To the south they began to take control of the neighbouring kingdom of Nubia and in the north-east they pushed into Western Asia. Major rulers of the time included Senwosret III, one of the first military rulers of Ancient Egypt. This time also saw a rise in the power of local rulers, known as nomarchs. This is witnessed by the grandeur of the noble tombs at towns like Beni Hasan.

The New Kingdom (1552-1069 BC), which included Dynasties 18-20, was the period when Egypt enjoyed its greatest power and wealth. The capital was now in the southern town of Thebes, which led to the development of rock-cut tombs in the cliffs to the west of the Nile. Most notable among these is the Valley of the Kings, which rivalled the splendour of the pyramids of the Old Kingdom. This is the best known era of Egyptian history and included most of the pharaohs identified in the specification for the controlled assessment, namely Akhenaten, Hatshepsut and Rameses II.

Resources
Details of some useful resources to help develop these aspects of the geography and history of Ancient Egypt, including a bibliography and list of useful websites, can be found on the Ancient History section of the JACT website. Some recommendations to get started include:


http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/
http://qqq.touregypt.net/kids/

The full resource list makes recommendations for reading on the six themes of the controlled assessment. It also suggests the appropriate audience for each item highlighting those suitable for students to access.

Peter Reason
Gorsehnon College

The new A2 Ancient History specification
—a view from the chalkface
Tom Pearson

As this examination season ends and the new A2 students take up their second year classes, it provides a useful opportunity to reflect on the first run through the A2 specification, and see what can be learned from our experience.

Teaching the specification
As a large entry we have to manage numbers with available teaching expertise, so as in previous years we divided the teaching so that the Roman and Greek modules were taught concurrently with different teachers delivering the discrete modules. Once the students got used to this, the model worked very well: links, parallels and contrasts were consistently drawn regarding generic understanding of issues germane to evidence and good use of sources, as well as aspects of antiquity with regard to geography, cultural perceptions, politics and so on. This approach also reinforced not only the thematic nature of both modules but also a similarity of approach in assessment.

It was clear to us that the two fundamental aspects of both teaching and learning here would be the thematic nature of the periods and the centrality of a source-based approach.

One of the key refinements that we would make for next year would be to complete the specification coverage earlier in order to concentrate more fully at the end on pulling together some of the key themes across the period - this will be particularly applicable to the Greek module. In this course, as in so many others, it has proved essential to ensure that a good start is made early in the year in order to be able to make good use of teaching weeks near the end of the course to look holistically at what has been covered and allow the students to review the earlier material with the fuller perspective they have gained.

The specification
Evidently there was less of a problem with the Roman module (we focused on ‘Ruling the Empire: AD 14-AD 117’) which we had taught previously under a slightly different guise. The Greek module (’Greece in Conflict: 460 BC - 404 BC’) presented more difficulty if only because it was new and all resources had to be created from scratch.

Using assessment criteria
We were hugely relieved and gratified when the wording of the assessment grids was changed partway through the year to become more apposite for a historian’s approach. Although we used the original grids for much of the year, students quickly adapted to the new descriptors and found them much more manageable. Indeed every returned piece of work was accompanied by rigorous deconstruction of the marking with specific reference to the marking grids. It has proved most valuable to have the students fully aware of the assessment criteria and to work with these explicitly in mind both when they are writing and we are providing feedback on their work.

The examination itself
The students were very pleased with the nature of the questions: these were generously worded and allowed students the opportunity to show their knowledge (we hope) across both thematic papers.

Training and support
Training and support from the board was very good in this first year of the specification. We are perhaps advantaged by having
Friends of Classics’ Survey
into Secondary School perceptions of the value of Classics

Jeannie Cohen & Peter Jones

LAST YEAR FRIENDS of Classics commissioned a professional survey of secondary schools understood to be teaching Latin. It was carried out by a distinguished market researcher and Friend Colin McDonald, with technical help from CSCP (to whom many thanks). His report appears below. We are extremely grateful to all the schools that took part. Since the response-rate was nearly 50% (Colin tells us that it is usually nearer 5%), it can fairly be said to provide a definitive account of what schools value about the subject and the problems they face.

A link to the questionnaire and full statistical analysis (c. 150pp of it) can be found on the home page: http://www.friends-classics.demon.co.uk.

Jeannie Cohen
Peter Jones

Classics in Schools:
the research report March 2010

Colin McDonald

THIS POSTAL SURVEY was conducted amongst secondary schools teaching classics, both independent and in the state sector, with the aim of discovering what values they attached to classics teaching and what problems they faced in doing so.

