



τά τ' ἔόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἔόντα

An Update from our Agents in the Field

This spring, two of our members, Brie Bridegum and Marci Baker are studying abroad in Athens with Professor Hurwit. On April 19th, Marci wrote:

Hey there everyone! So Easter was this weekend (not last weekend, sorry you are all wrong!) and it was pretty cool! At midnight last night there were fireworks and all the church bells in Athens were ringing! Who knew?! Fireworks on Easter!! I like it! Anyway, I am having a lot of fun still. I suppose that may go without saying. :) I went to a club last night and, strange fact... these Greeks don't dance! It is crazy! But Brie, Steve and I rocked out when they started playing Tubthumpin!! No one else seemed to care, but it really made it feel like home. Spring break is coming up and I'm not sure what I am going to do, due to a lack of money. I may go to Berlin, or Turkey, or just stay in Athens... Next weekend I am going up to Lamia with Brie and our Greek friends, so that should be fun! It will be interesting to see a small town in Greece, and it is really close to Thermopylae and we are planning on checking that out..Crete was amazing and Chania was beautiful! Anyway, not much else... I miss you all! TTFN!



Brie and Marci in Athens. Photo courtesy of Marci Baker

Welcome to the newest online incarnation of the UO Classics Club's newsletter! This is where we'll educate, enlighten and entertain one another, as well as keep up on club business and current events related to Classics. What's on your mind? Where are you going? Where have you been? Do you have any translations, quotations, grammar tips, ancient recipes, artwork, questions for the oracle or anything else you'd like to share? Send submissions to uoclassics@hotmail.com We'd love to hear from you!

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UO Classics Club meets every Thursday at 6:00 pm at Pegasus Pizza, 790 E 14th Ave. Join us for pizza, beer, comraderie, philosophical discourse, discussions of history, Latin and Greek grammar jokes, poetry readings and all other sorts of silliness.

Ostracism in Ancient Athens

By Jonathan Guenther

Ostracism was a democratic process practiced in 5th century B.C., in Athens, in which the citizens would cast votes in order to send one person into exile. Each year, the assembly would decide whether or not a vote of ostrakanos, a Greek word for pot sherds, was necessary.

If deemed necessary, the citizens of Athens would have two months to decide who from their community should be exiled. The vote was written or etched into a broken piece of pottery and collected by the city-state. If the total number of votes reached a tally of 6,000 then whoever had the most votes against him would be forced into exile for a period of ten years.



Ostraca, 5th cent. BCE, Athens www.artstor.org

The practice was maintained during the 5th century in order to remove dangerous citizens from the community before they gained too much power. Many of the ostracized citizens were seen as a threat because their financial or political power had grown too great, too fast.

Tyrannical rule was a common concern in ancient civilization, even one as democratic as Athens. This concern is not surprising considering the primary god of Ancient Greek civilization, Zeus, is often considered god of patriarchal domination and wrathful revenge.

The process was mainly used as a tool of prevention rather than punishment. While in exile, citizens were allowed to keep all land, possessions, family, and civil rights within the community and once the term of exile was served, they were welcomed peaceably back into the community. Among some of the citizens ostracized were Greek historian, Thucydides, Athenian soldier, Themistocles, and a wealthy politician, Xanthippus.

Over the hundred year period that ostracism was practiced in Athens, about a dozen men were actually exiled. The small number of exiled citizens suggests the process was not common.

In fact, Aristotle remarked that the process was inherently unfair, merely a way for the ignorant majority to do away with a distinguished upper class citizen who many times was wiser than the greater population. He believed that the process was no different than a tyrant killing many to maintain his rule. Of course, Aristotle was not impressed with democracy in general as he saw no use in guiding the state on the opinions of uneducated citizens.

The Athenian citizens discontinued the process near the end of the 5th century B.C. as the democratic structure of the city-state grew stronger.

Ask the Oracle!

“What should I do about the hole in my yard? I think it leads to Hades and I don't want any souls creeping up.” –Bertha H.

