LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the second in the new series of the Occasional Classicist. I write at the end of the second semester (Spring 2021) of the extraordinary three-semester long 2020-2021. In this time of a global pandemic, I hope that you and your loved ones are well and safe. That hope is one tinged with sadness that some of our community will have experienced loss as those near and dear have passed during the Coronavirus crisis of 2020 and 2021.

Brown University responded to the Coronavirus situation by re-shaping the school year and the teaching environment. Although we are living through a difficult period, the Classics Faculty, Graduate and Undergraduate students, and Administrative team, have carried on with considerable resilience and goodwill, adapting to online meetings and teaching, and doing as best as one can to maintain research activity. Many students have had to deal with varying challenges brought about by the crisis and we wish you all a better summer and look forward to seeing you in the new academic year.

To adapt to the situation, members of the Classics Department hosted several events online. Elsa Amanatidou organized a very successful series of Modern Greek Studies talks; Johanna Hanink developed her ongoing discussions with recently published authors; and the regular Charles Robinson Jr. and Putnam lectures were also online events this year. It was a pleasure to see so many students, past and present, attending these occasions.

This year we have been able to welcome Dr. Avery Willis Hoffman, who arrived at Brown in January 2021 as Director of what has recently become the Brown Arts Initiative, as Professor of the Practice of Classics. We have also been able to celebrate the fact that from July 1, Amy Russell will become Associate Professor (with tenure) and Johanna Hanink will become full Professor. Both richly deserve their promotions. Stevie Hull and Avi Kapach both produced excellent dissertations and secured their Ph.D. in Classics; Kelly Nguyen has had several successes, become the first woman to be awarded a Ph.D. in Ancient History at Brown, and will take up a position at Berkeley in Fall 2021 (you can read about her later in this issue).

This year, more than ever, I extend heartfelt thanks to our Faculty. They continue to deliver excellent courses, recently under very different conditions from normal. I also thank our Graduate students who, despite very challenging moments in accessing research materials, continue to progress their research, and to achieve their course requirements. A bit of debt is owed to our Administrative team of Justine Brown and Tiffany Lewis who have always gone above and beyond to support our community. And last but not least, many thanks go to the editorial team for the OC, Joe Pucci (Professor of Classics and in the Program in Medieval Studies), Justine Brown (Academic Department Manager), Tiffany Lewis (Administrative Assistant), and Susan Tang (Class of ’23).

It is a privilege to be the Chair of the Classics Department. Our wider Classics community beyond Brown always impresses upon me what it means to have been part of Classics at Brown. Let us all continue to enjoy our shared delight in being part of that community.

Enjoy the Summer!

Graham Oliver
Department Chair
Though the concentrators in Classics for 2020 were not able to gather in May with family and friends for the traditional graduation ceremony in Manning Chapel, we are able here to celebrate their accomplishments in brief. Our concentrators (and, in fact, our students generally) continue to dazzle us with their eclectic creativity, to impress us with their wide learning and scholarly acumen, and to inspire us with their commitments to making the world a better, fairer place.

The Classics Department's 2020 graduates are listed below:

**BACHELOR DEGREE RECIPIENTS**

**PETER CHO**
A.B. Classics; Sc.B. Computer Science, Magna Cum Laude

**VANESSA CLEMENTS**
A.B. Classics; Applied Mathematics

**JAMES FLYNN**
A.B. Greek & Latin; Cognitive Neuroscience (with honors)

**AUGUST “ALFIE” FUERTES**
A.B. Latin; Archaeology and the Ancient World

**REBECCA HARLESS**
A.B. Classics

**JONATHAN HESS**
A.B. Latin; Physics (with honors)

**SHAWN KANT**
A.B. Classics; Neuroscience, Magna Cum Laude

**JAЕ KIM**
A.B. Latin; Economics (with honors)

**CAMERON KINDER**
A.B. Classics

**VICTORIA ROBINSON LANSING**
A.B. Latin; Archaeology and the Ancient World (with honors), Magna Cum Laude

**JP MAYER**
A.B. Latin; Literary Arts (with honors), Magna Cum Laude

**DEAN MILKEY**
A.B. Classics

**SYLVIA E. NACAR**
A.B. Greek & Latin (with honors); Mathematics, Magna Cum Laude

**DALENA NGUYEN**
A.B. Latin; Education Studies (Human Development Track)

**JOHN DAVID O’DONNELL**
A.B. Latin; Economics, Magna Cum Laude

**ZANE YU**
A.B. Classics; Biology

**Masters and Doctoral Degree Recipients**

**JUSTIN BYRD**
A.M. Classics

**GAIA GIANNI**
Ph.D., Classics

**TRIGG SETTLE**
A.M., Classics

**ERIKA VALDIVIESO**
Ph.D., Classics

For more information about our 2020 graduates and their accomplishments, please visit [https://www.brown.edu/academics/classics/alumnae/recent-graduates/class-2020](https://www.brown.edu/academics/classics/alumnae/recent-graduates/class-2020)
Teaching a course while living on another continent in the midst of a global pandemic presented me with the biggest challenge of my time as an instructor at Brown. Prof. Ken Sacks and my fellow Teaching Assistants, Marko Vitas and Ella Kirsh, and I had agreed early on that we would abandon a reliance on conventional assessments, such as student papers, to make room for more creative engagement with the world of Greek philosophy, early Judaism and Christianity, and the rise of Islam, covered by the course. This was Ella’s suggestion – she had used it in previous courses – and it was a marvellous one. The students seemed a little wary at our first section meeting when I explained to them that they could replace their assigned papers with projects of their own choosing, but by the end of the semester many had fully embraced the spirit of alternative assessment, with some spectacular results.