Letters with questionnaires were sent to all UK schools known to teach Latin held on the database at the Cambridge School Classics Project (this database was compiled following a telephone survey of all schools carried out by CSCP in 2007). The letters were addressed to the appropriate heads of department and were timed to arrive during the 2009 autumn term (avoiding holidays and half-term). Reminder letters with questionnaires were sent to non-respondents after an appropriate interval.

Completed questionnaires were returned from 491 out of the 1103 schools contacted, a response rate of 45%. The returns included nearly equal numbers of independent (256) and state (234) schools. This equates to a slight bias in returns in favour of the independents; the response rate from independent schools contacted was 56% and from state schools 36%. Because of this small bias, results below are quoted separately for independent and state schools.

Key results from the participating 491 schools

Latin and Greek languages

95% of the independents and 78% of the state schools currently teach Latin. 77% (independent) and 33% (state) teach it to A Level or equivalent standard.

Teaching of Greek is much lower: 59% (independents) and 15% (state) teach any Greek; 41% (independents) and 8% (state) teach it to A level standard.

There is a difference in who gets taught these languages: of those who teach them, 93% of independents but only 65% of state schools say they are open to anyone (as opposed to being restricted to top-stream or ‘gifted and talented’ children). Three quarters of the state school teachers said that, if they had more resources, they would like to increase the numbers taking Latin or Greek. State schools have more difficulty fitting Latin/Greek onto the timetable; only 67% of those who teach Latin in state schools do so on timetable as opposed to virtually all the independents, and only 7% can teach Greek on timetable (cf. 40% of the independents).

Both types of schools agree closely in what they see as the main benefits of Latin and Greek. Mental training (intellectual rigour, developing logical and analytical skills) are regarded as more important than mere ‘practical’ aims (clarity of expression, improving English or helping to learn modern languages), although this rank order covers a wide range of opinions.

Both types of school claim a high degree of parental support for Latin/Greek: 91% independent, 71% state. In both cases parental opposition is almost non-existent. Both also claim support from teachers in other departments (75% independent, 58% state) the remainder being mostly indifferent; there is very little opposition from other departments in either type of school.

The main problems faced in teaching classical languages are timetabling and finding or training the staff required. These problems are somewhat worse in the state sector, where 53% say timetabling is a serious problem and 40% staff (equivalent figures for independents are 18% and 20%). A lesser problem is that pupils tend to give up too early (14% state, 18% independent). In open questioning, several respondents expressed a wish that the National Curriculum should give more acceptance to Latin/Greek (23% independents, 28% of state schools).

Ancient History and Classical Civilisation

72% of independents but only 38% of the state schools teach Classical Civilisation. Ancient History is taught by much fewer: only 10% of independent and 6% of the state schools. More than half (58% independents, 53% state) would like to increase numbers if they had more resources.

The most important benefits of studying these subjects were felt to
be ‘ability to understand different points of view’, developing skills of persuasion and argument, and ‘intellectual balance and objectivity’. These were given somewhat more importance than ‘wider understanding of one’s own history/civilisation’ or ‘skill in handling and presenting information’, although there is again a wide range of opinion around these averages and all do have importance. The pattern here was very similar between independent and state schools.

Support for these subjects is again high among both parents and teachers, with almost no opposition. Problems are similar to language teaching, with timetable and lack of staff the most serious (but pupils are less likely to give up these subjects too early). These answers are very similar for both independent and state schools.

Colin McDonald MA FMRS
McDonald Research (http://www.mcdonald-research.com/)

You couldn’t make it up:
improvised drama from Kaloi k’Agathoi
Nico Vaughan

‘IT’S LIKE TAKING the top off an egg,’ declares the prophet Calchas tearfully, drawing back the sacrificial sword to strike cleanly through the neck of Honks, the loveable Beanie Baby goose. Calchas, beneath the red light of the theatre, reads the entreaties on the altar. ‘This goose was born with...’, a tense hush descends, none of the other actors knowing what he will say this time, ‘...three skeletons! That means we will be moored in Aulis until Agamemnon sacrifices a member of his family!’

‘But which member of his family?’ I ask, wily old Odysseus to the core.

