F(18,153),(505,995)(533,153),(988,995)UTURE DIRECTIONS IN AUSTRALASIAN CLASSICAL RECEPTIONS

PROGRAMME

4-5 October 2018 at NeW Space (UoN's city campus, Room X803)
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Jessica Alexander-Lillicrap

‘The Portrayal of Theoklymenos in Euripides’ Helen’

The portrayal of Theoklymenos in Euripides’ Helen is usually considered as stereotypical of an ‘immoral barbarian’. Theoklymenos’ desire to marry a woman, in spite of her living husband is one of the central plot points of the play. This leads to an assumption that Euripides’ character follows the well-trod path of a lust driven foreigner with few other details to their character.

When staging the play in February this year, we cast an older, white male actor in the role. We did not use accents or cultural markers; the character was simply played as Australian in an Australian context. To Theoklymenos, the actor brought a warmth and charisma that was surprising, but compelling. By changing how a brutal man behaves on stage, a new image emerges of the character. A man emerges who is kind on the surface, likeable, yet capable of murder. This character is wholly believable both in the context of the play, and in the culture in which they performed.

When the character is performed this way, it sheds some light on the question of the seriousness of Helen, and the development of the concept of ‘barbarian’ in Athens at the time the play was first performed.

Jessica is a PhD candidate at The University of Newcastle, working on workshopped translations of Euripides’ Iphigenia among the Taurians and Helen. Jess completed her undergraduate degree in Classics and Drama at ANU and has worked with theatre companies such as Free Rain and CYT, as a stage manager, director and actor.
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John Davidson

‘James K. Baxter and Catullus Revisited’

A number of New Zealand poets, most notably James K. Baxter, C. K. Stead and Anna Jackson, have composed versions of some of Catullus’ poems or, in the case of Jackson, responses to them. Discussions of Baxter, or Baxter and Stead, have been written by John Davidson and Stephen Harrison respectively. Most recently, Jeff Tatum has written a full-scale study of all three, which is forthcoming in a special issue of Paideia.

My paper focuses on Catullus alone. Work on Catullus up till now has been confined to his sequence “Words to Lay a Strong Ghost, which was written primarily in 1966 and published for the first time in the posthumous collection, Runes in 1973. What was not known by myself, Harrison and Tatum when the Reception articles were written, was that Baxter had in fact experimented with a range of Catullus versions in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as versions of Horace Odes 1.5, which become entwined with the Catullan material, and from which he took the name Pyrrha, to be used instead of the name Lesbia as the poet’s love interest. These experiments are so far still unpublished, existing only in Baxter’s MS books that are held in the Hocken Library in Dunedin.
I will examine some of these unpublished poems, as the forerunners of the ‘Words to Lay a Strong Ghost’ sequence, the idea being to attempt to show Baxter’s developing style in his approach to the Reception of Catullus in particular but also of Horace.

John Davidson is Emeritus Professor of Classics at Victoria University of Wellington. He is the author of numerous publications on Greek tragedy, specialising in the shadow of the Homeric corpus in Sophocles and Euripides. Since the 1970s he has also published extensively on classical reception in New Zealand poetry, with particular reference to James K. Baxter. He is co-author of The Snake-Haired Muse: James K. Baxter and Classical Myth (2011). John has also just had the sixth collection of his own poetry published.

Robin Dixon
‘The Interstitial Turn: adaptation of Classical tragedy on the Australian stage, 2008-2012’
Australian mainstage performance across the first decade or so of this century was characterised by a number of trends, but one of the more surprising lay in playwrights and dramaturgs turning their attention to Greek and Roman tragedies. Several Classical tragedies were reworked by Australian practitioners between 2006 and 2012. Strategies pursued by these adaptors ranged from use of contemporary imagery for political comment (Barrie Kosky, Women of Troy, 2008) or insertion into much larger theatrical works (Barrie Kosky, The Lost Echo Act II, 2006) through to new plays that bore a more dialogic relationship with their source text.