Phenomoë replies (in Latin this time!):

“Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;
sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
hoc opus, hic labor est.”

“Night and day the door of the black underworld lies open;
but to retract one's step and escape to the upper air,
That's the hard part.”

Say What? The Meaning of Our New Motto

By Chris Todd

The new motto of the Classics Club, “τά τ' ἔόντα τα τ' εἰσόμενα προ τ' ἔόντα,” comes from Homer's *Iliad*. It was the seer Calchas “who knew the things that were, the things that would be, and the things past” (*Il.* 1.70). In Classics, we study the past through the timeless epics, histories, tragedies, and philosophies of the Greeks and Romans. It is our passion for the subject that brings these stories to life in the present moment and our dedication that ensures they will stand the test of time.

Report on the AIA Lecture: Textiles in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean World

By Larissa Carlson

In her very informative presentation entitled “*Textiles in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean World*,” Columbia University’s Joanna S. Smith explained ancient techniques for textile production, their market and trade, and how her archaeological findings from Cyprus added to understanding in these areas. Given the wealth of information covered, I will mention only a few points that I found particularly interesting.

Very few textiles, even fragments, actually survive from the ancient world. Therefore, we must find other ways of looking at the evidence we do have to learn about them. One way is to examine the tools of weaving; items like loom weights and distaffs can be evidence to the kinds of fibers that were worked, i.e. lightweight or heavy. The tools can even be examined for wear marks from the fibers to verify how they were used.

One interesting fact was that some scholars had erroneously identified bone beaters (used to pack fibers on the loom) made of cow ribs as writing implements. Dr. Smith was able to look at the wear marks to show their usage in textile production. She pointed out that given their size, they were unlikely writing tools: they would be comparable to giant novelty pencils.



6th cent BCE Attic Lekythos, Amasis Painter www.artstor.org



Mythtickle Comic Strip used with the generous permission of Justin Thompson

Calendar of Events

April 30: UO Classics Club weekly meeting, Pegasus Pizza, 6pm.

May 1: Continued viewing of the HBO series “Rome,” episodes 10, 11 and 12. PLC 189, 6 – 9 pm.

April 30 – May 3: “Latini in Dark World” a play written and directed by UO student Jonny Ormsbee. “A 'creation myth' drenched in metaphor and filled with references to the works of such literary giants as Dante and Milton.” The Very Little Theater. Visit http://www.thevlt.com/Now_Playing/PlaySL7.htm or call (541) 344-7751 for more information.

May 9: UO Classics Club group trip to the University Theater's production of “Metamorphoses,” 8pm. The deadline to RSVP for reserved seating with the group has passed, but we still encourage you to attend on this night, or any of the others the play is being performed between May 1 and 16. Please visit <http://www.tickets.uoregon.edu/event/3291> for more information.

The Presenter's Perspective of the Willamette Undergraduate Conference

By Larissa Carlson

Editors Note: This article was left out of last week's issue by mistake. Our apologies to the author.

On Saturday, April 18, I was honored to be able to present my paper entitled "Haec Sola Loca Colit: Ovid's Story of Pomona and Vertumnus" at the Oregon Undergraduate Conference in Classics at Willamette University. I would like to share a few thoughts about the experience, in the hopes of encouraging other students to try it.

As students, we should seek out opportunities to practice our public speaking; a conference such as this is a good way to start. It provides an opportunity to present to a larger audience, and one not familiar with our work already. I found that the atmosphere was very relaxed, with a supportive audience of about fifty people. With both faculty and students in attendance, it is a good opportunity to get feedback on your research.

Presenting at this conference was a very positive experience for me, and I hope that some of you will consider submitting abstracts for next year.

Lastly, I just want to offer warm personal thanks to Desi, Josh, Rachel, Natalie, Dr. Jaeger, and Dr. Wilson; I was profoundly moved by your support, encouragement, and help on what was for me a very important day.