‘Only another sacrifice will tell,’ Calchas replies, and asks the audience if anyone else has brought along a small, fluffy animal. A tiger the size of a fortnight-old puppy is willingly handed to the prophet. ‘Ah, India,’ begins Calchas, examining the tag, ‘so endangered you still have your label,’ and proceeds to read a verse of sickening schmaltz inscribed upon it. Soon India has joined Honks and Shweetheart the orangutan in deathly bliss, and it is revealed that Agamemnon must sacrifice his favourite daughter, Iphigenia.

This was during the first act of Kaloi k’Agathoi’s Agamemnon: Aeschylus gets the red carpet treatment for Three Choirs Plus in Hereford, August 2009. Don’t remember this bit from Aeschylus? That’s because Kaloi k’Agathoi chose to devote the first half of their production to enacting a prequel, during which the back stories of Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus and Achilles were described and the events leading to the revenge of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus revealed for all to see (except the sacrifice of Iphigenia herself). As our narrator, Siobhan De Souza - playing the part of pseudo-Aeschylus - explained, the Greek audience would already have been familiar with the stories when seeing Aeschylus’ play. They would have known all about the Beanie Baby executions, and probably all the words to the grimly upbeat songs too, for example Aegisthus to Clytemnestra:

‘There’s no-one who can beat us, ‘No parents left to eat us...’

Not that Act Two of Kaloi k’Agathoi’s new production - Aeschylus’ ‘original’ - is much different in tone. It stays true to his plot, but uses the Kaloi k’Agathoi brand of improvised, musical, self-derogatory, tragi-comedy to tell it.

It is not a format that burst into life fully formed, but rather has been tweaked and perfected, and having had its potential realised, is gaining popularity in schools and through public performances. Partly this is because truly improvised drama is unusual, so much so that even when the show is billed as improvised and explained as such in the programme, subsequent conversation with an audience member frequently follows the lines of:

‘So who wrote the script?’
‘There wasn’t a script.’
‘But you were speaking.’
‘We were making it up as we went along.’
‘But someone must have written it!’
‘No, we made it up!’

The benefits of this format have become clearly apparent. Improvisation allows for such flexibility that the performances are as much workshops as plays, with audience participation a regular, and unfailingly amusing, feature. Each performance can be easily tailored, facilitated by the fact that the company has a range of teaching backgrounds, from primary to A Level.

The format seems beautifully simple, but perhaps because of the simplicity, no-one would have designed it that way from scratch! It has evolved as required, and an observer of the previous Kaloi k’Agathoi events for the Three Choirs Festival fringe in Hereford would have seen this evolution in practice: 2003 saw a performance (with rehearsed lines and everything...) of a new, bawdy translation of Aristophanes’ Frogs, and 2006 witnessed the snappily titled workshop ‘A Herefordian look at the Aristophanic’. And finally, the 2009 Fringe (now named Three Choirs Plus, and run by the Festival proper) included three improvised play-workshops of Agamemnon: Aeschylus gets the red carpet treatment and a Daedalus and Icarus.

All this contributes to a new aim of Kaloi k’Agathoi: to engender an interest in Classics in children from the youngest level, which can be carried through into secondary school and beyond.

Perhaps this will not be too difficult. During one performance of Agamemnon, when the Chorus asked the title character if he had killed Hector, an indignant three year old voice chirped up in the darkness of the audience, ‘No, Achilles killed Hector!’

But not all primary school teachers are classical scholars - or have seen Troy. So, given that the Greeks are a compulsory aspect of the History National Curriculum at Key Stage Two level (it’s called ‘A European History Study’, but Ancient Greece is the only option provided), there are probably a lot of teachers out there faced with a topic they know little about, but which provides a fascinating backdrop for a diversity of subjects: PSHE (democracy), PE (Olympic games) and Literacy (plays) to name a few. And the new initiative to link subjects creatively as much as possible should encourage primary school teachers to examine the potential of Ancient Greece as a vehicle for creative curricula.

Kaloi k’Agathoi intends to be a tool to help these teachers. Bringing ancient stories to life through drama is one aspect. Another is the Romans and Greeks Service recently launched by the company, which, it is hoped, will serve as a resource bank and a forum for the primary teachers seeking to share ideas and those simply trying to find out who these wretched, column-building
people they have to teach about were. The service is in its early stages, and for now restricted to Herefordshire, but with the educational pedigree of Kaloi k’Agathoi, across all ages, growing at an alarming rate it should become a mainstay of the company.

At any rate, the company will continue to develop its repertoire of improvised, educational, musical, tragi-comedies. Surprisingly, there seems to be a niche in the market!