Poetry on the rise of Christianity as a major world faith; dramatic scenes and letters by imagined ancient characters explaining the impulse to change religious experiences in the shifting world of late antiquity; some memorable podcasts; photo essays on the Greek influence on Roman architecture; and projects on obscure Christian poets writing in Latin, are just a few of the innovative projects students pursued in order to accept the challenge with such enthusiasm for the course. This undoubtedly suits many. But broadening the bounds of the acceptable in class submissions allows students to play to their strengths in creative writing, music, or the creation of media content in ways that are not only highly enjoyable for the instructor, but also potentially of benefit to the students themselves. For some students, it might be helpful for their preferred careers to have a portfolio of podcast-style presentations or musical compositions, for example. For other students, flexibility in assessment addresses vital questions of accessibility; in an age where we all have to be looking at screens for hours at a time every day, even the opportunity to present an essay orally and give the eyes and mind a rest from the laptop is potentially most welcome!

I think embracing alternative assignments such as these allowed our class to adapt itself to suit the needs of as many students as possible over what was an extraordinarily difficult semester. Traditional papers will never go away: plenty of students chose simply to complete the essay assignments as specified in the original class syllabus, and this is a mode of assessment which undoubtedly suits many. But broadening the bounds of the acceptable in class submissions allows students to see every week over Zoom actually were as people.

Through these creative assignments, I found students eager to learn about concepts they had never encountered before and able and willing to draw on expertise from other subject areas to interpret the unfamiliar texts and historical contexts: a true testament to the open minds and intellectual curiosity of Brown undergraduates!
is separate from the others, but when you look closer, each building is actually continuous with the one next to it, with columns that have their base on one building extending to a different structure entirely. Through this, I wanted to show that although the classical languages and their respective cultures, histories, etc. may initially seem disparate, they are actually interconnected.

Helen will receive her prize once there is more of a normal and consistent presence on campus for students and staff. Congratulations to Helen on her beautiful design!

MEET THE UNDERGRADUATES

MIA BROSSOIE, '22 A.B. GREEK & LATIN

My first encounter with Classics was in middle school when I elected to take Latin for its exciting tales of gods and mythical creatures. In high school, after trying my hand at Mandarin Chinese, I found myself returning to Latin after only one week of being apart. In my fourth year, I took IB HL Latin (Virgil and love poetry options) and only became more attached to the language. At that point, I realized that Classics was something I'd be interested in pursuing further in college. Upon arriving at Brown, I initially intended to concentrate in Biology and Classics (Latin track), but after taking a variety of Latin and Classics courses, I began to lose interest in STEM and became increasingly interested in Classics and its adjacent topics. This broader interest led me to also declare a concentration in Medieval Studies on the Late Antiquity Culture track.

I'm primarily interested in the literature of Late Antiquity and the ways in which authors engage with prior literary traditions. This semester, I'm enrolled in an independent tutorial with Professor Pucci that explores several female authors, some in the original Latin and some in translation, and their varied experiences as being “other” and their feelings of alienation from society. We started off with Perpetua and her supposed diary, the Passio, and Egeria and her Itinerarium. We're also looking to Dhuoda’s Liber Manualis and Proba’s Cento Virgilianus. These texts offer interesting insights into the relationship between identity and voice in literature. Important questions arise when thinking about genuine female voices in literature as opposed to male ventriloquist (for example, Ovid’s Heroïdes) and these questions are particularly important when examining the study of Classics and its role in upholding narratives that have gone unchallenged for decades.

CAL CHEN, '22 A.B. CLASSICS

My name is Cal, and I am a junior from Shanghai, China studying Classics and Computer Science–Economics. I chose to study Latin in high school because I wanted to learn a language that is as old (or almost as old) as Chinese, my native language. I soon fell in love with the witty and passionate poetry of Catullus, the cocky yet comprehensive narrative of Julius Caesar, and the fantastical myths in Ovid’s Metamorphoses. When I came to Brown, the first Classics seminar I took was Professor Pucci’s “Idea of Self,” which centers on expressions of selfhood in classical and medieval poetry. Through our discussions of Sappho and Catullus, among other authors, I gained a new interest in classical lyric poetry, which has been a focus of my academic journey since then. Curious about the intersections between the classical tradition and my own culture, I have also compared ancient Greek and Roman poets to contemporary Chinese poets such as Bei Dao and analyzed similarities in their reflections on war and human conflicts. This October, I expect to continue my studies in Classics at St. Anne’s College in Oxford, which houses one of the three surviving copies of Catullus’ manuscript.

Outside of Classics, I have tried to take full advantage of Brown’s Open Curriculum: I have taken classes on Logic, Russian Literature, Gender Studies, Political Science, and (of course) Computer Science and Economics. While these subjects may appear very different, I see a lot of parallels and overlaps between them. They allow me to look at the world from different perspectives. In my spare time, I work part-time as a Student Technician in the Media Services department on campus, where I help troubleshoot technical issues in classrooms and on Zoom (I am actually assigned to help Professor Pucci’s seminar on “Literary Worlds of Late Antiquity” this semester). I currently live in downtown Providence, where I am working hard to sharpen my cooking and baking skills under the guidance of my roommates.