This paper will consider four plays from the latter category: Tom Holloway’s Don’t Say the Words (2008) and Love Me Tender (2010); Anne-Louise Sarks and Kate Mulvaney’s Medea (2012); and Simon Stone et al.’s Thyestes (2012). I will assess the dramaturgical features of these works, contextualise them within the “adaptation debate” that occupied Australian playwrights and directors in the same time period, and consider some future possibilities for this kind of theatrical adaptation.

Robin is an Honorary Associate of the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, Sydney University. His primary area of research interest is the stagecraft and performance of ancient Roman theatre, but he has taught widely on the history of Western theatre and pursues a range of interdisciplinary research interests. His PhD thesis on the spatial dramaturgy of Plautine comedy was submitted in 2011, and since then he has taught at the University of Sydney and the National Institute of Dramatic Art, where he was Convener of Performance Practices 2015-2017.

Michael Ewans
‘Szymanowski’s King Roger: an opera inspired by Euripides’ Bacchae and staged by Opera Australia’
Bacchae has rarely been set to music even in modern times, when scholars have explored its psychological depths. But early in the twentieth century a very important, challenging opera was inspired by Bacchae, and enters into a fascinating dialogue with Euripides’ original. It is King Roger, written by the great Polish composer Karel Szymanowski during and after World War I, and premiered in 1926 in Warsaw.
The opera is set in eleventh century Sicily, an exotic crossroads of cultures – Norman, Byzantine, Arabic, Greek and Italian. Each of the three Acts dramatizes an encounter between King Roger and a Shepherd, who in Act III reveals himself as Dionysus. There are fundamental differences from Euripides. Unlike the uptight Pentheus of the Greek tragedy, Roger does not deny the god, and so does not deserve death; the maddened mother Agave is replaced by Queen Roxana, a supportive wife; and the Shepherd, the Dionysus figure, is also seen as a new Christ, the 'good shepherd' as opposed to the ossified, vengeful Old Testament Christianity of the Archbishop and Deaconess in Act I. But he is unmasked in Act III as fundamentally cruel, instinctual and anti-intellectual, and therefore Roger is right to resist him.

This paper will explore the opera, concentrating in particular on the Nietzschean elements, on the possibility of a Jungian interpretation, and on three different endings; that proposed by the librettist, that which Szymanowski himself adopted, and the fascinating gloss which Kaspar Holten added in his 2015 production for the Royal Opera House, which was also staged in Sydney in 2016. Illustrations will be drawn from the DVD filmed during the Covent Garden season of that production.

Michael Ewans FAHA is Conjoint Professor of Drama in the School of Humanities and Social Science at The University of Newcastle, Australia. He was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 2005. He is an authority on the translation and reception of Greek tragedy and comedy, and his eleven books include Janáček's Tragic Operas, Wagner and Aeschylus: the 'Ring' and the 'Oresteia', Opera from the Greek: Studies in the Poetics of Appropriation and Performing Opera: a Practical Guide for Singers and Directors. He has also written several articles and numerous program notes on operas by Adès, Berg, Gluck, Janáček, Szymanowski and others. Michael.Ewans@newcastle.edu.au

Laura Ginters

“‘Let me come to Athens [/Ballarat], shelter me, accept me in your home’: Medea on the Goldfields in 19th Century Australia’