Nico Vaughan
FUNERARY MONUMENTS BRING us face to face with the dead. But it is not any kind of close encounter. The Roman dead are far enough from us not to elicit too much emotion, although their tombs are usually informative and sometimes can even be moving. The problem for teachers on field trips is how to engage pupils with the actual stones so that they become interested in the person commemorated and perhaps even feel some empathy. Stones in museums are not objects which gaudily demand attention and in that respect they can’t compete with the digital technology that serves to interpret them. They are also regularly accompanied by text which explains them and draws attention from the objects themselves. Likewise, when constructing a questionnaire to engage pupils with the real thing, there is a danger that their piece of paper becomes yet another substitute for a romance with the stone.

One solution is to treat them as biographies in stone, an approach which is sometimes highly appropriate in so far as they give us a considerable amount of information about the life of the deceased. Usually some basic details of a career can be found in commemorative texts, but these tend to be generic and not terribly revealing, but occasionally we are lucky enough to get a fuller picture of someone, as we find on the tombstone of Regina at Arbeia (South Shields). This famous memorial to a 30 year old wife reveals that she was British, from the Catuvellauni tribe and that she had once been a slave, most likely of the man who married her. We have the name of her husband, Barates, and we are also told his nationality: he was from Palmyra in Syria, just about the most distant part of the empire from South Shields. This stone raises interesting questions. Firstly one might ask how a British woman became a slave in the late second century AD. Lindsay Allison-Jones finds it hard to explain unless she was sold into slavery by her parents, a practice that was illegal, but probably widespread at the time, sometimes as a method of adoption. If she had not been enslaved in infancy, what would the separation from her family have meant to her? If she had been a slave from a very early age, what effect on her personality and development did her status have? Although there can be no definitive answer to these questions, the focus on her period of slavery makes a strong contrast with the visual impact of this tomb.

Firstly, the grand setting for the figure of Regina demands attention. For she sits under a broken-base pediment embellished by acroteria on each side, cable mouldings on the raking cornice and a beaded moulding on the short sections of horizontal cornice, below which are vestiges of the architrave decorated with an incised fishbone pattern. The niche she occupies is defined by an elliptical arch filling most of the tympanum with its edge defined by a curved cornice also with cable moulding. The niche is also flanked by two pilasters, their capitals adorned with acanthus (?) leaves and more cable moulding. This is an impressive setting for the figure of an ex-slave and the contrast in her fortunes might raise interesting questions about freedom and their evident need to assert their status in their funerary monuments. But there is more. She sits in a wicker chair with a high back above which an oval-shaped object frames her head and with her right hand she holds open a box standing on legs beside her chair. Its crescent decoration, metal fittings and keyhole are carefully depicted, the latter suggesting a box of valuables, in all likelihood jewellery. She seems to invite the viewer to examine the precious contents (unless she’s closing it).

She is also wearing jewellery. Easy to see are the bracelets and matching necklace, but the earrings only become apparent on close examination since her face has been broken off. This damage has also affected her hair, but we can still see ringslets falling down onto her shoulders, indicative of a careful coiffure. Her dress consists of a long tunic which hangs loosely down to her shins and an under-tunic which reaches her ankles and is also clearly visible at the neck and detectable under the tunic’s short sleeves just below the elbows. A replica of the stone has given the two tunics different colours, which makes them much easier to distinguish. Visually Regina is presented as a wealthy woman whose previous servile status would be difficult to guess, given her opulent surroundings and adornment.

She is also presented as a virtuous wife. In her left hand she holds what appear to be of a spindle and distaff, while a basket with balls of yarn stands beside her chair. In a household which could afford an elaborate tombstone and whose wealth is advertised on it, one might perhaps expect that the menial tasks of wool working would be done by slaves. However, Regina may well have been a capable spinner and weaver too, and she may have continued in those occupations as a married woman, even if her role was now mainly supervisory. Since wool working was a traditional wifey virtue, could Regina’s spinning equipment be more symbolic than practical? At least it tells us that Barates wanted her to be remembered as a respectable matron. But there is more: on this stone we seem to find an expression of emotion which suggests Barates felt a real affection for his wife. In Palmyrene script below the Latin is the inscription, ‘Regina, the freedwoman of Barates, alas.’ Yet, if this is from the heart, why does he only use the term ‘freedwoman’?