COLIN OLSON, '23 A.B. GREEK & LATIN

I came into my first semester at Brown all but sure that I would be taking 8 semesters worth of Latin classes, focusing on the literary output of the Augustan Age, while possibly trying my hand at International Relations. However, that picture of my incumbent time at Brown began to dissipate at a rather rapid pace on the first day of shopping period. This is not to say that I wasn’t enjoying my Latin; far from it, Professor Pucci’s course on the Confessions had me practically jumping off the chair. However, that picture of my incumbent time at Brown began to dissipate at a rather rapid pace on the first day of shopping period. This is not to say that I wasn’t enjoying my Latin; far from it, Professor Pucci’s course on the Confessions had me practically jumping out of my seat, but the previously-foreign world of Ancient History now demanded attention. On the first day of Archaic Greek History, I found myself to be overwhelmed. I was nervous. It was my first ever college course. I knew I would have to be able to understand the material, and to be honest, I had no idea what the Greek Archaic Period was.

While my excitement for Greek History had grown to a climax by the time Darius and Xerxes first appeared in our textbook, this new-found passion brought with it a great degree of anxiety. My next vision of my future at Brown had now experienced at least ten revisions with every development lending more and more time to pursuing Ancient History. By the time Xerxes was heading home, leaving Mardonius to care for the last of the Persian troops still in Greece, I was completely sold. Only one question remained: what to do next?

While Classical Greek History was a no-brainer (and still is a no-brainer for my peers who have years at Brown left and for those who will someday arrive on campus), I was hungry for a bigger picture. First and foremost, a terrifying realization began creeping into my consciousness—it was time to learn Ancient Greek. High school had seen me take one year of Ancient Greek which had the ultimate effect of convincing me that Ancient Greek was impossible; on the one hand, I could only get through present indicative endings, and, on the other, an ability even just to recite and recognize the alphabet had taken me longer than I care to relate. However, Ancient History was telling me to give Greek another chance and, having spoken to Professor Pucci and Professor Oliver, I was ready to take my leap of faith. Spending ten weeks of my summer drowning in Hansen and Quinnen’s introductory Greek textbook was no simple task. Taking online classes through the University of California at Berkeley, I often found myself isolated at late hours of the night trying to un-
A Freshman's Journey in Classics

KATHERINE VAN RIPER, '23 A.B. LATIN

I came into Brown as a freshman eager to continue studying Latin like I had in high school, but definitely more focused on concentrating in English. I wasn't sure what college Latin would look like, but I decided to try Professor Pucci’s seminar on St. Augustine’s Confessions. I left the first week of classes blown away at my classmates’ comments about the resonances of Classical Latin in Augustine’s prose. With the kind guidance of Professor Pucci, I realized that studying Classics in college combined my love for the Latin language with the literary analysis I enjoyed so much in English class.

My path to Brown Classics was not entirely random; my dad, Ran Van Riper, concentrated in Classics at Brown, studying Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit and graduating in 1988. Over parents’ weekend, my dad came to visit me, and we walked around campus together revisiting some of his favorite spots on College Hill. Macfarlane House was a star feature of that tour. As we revisited some of his favorite spots on College Hill, my dad told me about his experiences studying Classics at Brown, and I learned that my dad once read the Aeneid in Professor Putnam’s class. I took Imperial Roman History with Professor Bodel last fall, only to discover that Professor Bodel had also taught my dad during graduate school.

Now a second-semester sophomore, I have continued to explore late Latin with Professor Pucci in classes like “Alcuin” and the “Literary Worlds of Late Antiquity,” connecting these texts to my interest in religious studies and early Christian culture. Last semester, I dove into Latin love elegy with Professor DeBrohun and will continue to study with her this semester as we read Virgil’s Eclogues and Georgics. Latin literature has come alive for me, shaping my interests in English literature as well. My favorite projects have been ones where I can examine an English author’s classical roots or influences, like a paper I wrote last semester about Livy’s presence in Shakespeare’s epyllion “The Rape of Lucrece. Over the next two years, I’m looking forward to studying new authors and, whenever possible, experiencing traditions like the Latin Carol Celebration again!

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TEACHING IN A PANDEMIC: ADJUSTING TO A NEW NORMAL

BENJAMIN DRIVER, Ph.D. CLASSICS:

I taught Herodotus to introductory Greek students this past semester, though it was an experience unlike any other as students were both in the classroom and online. It was difficult to manage so many different screens and voices which were sometimes disembodied, but the students had a positive attitude and a determination to persevere. One particular challenge was the reticence of many of the students at the beginning of the term. I think this was caused by the lack of community—people sometimes feel safer speaking and sharing with those whom they’ve met in person. I remedied this by assigning a student leader for each class, who prepared the assigned reading extra well, and fielded questions from fellow students during class, rather than me taking on that role exclusively. The students spoke more after and during this change, so I think it was a success! All the same, Herodotus is a joy, and the class was fun and educational for the students. The times may change, but Herodotus remains a classic, which helped them get through the term with more than a few smiles.

MAC CARLEY, Ph.D. CLASSICS:

This fall, I was the Teaching Fellow for Latin 300: Introduction to Latin Literature. While it was certainly an unconventional first teaching experience, my students and I were able to adjust to discussing Cicero’s Catilinarian orations through Zoom issues, remote learning, and a global pandemic. I feel grateful to have had the opportunity to work with my group of friendly and enthusiastic sophomore students. We used online tools such as screen sharing and course Google Docs to simulate the in-class experience of a chalkboard. In class discussions, I emphasized the cooperative experience that remote learning offers; we explored different theories of translation and literary interpretation. At every turn, the students surprised me with the generosity of spirit they offered to each other and to me, and it was ultimately this sense of intellectual collaboration that made Latin 300 a positive academic experience for all of us.