I draw on Medea’s words, quoted above, to gesture towards the long history of Western cultures which have sought their “home” in the philosophical, political and literary cultures of ancient Greece. But I look to Medea too for her particular role in the reception of Classical Greek dramatic literature in the Australian colonies in the 19th century: the first seven productions (1858-1884) of Classical Greek plays in the colonies were of Medea – and, perhaps more surprisingly, the first five of these were performed on the Victorian Goldfields between 1858 and 1875. This phenomenon is ripe for further exploration, as the production of Classical plays are significant sites through which contemporary social and cultural concerns are explored and negotiated (see Ginters 2018). While the prevailing assumption regarding the Victorian era’s relationship to ancient Greece is that Greek knowledge constituted an exclusive discourse within elite male domains – often schools and universities – both in the United Kingdom, but also in its colonies, this notion has been challenged, for example, in relationship to women writers of this era (Fiske 2008). The Goldfields Medeas offer us a fascinating glimpse into the ways in which other female artists also actively engaged with Classical material in this period, and an opportunity to reconceptualise the reception of Greek dramatic literature in Australia to account for these clearly very popular – certainly not “elite” – productions: Peter Freund, for example, has pointed out that the “problem” of the play struck a chord with the goldfields audiences where the issue of deserted wives was very real (Freund; Sussman). I suggest that Greeks, both ancient
and indeed potentially “modern”, from Euripides to Greek goldminers (some of whom took part in the Eureka Stockade (Tamis 2005)) in the Medea audiences have played an under-recognised role in 19th century Australian society and culture, and that the story of the reception of Greek classical material involves complex, sometimes intersecting and sometimes parallel, encounters between “elite” and popular culture of the time.

References:
Freund, Peter. Marketing and Public Programs Officer, Art Gallery of Ballarat. Email communication, 27 August 2017.

Dr Laura Ginters is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Sydney. Her research projects include an ARC-funded project on historical rehearsal processes, production histories, and Australian theatre history, especially amateur theatre. Her book on drama activities at the University of Sydney (The Ripples Before the (New) Wave, with Robyn Dalton) will be published in 2018 by Currency Press. She also works occasionally as a script assessor and dramaturg, and her play translations have been produced, published and adapted, including for: Belvoir St Theatre, Malthouse Theatre and the Sydney Theatre Company.
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Jacqueline Harris
‘Men Painting Women, Women Killing Men: The effect that modern male depictions of women in antiquity has had on their classical reception’

Our understanding of ancient events, people, and social structures is bound by those who have studied the same topics before us. The scholarship of women in antiquity has historically been coloured by male interpretation due to its male domination. I aim to shine a light on the negative impact this interpretation has had on the topic’s modern classical reception.

The revival of classical themes in the Renaissance period is one of the first examples in which the theme of classical antiquity re-emerges after the middle ages. Renaissance artists, primarily male, regularly used characters from Greek and Roman mythology, biblical images, and historical accounts in their works. Using Renaissance and Italian Baroque art from this period as a conduit, I will discuss how the resurgence of classical themes in Renaissance art heavily, and negatively, influenced the perception of women in antiquity.

By using the work of female artist Artemisia Gentileschi as a counterpoint to the high volume of pieces by male artists during this period I will demonstrate how women of antiquity painted by men differ in the most fundamental ways to the renderings of a female artist. Overall this case study will allow us to see how the portrayal of women as seen through the artistic male gaze has damaged the scholarship of women in antiquity.
References:

Jacqueline Harris is a postgraduate student undertaking a Master of Arts in Classics and Ancient History at the University of New England. She has a background in Ancient Greek Political History and Art History. Her current focus is the reinterpretation of women in antiquity while at the University of New England.
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Nicole Kimball
‘Workshop presentation on PhD thesis: Reception Studies, Witches, Theory’
The images and concepts behind ideas of witchcraft are fluid, constantly changing to reflect various socio-cultural dynamics across time. Often portrayed as old women, witches have been represented as anything from worshippers of an ancient pagan goddess to devoted adherents of the Christian Devil. Using Lorna Hardwick’s understanding of Reception Theory to examine these images allows us to trace the developmental history of the image of witchcraft in the west. It also allows us to trace the developmental history of the process of reception, and the different types of reception that make up Hardwick’s theory, originating in the process of imitatio in ancient Rome.