Regina is an exceptional case, but other, less elaborate stones can provide much of interest. Aurelia Aureliana in the Great North Museum was found in Carlisle. The sculpture is comparatively chunky, but nevertheless she is given a grand send-off with her figure standing in a niche represented by an arch and flanked by two engaged columns with bases and plain capitals from which stylized leaves extend to support the arch and pinecone finials. Her inscription reveals that she died at the age of 41 and was survived by her husband Ulpian Apolinarius who set up the stone to his dearly beloved wife (contagi curantis). While her husband’s sentiments might be sincere, they are expressed in a standard formula. She herself stands facing the viewer. Her long hair falls to her shoulders and she is undecorated at any jewellery. However she does wear what is rather misleadingly called a ‘Gallic coat’. It is a very wide tunic which fell in deep vertical folds from the arms and elbows and was not gathered at the waist by a belt or girdle. The garment was worn by both sexes, usually knee length by men and ankle or calf length by women. Aurelia seems to wear a version that has a panel of decoration down the middle in contrast to the outer tunic (or Gallic coat) worn by Regina. Alternatively, it could be a different garment that perhaps opened down the middle. It may be of a heavier cloth too, unless the sculptor was not skilful enough to represent finer material. Aurelia also has what is probably a fringed cloak, represented with thick folds and thrown over her right shoulder while in her left hand she holds a bunch of flowers, possibly poppies symbolising the sleep of death.

With a less substantial biography available for Aurelia, her stone seems to require a different approach. Both these stones provide ample evidence for textiles, and questions about the clothing, or the woolworking equipment of Regina will certainly demand that pupils look carefully at the stones.

Many tombstones offer us no more than an inscription and, as the texts are often accompanied by a translation, they present a different challenge to the two stones we have so far considered. The inscriptions below, from the Great North Museum, are accompanied by a digital display which offers translations and an audio recording of the Latin. The inscriptions can therefore be studied without reference to the stones at all, but there is also a potential advantage in not having information right beside the stones, if only eyes can be enticed in the right direction. What follows are some draft examples of questionnaires that try to make students look at the objects carefully. They may not be entirely successful, and they may not
answer to everyone's need, but they are presented as examples to prompt further thought about questionnaire design. Asking the right sort of question, appropriate to the experience of the pupils, is obviously a key part of the exercise, but there is another important consideration. If the questionnaires are going to have a life beyond the immediate moment in the museum gallery, they also need to be designed to survive in a useful form. For this reason, these questionnaires wherever possible have a picture of the stone which gives the student a reliable visual representation for future study. Sometimes there may be value in asking students to sketch a stone, but often the complexity of the image is too great for their drawing skills to do justice to the original. On the other hand, a sketch obviously requires detailed attention to be paid to the object. The first two examples feature stones at Arbeia and aim to stimulate ideas about creating a biography for the two deceased. The second questionnaire on Regina is designed for the study of textiles and approaches the subject in an entirely different way. Aurelia's stone is approached with a varied focus, while the remaining examples from the Great North Museum are all directed towards reading the Latin texts. Some simple questions, suitable for those learning to read military tombstones in the Cambridge Latin Course are used, while other questions try to make the students look carefully at the inscriptions on the stones. The ploy adopted for the Anicius Ingenuus inscription should introduce pupils to the skills of the stonemason, and the mistakes that can happen.

Alan Beale

Sample Questionnaires

**Find the tombstone of Victor and look at the inscription.**

What was his nationality?
Write down the Latin numerals which show old he was when he died?
What was his status?
What was the name of his former master?
What was his former master's rank and in which unit did he serve?

The inscription ends qui | piantissime pr[ose]qu[utus est = 'who most devotedly conducted him to the tomb'. Look at the tombstone carefully and say what you think it tells you about his former master's attitude to Victor.

Bearing in mind his former master's rank, what sort of jobs might Victor have done for him?

Victor may be depicted taking part in his own funeral banquet. What is he reclining on and how carefully is it portrayed?

Who is the small figure and what is he doing?

Is there enough information on this tombstone to write Victor's story?

**Find the tombstone of Regina.**

Think about writing her biography.
What clues are here?

Her age?
Her nationality?
Husband's nationality?
How might they have met?
What is in her left hand?
Describe her costume?
What jewellery is she wearing?
Why is she holding a box open?
Describe her chair

What indications of affection for his wife can you detect on the stone?

Make a list of 3 other things you would like to know about Regina in order to write her biography:
1.
2.
3.

**Find the tombstone of Aurelia Lupula**

(a) Who set this stone up?