NEWS FROM OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

GRADUATE ACTIVITIES

SAM BUTLER, Ph.D. ANCIENT HISTORY:

The outbreak of the global pandemic found me on the island of Crete, during what should have been the penultimate trip while a regular member of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. Unfortunately, not only that trip, but the rest of the program was cut short, and most regular members returned to North America in early March amidst fears that flights would be cancelled. So instead of returning from a year abroad to the familiar comfort of departmental life, I began the long life of quarantine that so many of us have come to know. Yet while I was sad to miss the last few months of the program in Greece (especially a trip to the Isle of Delos), I am grateful for the six months I had at the American School. It was a once in a lifetime chance to visit a staggering number of ancient sites in Greece while forming friendships with other Ph.D. students that will last a lifetime.

AVICHAI KAPACH, Ph.D. CLASSICS:

My piece “The Art of Mythical History and the Temporality of the Athenian Epitaphioi Logoi” is forthcoming in Trends in Classics. This paper examines the use of myth and history in the Athenian public funeral speeches (epitaphioi logoi), with the specific aim of revisiting earlier scholars’ views on the use of time in these speeches. In October, 2020, I presented a paper at the Exeter Works in Progress seminar series, entitled “Sailing to Troy: Allusion and the Pluralism of the Past in Homeric Epic.” This paper studies allusions made in the Homeric epics to the period immediately preceding the Trojan War, during which the Greeks prepared for the war, noting how the contradictory nature of these allusions have important implications for our understanding of how the past is conceived in the Homeric epics. In November, at a conference sponsored by the Universities in Wales Institute of Classics and Ancient History, on “Themes in Isolation” I delivered a paper entitled “The Solitude of Anna Soror: Inter-textuality, Wordplay, and National Identity in Silius Italicus Punica 8.1-231.” This paper discusses Silius Italicus’ reception of the literary character Anna, the sister of the Carthaginian queen Dido, making the case that though Silius Italicus differed from his immediate source Ovid in his presentation of Anna’s story, both poets ultimately constructed Anna as the last of the Carthaginians. Finally, at this year’s annual meeting of the Society for Classical Studies, I delivered a paper to the Society for Ancient Religions’ panel devoted to the theme “Laughing with the Gods: Religion in Greek and Roman Satire, Comedy, Epigram, and Other Comedic Genres;” my paper was entitled “Heracles’ Inheritance and Other Paradoxes: Aristophanes on Euripides and the Anthropomorphism of the Gods.” It argues that Aristophanes’ depiction of the gods presupposes a strictly anthropomorphic notion of divinity which becomes especially apparent in his criticisms of the contemporary tragedian Euripides’ depiction of the gods.

Presenting a paper virtually is a strange combination of convenient and unnerving. Given everything that is
NEWS FROM OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

ITAMAR LEVIN, Ph.D. ANCIENT HISTORY:

The International Conference in Classics and Ancient History (Coimbra, June 2021) assumes the role of a forum. The conference offers various panels that relate to all aspects of life in classical antiquity, including — perhaps ironically — death. The panel on necropolitics examines the applicability of this Foucauldian framework in ancient Greece. Building on Foucault’s conception of biopolitics, Achille Mbembe coined the term “necropolitics” to address the subjugation of life to the power of death, especially in light of the destructive potential of modern weaponry. Banu Bargu had extended the definition to include all forms of practices that target death to employ power on the living. In my talk, “Two are Better than One,” I return to Foucault’s comprehension of power as a constructive force. Whereas scholars usually associate necropolitics with the mutilation of corpses and graves, I apply it also to the performance of funerals and the building of tombs. With this idea in mind, I explore the funerary practices for the war dead in fifth-century Athens. Due to new regulations and customs, grave markers dated to ca. 490–430 are abruptly missing in archeology. According to the prevalent assumption in scholarship, since the city monopolized the commemoration of the war dead, family tombs became illegitimate. I challenge this perception, suggesting that families never fully concealed their privileges. Instead, they continuously erected cenotaphs as an addition to the mass grave built at public expense.

MARKO VITAS, Ph.D. CLASSICS:

As a unique feature of Brown’s graduate education, the Open Graduate Education Program permits select Brown Ph.D. students to pursue an M.A. in a secondary discipline in addition to the Ph.D. they are already pursuing in their own field. The idea is to allow these students to gain a rare combination of skills that will enable them to write a dissertation from a unique academic perspective.

My secondary discipline is Assyriology and Egyptology. I would like to work on cultural connections in the ancient Mediterranean in the late 2nd and early 1st millennium B.C.E. — more specifically, how the connections between Egypt, Anatolia and Greece helped shape the earliest extant examples of the Greek literature, most notably the Homeric epic poems. As a Classicist, I have a firm grasp of the Greek perspective, but in order to pursue this research direction it is absolutely necessary to have an equally solid understanding of the other cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and their languages.

The fields of Classics and of Assyriology and Egyptology are closely related since they both explore, broadly speaking, ancient cultures of the Mediterranean, but they are in fact very different. First of all, a knowledge of different sets of languages is required (Greek and Latin for the one; Sumerian, Akkadian and Egyptian, among other ancient Near Eastern languages, for the other). Secondly, major literary texts from Mesopotamia and Egypt did not come down to us through a manuscript tradition, but are preserved on tablets, stones and stelas, which in turn means that the discipline has never been divorced from the materiality of texts, and that a great deal of archaeological skillfulness is always involved in interpreting them.