Nicole is currently completing a PhD in Classics, examining the reception of witches in various facets of western literature throughout time. Her research interests include the interplay between magic and gender in ancient and modern literature and the reception of the ancient world in popular culture.
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Chris Mackie
‘Layers of conflict at the Dardanelles: from Homer to Gallipoli’
This paper explores the landscape of war that is the Dardanelles, a place that has seen more conflict than most other parts of the Mediterranean world. It explores the different layers of conflict, with the initial focus being the sacks of Troy conducted first by Heracles and Telamon when Laomedon was king, and then by Agamemnon in the next generation when Priam was king. We will be concerned with how the references to the earlier defeat of the city in the Iliad might be read. We then consider the way that the second conflict at Troy ‘spills across’ from the Asian side to the European side with reference to the figures of Protesilaos and Hecuba. The former has his own cult site at Elaious at the tip of the peninsula, and the latter has a promontory named after her (Cynossema). Particular attention is paid to the Protesilaos site, not the least because of the way that the British and French are cut down in 1915 in close proximity. One might even say that this is one of the terrible re-enactments of the Gallipoli campaign that soldiers are cut down as they leave their ships, rather like the way that Protesilaos is the first casualty of the Trojan war.

Chris Mackie is Professor of Classics at La Trobe University. He did his undergraduate studies at The University of Newcastle, Australia and his PhD on Vergil’s Aeneid at the University of
Glasgow. He worked at the University of New England and the University of Melbourne before starting at La Trobe in 2010. His academic interests are Greek and Roman epic poetry, especially Homer and Vergil, Greek mythology, and Classical Reception Studies. He was part of a three-nation team (Australia, New Zealand and Turkey) that did a historical and archaeological survey on the Gallipoli peninsula from 2010 to 2014.

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Annabel MacPherson
‘The reception of the goddess Hecate from antiquity to modernity’
My research follows the reception of the goddess Hecate from antiquity to modernity. Initially an Asia-minor maiden goddess, similar to Diana of Ephesus, Hecate took on aspects of the Egyptian Heka, god of medicine and magic ('ka' being similar to 'life-force' or spirit). Hecate, the Greco-Roman goddess of magic, ghosts and witches, appears as a background figure in much ancient mythology but was commonly worshipped. With the rise of Christianity, Hecate became associated with the emperor Julian's pro-pagan stance and neoplatonic Chaldean oracles. Later, after widespread worship had disappeared, Italian Renaissance numerology reimagined Hecate to represent divine wisdom. Her significance shifted with the surge of the demonological/witch-hunting movement which recast Hecate as an ancient leader of demons. More recently, Hecate has been reclaimed and worshipped again by some neo-paganist groups as patroness of witches or as a dark aspect of divine femininity, an ancient goddess mediated through centuries of reinterpretation and myths around this history. My thesis focuses on how Hecate has been received across centuries, through pagan worship, Christian reinterpretation, demonological theories, feminist reclamation and worship once again. The waxing and waning of Hecate allows us to see how centuries of ideas around religion, magic and women interconnect.

Annabel Macpherson is currently undertaking a PhD in Ancient History and the Classics at La Trobe University on the reception of the goddess Hecate. She completed a BA in Sociology and International Development before shifting to an Honours in History, inspired by her exchange program experience at Cambridge University Ancient History Summer School. In 2017 she presented at the Verbal Charms and Narrative Genre Conference in Budapest.
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Ruth McKimmie
‘(Re)presenting madness in Ancient Greece’
Ancient representations of madness attract scholarly attention for a variety of reasons. Classical scholars have studied madness in ancient texts in order to better understand ancient societies and their philosophies and religions. Others have considered madness in ancient texts from a literary perspective with the intent of understanding, for example, characters’ motivations or the function of madness in the text. Representations of madness in ancient texts have also been studied from a medical, psychiatric and psychological perspective by those seeking to understand the history of their fields.

My own work will draw on, and contribute to, each of these perspectives. I will do so through traditional, conventional, rigorous scholarship but in addition I will be creating a new literary work—a new reception—which incorporates both ancient and modern ideas of madness and explores the relationship between them.
There are three parts to this presentation. The first considers some of the significant 20th century scholarship into the study of madness in ancient Greece, (particularly that of E. R. Dodds and R. Padel). The second part introduces the “madness matrix” which I am constructing in order to identify and reference all the representations of madness in the Greek texts. This is a resource which may be of interest to others studying madness in ancient Greece. In the third and final part of the presentation I briefly share some of my preliminary thoughts about my new literary work and the process by which it might be created.