Classics Club Meeting 4/23/09 Minutes

Business discussion:

- We're growing! Let's get recognized by ASUO.
 - We took a look at the paperwork for ASUO recognition (Recognition Process, Application, By-Laws Template, and a sample governing document that Desiree had prepared for a previous group she organized).
 - We welcome ideas for our mission statement and governing documents. Let's classicize leadership positions—consuls? Praetors? Senators? (The Romans were very good at bureaucracy, let's follow them.)
 - We need to consider organization, etc. as how we are representing ourselves as the club to the department and the greater university community.
 - Natalie asked if a faculty advisor was necessary for ASUO recognition. Answer: we do need references on the application. Either way, we should have one; the club should strive to include the faculty and greater department.
- Nuntia or Nuntii?
 - Consensus says that we prefer the name "Nuntia Antiqua" for our weekly club newsletter. We don't want the title to be misinterpreted to mean that we are a bunch of old masculine messengers. The name change coincides with our move from the email format to making it part of our newly acquired webspace on the Classics department website. We also discussed how the format of the newsletter will change, and how to take advantage of such space. On a related note, Desiree asked if everyone might be willing to give a short response to the question we hear so often: "Why study Classics?" Responses could be compiled and published in the Nuntia. It couldn't hurt to have a "Rolodex" of reasons at the ready for the next time!
- Chris introduced a motto idea!
 - From the Iliad, "τά τ' ἐόντα τα τ' εἰσόμενα προ τ' ἐόντα." Consensus notes that this is a succinct explanation of our mission as classicists: to study the past, in the present, to make a better future. Of course, if anyone has other ideas, feel free to email them to uoclassics@hotmail.com.
- The graffiti board is up and running! Stop by 8th floor PLC anytime you feel the urge to write something ancient-y!

(Business minutes continued)

- The UO Theater department is putting on a production of Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses*, based on the seminal poem by Ovid. Club is planning on attending as a group on May 9th; Amy has volunteered to see if a block of seats could be secured for us. Please RSVP if you are interested, so that we know how many seats to ask for.
- Amy told us about an upcoming panel discussion on campus about why to study humanities during an economic crisis. Let's support the humanities!
- Natalie and Rachel told us that a classmate of theirs will be presenting a play that he wrote and directed. It will be shown this weekend (4/25-6) and next (5/2-3) at the Very Little Theater; See the calendar of events for more info.
- Amy presented a volunteer opportunity for anyone interested—the SMART reading program is always looking for people who want to help kids. Would anyone like to read to kids? Let Amy know if you are interested, she can give you the necessary information.
- Don't forget our viewings of HBO's Rome program this term! This Friday, we will be showing episodes 7-9 at 6-9 pm, PLC 189.

Social notes:

- We got started on our discussion of “Why study Classics?”
- Desi mentioned that Dr. Chamberlain showed a piece of the Oresteia on film in the gender class and it inspired her. It's available from the library—we should check it out sometime.
- We like cheese.
- Today is the traditional birthday of William Shakespeare, a great lover of Classics himself! Two members present were too bashful to share the sonnets they know by heart. Larissa said that when she's dead she wishes to have a “traditional” birthday, like Shakespeare—that's when you know you've made it.
- Sample titles for leadership roles in the club: Master of Paper? (Octavius wishes this to be his, for providing a notebook for minutes.) Pen Captain? (Natalie's suggestion)
- Bekah, Chris, Josh, and Rachel had fun guessing the names of inhabitants of various US states (what do you call people who live in Vermont??)
- Natalie reminded us of the Euripides joke
- Bekah told us travel stories, including that she was once helped by the Italian mafia
- Larissa had a respiratory moment, which Octavius described in clinical detail for those who missed it. (You, fair reader, I will spare)
- Octavius and Eric agreed that a photo hanging at Pegasus is Nietzsche with a bunch of old-timey basketball chicks
- Desi went home to spend some quality time with Homer
- Octavius promises there's more where this came from.



Detail from 2nd cent CE Roman Sarcophagus with Muses

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