Already before embarking on the M.A. program, I had taken courses in Akkadian and audited courses in Middle Egyptian. In the Winter Semester 2020 I took an Akkadian seminar on Babylonian Medicine. In the Spring Semester of 2021 and later semesters I plan to take further courses that will help me improve my language skills and acquire a deeper insight into historical, intellectual and cultural perspectives of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

I spent most of the Spring and Winter Semesters 2020 working from home, i.e. my flat in Belgrade (Serbia), in the Central European time zone. Apart from embarking on the Open Graduate Education Program, I have won the CAMWS Presidential Award For Outstanding Graduate Student Papers for my paper on Pindar (“Name Replacement as a Stylistic Device in Pindar’s Epinician Odes”), which I presented during the online edition of the CAMWS conference on 27 May 2020. I also presented another paper on Pindar (“Pindar’s Losers”) at the CUNY Graduate Center’s 13th Annual Conference on Shame and Honor in Classical Antiquity, on 23 October 2020.
Kelly Nguyen's research and scholarship have been most notable in the past year, in which she won the Erich S. Gruen Prize for the best graduate paper on multiculturalism in the ancient Greek and Latin tradition. In 2021, she was the recipient of a Stanford Pre-doctoral Fellowship. Nguyen successfully defended her dissertation on February 16, 2021.

Congratulations on your recent publication in Classical Receptions Journal! We know it received a lot of positive attention and generated a lot of buzz. Can you speak a little bit about the feedback you received for this piece?

Thank you! My article analyzes the life and work of Pham Duy Khiem, the first Vietnamese classicist and a prominent student of the renowned leader in mid-20th century Vietnam. I explore how Pham Duy Khiem used the ancient Greek and Latin classical tradition to challenge colonial power dynamics and to explore his own intercultural identity. I stumbled across Pham Duy Khiem as I was investigating the history of Classics in Vietnam. Previous scholarship in Classical Reception has overlooked the long and fraught relationship between the Greek and Roman classical tradition and Vietnam. Most people are shocked to hear that there is even a relationship, and yet one just has to look at Vietnam's writing system to see the remnants of that relationship: Vietnamese is one of the few Asian languages in which a classical, regional written script has been officially Romanized. What's more, Greek and Roman antiquity played a key role in shaping the Vietnamese national identity, which is still evident in Vietnamese culture today. The result is a fascinating story about how Classics have been reworked well-known Greek and Roman classical motifs to counter Vietnamese people by relegating them to the margins of history with racist stereotypes. The index of Achilles in Vietnamese is one of the few Asian languages in which a classical, regional written script has been officially Romanized.

How can the COVID-19 pandemic interfere with or alter your research in terms of both scope and practice?

In its current form, my dissertation explores the relationship between Greek-Roman antiquity and Vietnamese communities in the context of Western imperialism from the French colonial era in the mid-19th century to the present post-colonial moment. Originally the scope of my dissertation was limited to the French colonial period in Vietnam (1864-1954), and Latin as a means to curb access to French schools. As I dove into Pham Duy Khiem's work, I became fascinated by his subversive use of Classics to ultimately challenge the perceived inferiority of Vietnamese people and to create a "third space" that transcended the binary of colonizer and colonized. I decided to share his story as a window into the history of Vietnamese intellectualism in the field of Classics.

The article also serves as an intervention in previous classical reception studies that do touch upon "Vietnam," but only as a metonym of the Vietnam War. One of the earliest and most influential examples is Jonathan Shay's "Achilles in Vietnam" (1993), which uses the Homeric Iliad to better understand post-traumatic stress in American veterans from the Vietnam War. Shay's work has shaped an entire subfield of Classical Reception in which classical texts are used to comparatively study combat trauma in the ancient and modern worlds. However, while works like Shay's elucidate the experiences of American veterans, they disremember Vietnamese people by relegating them to the margins of history with racist stereotypes. The index of Achilles in Vietnam provides a striking example of Vietnamese disrememberance: "Vietnamese" does not appear as a stand-alone gloss—in its place is "Vietcong," with the additional gloss "See enemy, Vietnamese." The wider aim of my article therefore is to ethically remember Vietnamese people beyond the Ameriocentric memory of the Vietnam War.

As you probably know, the Classics isn't known to be the most diverse field of study. As a woman of color, what do you think the Classics can do to become more diverse, inclusive, and accessible?

I am slated to be the first woman, and of course the first woman of color, to receive a doctorate from the Ancient History Program. And to top it all off, I'm a refugee! It has not been an easy road, I also had to go on my own— I have benefited from excellent mentors and allies. In my personal experience, Classics from becoming more inclusive is educational inequity, especially in ancient history, as many students are fortunate enough to find these mentors. We cannot rely on luck; there needs to be institutional change. What Classics departments need to ask themselves is how they can disrupt this status quo and increase access to educational opportunities.

This past November, I attended an inspiring event about decolonizing Classics, hosted by undergraduate students at Oxford University. One of the speakers, Dan-El Padilla Peralta, described the process of decolonizing Classics as "an exercise in redistributive justice." This struck me profoundly. I think Classics can become more diverse, inclusive, and accessible by applying this frame of thinking. On an individual level, how can we leverage our position to help others succeed? On an institutional level, how can we redistribute our resources to increase educational equity? The Classics Department at Brown is already starting to do this: before the pandemic, there were plans to provide free summer educational opportunities to the wider Providence community. In addition to such community-oriented programs, graduate students in the department have also proposed online language instruction and financial investment in the community.