(b) What was his relation to the deceased?
(Latin.........................)

(c) Which Latin word suggests their relationship was affectionate?

(d) How is it translated?

(e) Translate the final abbreviation (SIT TIBI TERRA LEVIS) and copy it as it appears on the stone.
Find the tombstone of Aurelia Aureliana

Look carefully at Aurelia’s clothes. What do you think she is holding across her right shoulder?

Describe her tunic, or label the picture, noting how it fits and how long it is.

What is Aurelia holding in her left hand?

Judging from the tombstone, how wealthy do you think Ulpius Apolinaris was? You should consider the size of the stone, the quantity and quality of carving and the inscription.

Why do you think that she was once drawn as a man in the 19th C?

Find the tombstone of Anicius Ingenuus

Look carefully at the stone and copy the missing parts of the inscription on this drawing. Think about layout before you start.

Are there any defects in the original layout?

What special rank did Anicius Ingenuus have?

What unit did he serve in?

What animal is carved above the inscription?

How old was he when he died?

Find the tombstone of Lucius Novellius Lanuccus

What was his status
(Latin ........................R..................)

How old was he when he died?

Who had this stone set up?
(Latin ........................)

What letter is missing before C at the end?
On the following transcription, mark the ends of lines with a straight line. Bracket the parts of words which do not appear on the stone. In the square brackets add the missing word.

DIS MANIBUS LUCIUS NOVELLIUS LANUCCUS CIVIS ROMANUS ANNORUM LXX NOVELLIA IUSTINA FILIA [ ] CURAVIT

Find the tombstone of Regina.

Regina is depicted sitting on a wicker chair and opening a small chest with her right hand.

What can be seen in the basket beside her left foot?

What do you think she is holding in her left hand?

Label the drawing, pointing out features of her dress and hairstyle, and all items of jewellery she is wearing.
Obituary:
Mary Beachcroft
29 June 1914 – 25 January 2010

Many of us who have attended ARLT Summer Schools and Refresher Days over the years will have good cause to remember Mary with affection and thanks. For about half a century she was a leading figure in the ARLT, being the Hon. Sec. for Archaeological Aids for many years and the keeper of records in the form of the photograph albums which are such a valuable historical record of the activities and personalities of our Association. She was honoured to be made a Vice President for her services to the ARLT, and continued to take a keen interest in its doings even though she was unable through frailty and ill health in her later years to participate as an active member.

Mary did her Classics degree at Bedford College, University of London, and went on to do a PGCE at the London University Institute of Education, where she was a contemporary of Belinda Dennis, another well-loved past member of ARLT. In the holidays of these years she fulfilled her passion for archaeology, and particularly enjoyed a dig with Sir Mortimer Wheeler at Maiden Castle.

Her first two years of teaching were at Felixstowe College, followed by four years at Sherborne School for Girls. She left Sherborne, although teaching was a reserved occupation, because she felt, having lost two brothers in the war, that she wanted to play her part in the war effort; so she joined the ATS and received her commission; she was in charge of the units attached to the RAOC and looked after the drivers, vehicles and stores until she moved to a holding unit for girls in London.

She was demobilised in 1946 and, feeling rusty as far as Classics teaching was concerned, decided to attend an ARLT Summer School to bring herself up-to-date; and from then onwards she became a familiar face at these events.

After a teaching post at Cheadle Hulme co-educational school, she joined Berkhamsted School for Girls as Senior Classics Mistress in 1950, and it was there that she was destined to spend the remainder of her teaching career. She was one of the teachers who piloted the Nuffield Latin Scheme (better known to us nowadays as the Cambridge Latin Course); she regularly took pupils to the Bradfield Greek plays, and prepared them for Latin and Greek Reading Competitions. She was also known as a star producer of plays within the school - for both girls and staff; her Medea of 50 or so years ago was remembered with great awe by her colleagues. For many years Mary was responsible for organising the London Area Classical Reading Competition.

At Summer Schools Mary regularly led Reading Groups on various authors (Cicero was a favourite) and a large number of us, myself included, have good reason to be grateful to her for passing on her expertise to us younger teachers, especially with regard to the niceties of the correct pronunciation. The last Summer School she attended was in 1996 at Lord Wandsworth College; by this time her increasing deafness was making it difficult to participate in the way she would have wished, so to her great disappointment she felt she should give up playing an active part in the Association which she had served so well for so many years.

"May her body rest in peace
And may her spirit dance in the Elysian Fields"

Janet Liddicoat