References:

Ruth was awarded a BSc and PhD in Psychology from the University of London some decades ago; and more recently received her BA (Honours) in Ancient History and Classical Languages and English and Writing from The University of Newcastle, Australia. She is currently enrolled there for a second PhD, but this time in Classics, and purely for fun. Her PhD research project is concerned with the representation of madness in Ancient Greece and so encompasses her ancient and more recent areas of interest.
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Sarah Midford
‘An Athenian Temple in the Antipodes: Ancient Greek Cultural Values and Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance’
When the Great War ended, Australians needed to accommodate the grief and destruction it caused in their lives as they rebuilt their communities. Commemorating the dead preoccupied Australians for decades following the war, and the Classics were drawn upon to present a serene, nebulous, and timeless version of events, in an enduring commemorative aesthetic and rhetorical language that comforted those who survived. The Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne was dedicated on Remembrance Day 1934. As well as being a mausoleum to those who died serving the Australian people in war, it is also a shrine and a temple venerating these same people as exemplary Australians, to be revered by future generations. It is often acknowledged that the architectural design of Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance owes a debt ancient Greece. However, the function and form of the memorial draws on much more than Classical aesthetics, connecting Melbourne to ancient Athens, its democratic values, strong defense of freedom, and belief that sacrifice in service to the state should drive surviving citizens to build a beautiful and prosperous future, mitigating the cost of war. This paper contends that the Shrine of Remembrance embodies ancient Athenian notions of glory, freedom, and democracy, in order to provide the people of Victoria with an everlasting monument to those who sacrificed themselves for the state’s eternal prosperity.

Sarah Midford is Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University. Her research focuses on the reception of classical narratives in Australia since European settlement. She is also interested in war commemoration and the use of ancient Greek and Roman commemorative processes to commemorate war dead in later societies.
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Jane Montgomery Griffiths
‘Adapting Antigone: the politics of gender’
Greek tragedy is staged only rarely in Melbourne and each production carries with it heavy baggage of the expectations and assumptions of both audiences and critics. In this paper, I shall argue that translation and adaptation are both the means and the site of reception and have radical potential to recontextualise Greek tragedy with an often surprising political force. While acknowledging there have, internationally, been many overtly political productions of this play - productions that are transparent in their use of Antigone's figure as a sign of resistance - this paper will focus on a less obvious form of political theatre.

Using the 2015 Malthouse production of 'Antigone' as a case study, I shall examine the political ramifications of the play in 'a comfortable society'. The gendered divide in critical responses to this production demonstrates a political importance that lies beneath the polite mores of C21st Melbourne. It suggests that there is still an, albeit subliminal, power and danger in the female figure of authority that 'queers' our understanding of the play.

Professor Jane Montgomery Griffiths is Director of the Centre for Theatre and Performance, as well as a multi award winning actor and playwright. She has published on Greek tragedy, adaptation and Classical performance reception and acting and trauma. She was formerly Convenor of Monash's Classical Studies Program and Cambridge University's Leventis Fellow in Greek Drama.

Natalia Polikpova
‘The History of “Worker and Collective Farm Woman” Monument – a Study in Classical Reception’
Among many symbols of the Soviet era, few are still deeply engrained in the consciousness of modern Russians as part of their cultural legacy. One of them, arguably, the most striking visual symbol of the Soviet epoch, and the least ridden with negative connotations, is “Worker and Collective Farm Woman” by Vera Mukhina. The Soviet monument, sculpted for the 1937 World’s Fair in Paris, provides several significant insights into Soviet history of the 1930s.