Classics is, of course, the study of classical antiquity. Why do you think Classics is still relevant in the 21st century?

In its narrowest form, Classics is the study of the culture, history, and literature of the ancient Greek and Roman world, and even in its wider forms, what my advisor, Johanna Hanink, has coined as "Critical Classical Reception". This narrow approach does not represent the field of Classics since it would pull in tenets from other "critical studies" ar- eas such as Cultural Studies, Critical Refugee Studies, Critical Ethic Studies, and Critical Gender Studies) to diversify scholarship within the field of Classics, whose histories have been dominated by white men. I believe that this development in Classics would not only open up the field for many more students, but it by its engagement with con-temporary issues in meaningful ways. For example, in my dissertation, I en-gage with critical race, postcolonial, queer and feminist theories to provide insight into the process of decoloniza-tion, both within and beyond the field of Classics. In a future project, I plan to analyze refugee history in the Roman world and the U.S. through the lens of Critical Refugee Studies. This compar-ative approach allows to explore the status and identity of academics in the fields of both the contemporary nation-state and to ultimately engage in the current debate on the definition of refugees.

Where do you hope to see Classics go in the future?

Greek and Roman antiquity have long played major roles in construct-ing and sanctioning violent societal structures, such as racism, national-ism and colonialism. The field of Classics itself has long been entrenched in Eurocentrism— its name, along with its capital C, betrays the exceptional-ism it ascribes to Greek and Roman civilization. Recent classical schol-arship has exposed the field's fraught history and many concrete initiatives have emerged to promote diversity and equity in the field— but of course we still have a long way to go. I hope Classics will continue along this route by promoting more engaged scholar-ship. One way to start is to ask my- self what my advisor, Johanna Hanink, has coined as "Critical Classical Reception". This is exactly what I think Classics needs to do: to engage with critical race, postcolonial, queer and feminist theories to provide insight into the process of decoloniza-tion, both within and beyond the field of Classics. In a future project, I plan to analyze refugee history in the Roman world and the U.S. through the lens of Critical Refugee Studies. This compar-ative approach allows to explore the status and identity of academics in the fields of both the contemporary nation-state and to ultimately engage in the current debate on the definition of refugees.
This year my mind has been immersed in Sanskrit poetry and its classical theorization. In the Fall of 2020, a cohort of eight advanced undergraduates gathered on Zoom to read selections of Sanskrit poems from the 4th-12th centuries C.E. on topics ranging from the heat of passionate love to the cold of poverty and homelessness. Students simultaneously explored the early modern reception of these texts preserved in Sanskrit commentaries that draw upon the grammar of Pāṇini (5th century BCE), calendrics, and the mathematics of prosody, wherein Vīrāhaṇka discovered a certain numerical sequence about a half millennium before Fibonacci. Meanwhile, I am preparing a paper on the theorization of punning that develops in Sanskrit works on poetics from the 7th century C.E. into the early modern period. And I’ve learned how to cut my own hair.

David Buchta
Lecturer in Sanskrit
Department of Classics

As the world at large tried to adjust to the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the world of teaching and learning, traditionally reliant on personal relationships and face-to-face instruction, resorted to technology to counter the alienation and disruption of the new normal. New modalities were introduced to allow us to reach and teach our students, communicate with colleagues, carry out research and sustain a sense of community. Modern Greek Studies, which has enjoyed the hospitality and support of Brown Classics since its launch in 1995, was no exception. As we sought to re-envision not just the delivery of our curriculum but also the organization and implementation of our public program of events, we found an unlikely and unpredictably effective ally in Zoom, thanks, in large measure, to Tiffany Lewis and Justine Brown, Classics Administrative Assistant and Department Manager respectively.

Conversations about Greece: a series of webinars dedicated to literature, translation and scholarship from Greece, about Greece, and beyond, was borne out of discussions with Graham Oliver, chair of Classics, Johanna Hanink (Classics and Modern Greek Studies), Vangelis Calotychos (Comparative Literature and Modern Greek Studies) and Eleni Sikelianos (Literary Arts and Modern Greek Studies), in an effort to maintain the presence of our program, promote the visibility of critical issues and new work from and about Greece, and beyond, to reduce the barriers to public outreach and intellectual exchange that were the outcome of social distancing. For the students of Modern Greek in particular, the webinars offered access to unique voices, provided an intercultural perspective, and cultivated the literacies that allowed them to juxtapose, integrate and respond critically to diverse discourses.

We were thrilled to see our audience growing from one seminar to the next and become increasingly engaged in the conversation around topics and texts: Adoption, Memory and Cold War Greece, a new book by Gonda Van Steen about the hitherto little known Greek-to-American adoption movement; Patricia Barbeitos’ translation of Amanda Michalopoulou’s Gods’ Wife, short-listed for the 2020 National Translation Awards in Poetry and Prose; Scorpion Fish, new fiction by Natalie Bakopoulos; This Way Back, a new essay collection by Joanna Eleftheriou; a panel discussion on the Golden Dawn Trial and the landmark verdict against dozens of defendants; and last but not least, the forthcoming translation of Andreas Karkavitsas’ “The Archeologist” and a selection from “Tales from the Prow” by our very own Johanna Hanink. Information about the series of five webinars may be found on our departmental website, as well as a selection of recorded material. What started as an experiment borne out of necessity developed into a useful tool for establishing presence, maintaining community and contributing to our university’s humanistic mission. I could finish by saying “Watch this Space” about our spring webinar series, but I’d much rather see you all in person, at our next event.

Elsa Amanatidou
Distinguished Senior Lecturer, Department of Classics
Director, Modern Greek Studies
JAMES FITZGERALD earned the Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1980, and was for nearly three decades a distinguished member of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He was appointed St. Purandara Das Distinguished Professor of Sanskrit at Brown in 2007, and spent a dozen years here building on the strengths of Sanskrit studies established in previous decades by, among others, Otto Neugebauer, Gerald Toomer and David Pingree. In his scholarly work, which continues in retirement, Fitzgerald studies Sanskrit and ancient Indian literature and intellectual history. His research and writing continue to focus on the translation of the vast Indian epic, the Mahabharata, which dates back some two millennia, and on the interpretation of it as a work of religious, philosophical and political literature in its historical contexts. For the University of Chicago Press Fitzgerald is the general editor of the ten-volume translation of the Mahabharata, and he is also the translator for a large segment of that series, including sections detailing hundreds of chapters of political, social, religious, and intellectual teachings that form the foundation of classical Hindu religions. This segment of the Mahabharata comprises about twenty percent of the whole epic, and Fitzgerald’s contribution forms volumes 7 and 8 of the series. Apart from his scholarly work, Fitzgerald developed at Brown a joint Ph.D. program in Classics and Sanskrit, and devised several unique tracks of study for undergraduates to combine and cultivate interests in Sanskrit and Greco-Roman antiquity. He also taught widely in Sanskrit language and literature across the curriculum. His publications, too numerous to mention, include some six monographs, edited volumes, critical editions, and translations, dozens of journal articles and reviews, with several book projects on-going. A native of Trikala, Greece, Papaioannou couldn’t resist the allure of his homeland, and returned in 2019 with his wife and children to Greece, to take up a Professorship in the Department of Philology at the University of Crete. Fitz Gerald is the general editor of the ten-volume translation of the vast religious, philosophical and political literature in its millennia, and on the interpretation of it as a work of foundation of classical Hindu religions. This segment of the religious, and philosophical teachings that form the foun- dation of classical Hindu religions. This segment of the Mahābhārata comprises about twenty percent of the whole epic, and Fitzgerald’s contribution forms volumes 7 and 8 of the series. Apart from his scholarly work, Fitzgerald developed at Brown a joint Ph.D. program in Classics and Sanskrit, and devised several unique tracks of study for undergraduates to combine and cultivate interests in Sanskrit and Greco-Roman antiquity. He also taught widely in Sanskrit language and literature across the curriculum. His publications, too numerous to mention, include some six monographs, edited volumes, critical editions, and translations, dozens of journal articles and reviews, with several book projects on-going. A native of Trikala, Greece, Papaioannou couldn’t resist the allure of his homeland, and returned in 2019 with his wife and children to Greece, to take up a Professorship in the Department of Philology at the University of Crete.
was fun to be back in the neigh- 
borhood where I grew up and to 
have access to the lovely library and
stunning campus. The setting was a
consolation as the northeast locked
down. This semester I am back at
Middlebury, teaching in person as
much as possible, and finding ev-
erything going unexpectedly well.

1990s

CLARA SHAW HARDY, Ph.D. ’90 & ROB HARDY, Ph.D. ’91: Our plan for 2020 was to spend the fall
term on sabbatical in Greece. In-
stead, we’ve stayed in Northfield,
Minnesota, where Clara is a Pro-
fessor of Classics and the David
and Marian Adams Bryn-Jones Distinguished Teaching Profes-
sor in the Humanities. Clara’s
book, Athens 415: The City in
Survoria Ecclesiastica. I’ve been taking
tutoring and working as a research
assistant to Rashid and have access to the lovely library and
college arboretum) since the start of the pan-
demic. I’ve written and pub-
lished more poetry since March than in any other year of my life.

MEGAN R. LIPTON-INGA, ’93: After graduating from Brown, I
worked in Mexico for two years
doing family planning health edu-
cation training in the outskirts of
Cancun, then spent a year back-
packing in Africa, and a few years tutoring and working as a research
analyst in Los Angeles. I received a
Master in International Affairs with a
focus on Economic and Political
Development and Public Health
from Columbia University in 2001, and was a Presidential Management
Intern, and Public Health Analyst
for Health Resources and Services
Administration in New York for 3
years. A sick father and a new love
brought me back to my hometown
of Los Angeles in late 2003. For 16
years I worked at Children’s Hospi-
tal, Los Angeles, as a research ad-
ministrator, directing a pediatric
weight management program and
doing research on childhood obe-
sity and diabetes. Along the way I got
married to the “new love” and had
a daughter who is now 9. Last Feb-
uary my husband and I both quit
our jobs and moved to Lima, Peru
with the plan to stay for the year
and have my daughter do 3rd grade
here. Her first week of school was
fabulous. Then Covid came and the
rest is history. We have been
quarantined inside for much of the
year but things are finally relaxing
and we are able to explore more.

Because of quarantine, I’m on my
6th 1000 piece puzzle, have made
quilches, and pies, and cookies
galore, have fallen in love with
Netflix (never had any kind of
paid TV in the U.S.), am ‘doing
3rd grade online in SPANISH’,
and have taken up birdwatching.