The statue’s composition and ideological footing were inspired by two ancient prototypes singled out by the architect Boris Iofan. The first was the “unforgettable Louvre Nike – Winged Victory,” meant to personify the “triumph of October,”1 and the other was a sculptural pairing of the tyrannicides Harmodius and Aristogeiton, meant to symbolise “the victory of the union of workers and peasants.”2 While the first is a perfect representation of victory, the reception of Harmodius and Aristogeiton as tyrannicides had been inextricably linked with the homoerotic nature of their relationship,3 which the Soviet culture could not look with favour upon.

1 In the USSR, “October” was a commonly accepted name for the October 1917 Bolshevik revolution.
3 For instance, according to Plato’s Symposium, “it was Aristogeiton’s love and the constancy of Harmodius’ loyalty which caused the downfall of the tyrants” (182c).
This paper will focus on the cultural, artistic and political histories behind the Soviet monument. It will demonstrate how the ancient prototypes of the “Worker and Collective Farm Woman” transitioned into the symbol of the Soviet era, created at the height of Stalinist repression. Furthermore, it will attempt to answer the question of whether the creators and the approving officials were familiar with the idea of the pederastic nature of the tyrannicides’ relationship, and if they knowingly allowed the idea to be reflected in the statue.

Natalia Polikarpova is a PhD candidate in Classics at The University of Newcastle, examining the manner in which gender intersects with, and influences the phenomenon of death in the body of work of Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca the Younger. Her research interests include gender and sexuality in ancient Rome. She is also interested in Classical Reception in Russia. 
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Rueben Ramsay
‘A Reading of Selections of Aeschylus’ Persians: A New Translation Derived from Analysis by Tone Group’
This paper will present a reading of new translations of selected passages from Aeschylus’ Persians. These translations are unique in that they are derived from a newly-devised method of textual analysis, Analysis by Tone Group.

Tone Groups (TGs) are a function of human language and linguistic processing. Natural speech does not come in an uninterrupted stream, but in ‘spurts’ (Tannen). These spurts – which are always separated by a pause – are Tone Groups. They allow the smaller chunks of sound to be interpreted as whole pieces of information almost instantaneously, using ‘echoic memory’, a universal human cognitive faculty (Chafe). TGs are readily identifiable within certain predictable limits (Scheppers), and their use in the interpretation of ancient Greek texts is well-established (Bakker).

Analysis by Tone Group is a practical method of interrogating written texts for their oral-aural qualities, by identifying the tonal groupings inherent in the lines of the traditional printed texts. The TGs are identified with reference to grammatical properties, and, in poetry, rhythmical form (Ramsey). In the case of a poetic text, where the TGs ostensibly represent the actual spoken ‘lines’ of the original oral performance, it is possible to produce a direct, phrase-by-phrase translation of the text. Analysis by Tone Group makes this not only possible, but practical. To date, approximately one third of the Persians has been analysed and translated. The translations cover the play from beginning to end, and all four types of poetry used in tragedy.

The presentation will feature a brief introduction to the theory and practice of Analysis by Tone Group, with some observations on the potential for this new method of analysis for the reception of classical texts in translation. This will be followed by a reading of the newly-translated text, with brief narrative linkages between the separate scenes.

References:
Chafe, W.L. Discourse, Consciousness and Time: The flow and Displacement of Conscious
Reuben Ramsey is a post-doctoral researcher, currently attached to The University of Newcastle as a conjoint lecturer. His academic interests have always been principally philological, representing something of a personal quest to re-discover the Original Word. While engaged in this quest, Reuben was fortunate enough to discover a concrete link between cognitive structures that govern natural language, and the poetic structures of Aeschylean tragedy. He is currently pursuing that line of research.
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Sharleen Schier
‘Is there wifi in the afterlife? Depictions of the underworld from Homer to ‘Doctor Who’”
The concept of an afterlife is one that was thoroughly explored in the literature and philosophy of antiquity, and we continue to explore it today in all available storytelling mediums: from literature to films, television to video games. Our constant fascination with the afterlife and what we might expect after death is an excellent window into the societies in which these visions of the afterlife are produced, each varying from the others but all with the common vein of human questioning.