2000s

JESSICA PESCE, ’06: On June 22,
in Cambridge, MA, my husband
Dan Ullucci (Brown Religious Stud-
ies Ph.D., 2009) and I welcomed
a baby boy named Antonio Julian
Pesce Ullucci. His middle name
is a nod to our favorite Emperor
Crisis of the Third Century” ap-
ppeared in TAPA (150:2: 473–97). I
have also been appointed to a three-
year term on the Society for Classi-
cal Studies Committee on Gender
and Sexuality in the Profession.
During quarantine, I am continu-
ing to teach at the University of
Nebraska-Lincoln, where I am an
Assistant Professor of Practice in
Greek and Latin Studies. I am
amazed at all the technology
that has allowed me to continue
my teaching and research.

EDWIN WONG, ’07: Salem Press
will be publishing my book chapter
“Greek Tragedy, Black Swans, and
the Coronavirus: The Consola-
tion of Theatre” in their forthcoming
collection (Spring 2021) LITERA-
TURE IN TIMES OF CRISIS. Black
swans are low-probability,
In addition to my work on campus, I have been cooking! It’s been fun to learn to cook new things.

KELLY LOUGHEED, ’13: This summer, I got married in a very small ceremony at Pismo Beach, CA! My husband and I teach at the same all-girls school in Los Angeles, CA. Since beginning my teaching career in 2013, I have transitioned from teaching Latin to teaching computer science — a whole new world of languages!

During quarantine, I’ve been studying Italian and, as always, preparing for the next trip to Italy once things are back to normal!

ELEANOR WALSH WILCOX, ’16: I am the associate professor at University of Massachusetts Boston and teaching high school social studies. I moved to Cranston in 2018 and am in my third year as an Economics and World History teacher at Blackstone Academy Charter School. I do my best to keep things engaging on the Zoom screen and I am increasingly feeling like a long-term home. Highlights of the fall include a writing project inspired by the Center for Reconciliations’ work on the Rhode Island state name change, and an Economics unit focused on interpreting racial disparities in COVID data. When I’m not teaching virtually I’m reading far more than I used to and trying to stay safe indoors in our apartment.

During quarantine, I’ve been reading a lot of books, including a return to some long-overdue topics from my undergraduate Latin major (late Antique and Medieval Christianity). Recently I’ve enjoyed the work of Richard Horsley on the politics of first-century Judea and I’m developing a small obsession with Viking religion and the Christianization of Scandinavia. I’m also consuming a lot of comic books, improving my skill in strategy games, and trying my best to keep up with a burgeoning Improvisation habit via Zoom. Before quarantine I was on track to finally learn Spanish, but my progress has taken a hit from the isolation.

GABRIELLA REYES, ’17: Back in December 2019, I accepted an amazing job offer to be a teacher-librarian at a school in Beijing. And then COVID happened. I was a graduate student in London at the time—within a month, all of the international students had to leave the country. I spent six months at home in Connecticut, the longest time I’ve been in the U.S. since graduating from Brown. I finished my Master’s program and dissertation remotely. I was so lucky that my job let me work remotely until I could travel. In September, fortune favored me—I got approved for a Visa to move to China! The entire process was intense: I was tested for COVID multiple times (including a painful swab at the Shanghai airport at midnight), I was put in a Shanghai hotel room for two weeks and not allowed to leave, and then I had to make it to Beijing with 24 hours of testing negative for COVID once again. Now I am finally in Beijing, working at a job I love and living in a lovely apartment with an even lovelier cat.

During quarantine, I’ve been reading. I have read so many books this past year! This was my New Year’s Resolution, and I ended up surpassing my original goal of 52 books by a lot (thanks quarantine?). I’ve also been working on translations and illustrations of two medieval Latin texts: the Exempla of Jacques de Vitry and the Book of Herbs by Albertus Magnus. During quarantine, I’ve spent some time reviewing Ancient Greek, largely inspired by re-reading my favorite novel (and the favorite of many Classicists, I imagine) The Secret History by Donna Tartt. I have also taken up piano, with the goal of learning how to play Debussy’s Arabesque No. 1. Currently I am working very hard to master Bach’s Minuet in G.

During quarantine, I’ve spent a lot of time reading and learning languages. I’ve continued my studies in Spanish, but my progress has taken a hit from the isolation.

ADAM KRIESBERG, ’08: After moving around the country a bit over the past few years, I started as an Assistant Professor at Simmons University School of Library and Information Science in Boston in Fall 2019, and moved a bit farther north to Portland, ME, where my spouse’s family lives. In March 2020, just as COVID was emerging as a full-scale pandemic, we completed renovations on a house we had purchased and moved in just as the statewide stay at home orders were issued. I feel incredibly lucky to have a home office and enough space to work from home, as I have been doing for nearly 10 months at this point, with another largely virtual semester on tap for 2021.

In addition to my work on campus, virtually, I have been doing my best to stay busy and active while remaining close to home. Baking bread (and homemade pizza), riding my bike, reading, video-chatting with friends and family, playing the guitar (very poorly), and hanging out with my spouse and our furry friends: two cats and two dogs. Among the books I cracked during this time has been Circe, an excellent book by fellow Brown Classics alumna Madeline Miller, ’00, GS ‘01! It was great, a fabulous read.

2010s

PETER BARRIOS LECH, Ph.D. ’16: I am an associate professor at University of Massachusetts Boston, and working on two projects: one on politeness theory and Greek drama; the other on a topic in Latin syntax: the indirect question!

TED KELTING, ’12: I’ve moved to San Diego to take up a job as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Literature (and Classical Studies Program) at the University of California, San Diego. I’m looking forward to continuing to think about Rome/Egypt cultural overlap, which I started working on back when I was at Brown! I also look forward to proselytizing coffee milk on the West Coast.

During quarantine, I’ve been reading. I’ve been fun to learn to cook new things.

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