This paper explores the setting of the underworld in two episodes of the popular science-fiction television program ‘Doctor Who’ in order to draw a comparison between the visual depictions of the underworld from antiquity to today. The act of fabricating an underworld is one that constantly engages with the rich history of portrayals of the underworld. We can consider the underworld in modern science-fiction television to be one of the latest iterations in a long pastime of not only considering what happens after death, but creatively producing a location for the afterlife with distinct appearances and functions.

This paper is a smaller piece of a larger framework that explores the concept of the underworld from antiquity to modernity. Consequently, I will be limiting this paper to drawing from the visual portrayals of the underworld found in Homer’s Odyssey, Aristophanes’ Frogs, and the more fleshed-out underworld of Virgil’s Aeneid. By building a brief foundational understanding of the appearance of the underworld in Greece and Rome, we can compare this to the modern portrayal of where we go after death in the two-part finale of season 8 of ‘Doctor Who’. This opens the door for an exploration into the larger topic of why the appearance of the underworld looks different to us today than it did to Homer, Aristophanes, and Virgil.

Sharleen Schier is a multi-disciplinary scholar with degrees in Classics, English, and Media. She is currently studying her Master of Arts at the University of New England in the field of Classical Reception Studies with a particularly interest in the afterlife and underworld in antiquity.
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Catherine Walsh
‘Classics is having a moment’
Publishers are keen and rewritings of myth (including those on the stage) are well received. These rewritings either champion or challenge traditional power structures. Appeals to Classics are being made by both the political left and right to support ideological positions. As a society we are rewriting the stories we tell ourselves about who we are, by challenging the identifiers of nationhood, race, sexuality, ableism, religion, class and gender, and how these identifiers have traditionally sat in terms of power structures.

We are doing this in a country in which the political right is claiming ownership of what great books and great ideas are. The proposed program of The Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation claims ownership of these ideas as code to include some and exclude others and maintain social and institutional hierarchies.

How can we democratise Classics and teach for social justice? How can we transfer an interest in the classics in the ‘right way’? What are the opportunities in the new HSC syllabus, with its Preliminary modules: Reading to Write; Narratives that Shape our World; and the Extension module: Texts, Culture and Value, and new Year 12 modules: Texts and Human Experience; Language, Identity and Culture; The Craft of Writing? How can Classics be incorporated in Years 7-10 English, in modules about The Hero’s Journey, or connected curricula which combines subjects, such as History, Geography and English, to study a topic, such as ancient Greece? Do we need to revive terms of rhetoric? Should we track big ideas, including ones about literature, from classics to now, asking questions along the way? How do we integrate canons with countercanons? How do we improve the relationship between English and Classics?

Catherine Walsh has a major in Myth and Ancient Literature in translation, wrote her Masters thesis on feminist rewriting of Greek myth and is an English and Drama teacher. She considers the proposed Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation to be a very bad idea.

Rachael White
‘The Gracchi in New South Wales’
Advocates for land reform in nineteenth-century New South Wales perceived a striking similarity between their own agenda and that of the second-century BC agrarian reformers Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. From the 1840s onwards, the Gracchi were regularly evoked in parliamentary debates, newspaper columns, and public meetings in support of the policy of free selection before survey, and as champions of the small-holding agriculturalist against large pastoral holdings. By contrast, opponents of land reform depicted the Gracchi as demagogues, and, in the context of the shift to self-government, as a cautionary tale about the dangers of democracy and class warfare. This paper will examine the reception of the Gracchi in this period and argue that they form part of a wider idealisation of smallholding farmers in colonial New South Wales.

Dr Rachael White completed her doctorate ‘The Man on the Land: Classics in Colonial Australia’ at Exeter College, Oxford in 2017. She was previously Associate Archivist at the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama and has lectured and tutored at the University of
Oxford. Her doctoral thesis is forthcoming as a monograph, and she has written on Australian Classical Reception for forthcoming volumes including Marguerite Johnson’s *Antipodean Antiquities* (Bloomsbury, 2019) and A. Blanshard and E. Stafford’s *The Modern Hercules* (Brill).

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