BODY OF ATTIC WHITE-GROUND LEKYTHOS
SCENE OF BATTLE BETWEEN HORSEMAN AND TWO SOLDIERS ON FOOT.
ATTRIBUTED TO THE REED PAINTER
(see p.11)
REPRODUCED COURTESY OF THE THE JOHN ELLIOTT CLASSICS MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA
**IN THIS ISSUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDITORIAL</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Scott</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESIDENT’S REPORT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denis Brosnan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEWS FROM THE DISCIPLINE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alastair Blanshard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R D MILNS ANTIQUITIES MUSEUM</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janette McWilliam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERVIEW WITH THE 2015 MUSEUM INTERNS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Dickinson, Bethany Hawkins, Linc Morse, and Dominic Ragonesi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES DONALDSON, SENIOR MUSEUM OFFICER</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Donaldson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE JOHN ELLIOTT CLASSICS MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Apted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVISITING ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS - THE JOHN ELLIOTT MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Scott</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ECONOMY MAY BE STAGNANT, BUT NOBODY SEEMS TO HAVE TOLD THE BRIDAL INDUSTRY</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alastair Blanshard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDITERRANEAN MIRROR: CULTURAL CONTACT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (1200-750 BC)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Babbì; Friederike Bubenheimer; Beatriz Marin-Aguilera; Simone Mühl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE EARLY ‘IMPERIAL ANNALISTS’</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Toohey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT’S IN A WORD?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Milns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POEM - THE STREETS OF OLD MADRID</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Milns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMBERSHIP OF FOA AND ALUMNI FRIENDS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIENDS OF ANTIQUITY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIENDS OF ANTIQUITY PROGRAM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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- **Professor Alastair Blanshard** is the Inaugural Paul Eliadis Professor of Classics and Ancient History.
- **Denis Brosnan** is President of the Friends of Antiquity and an honorary lecturer in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry.
- **James Donaldson**, is the Senior Museum Officer, R D Milns Antiquities Museum.
- **Dr Janette McWilliam**, is Lecturer in Ancient History, Classical Civilization and Classical Languages, is Director of the RD Milns Antiquities Museum.
- **Emeritus Professor Bob Milns**, a founder member of the Friends of Antiquity, was Professor of Classics & Ancient History, University of Queensland, from 1970-2003.
- **Dr Ann Scott** is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, and has been editor of *Nova* since July 2009.
- **Emeritus Professor Roger Scott**, School of Political Science and International Studies, is Immediate Past President of the Friends of Antiquity.
- **Kathleen Toohey** has BA Hons in Ancient History from the University of Queensland.

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**EDITORIAL**

**Ann Scott**

This *Nova* celebrates museum *thauma* (see James Donaldson interview on p.8). The theme was inspired by a recent visit Roger and I paid to the University of Tasmania - Roger’s alma mater. The university’s classics museum was started in 1954 by Professor John Elliott, the pioneer of teaching Classics in translation Australia. He had an abiding interest in the cultural context in which Greek art was produced and employed. Elliott was particularly interested in the original colours that would have adorned some of the temples and statuary that we now associate with marble purity. Elliott’s research, at a time when Beazley and Trendall were identifying individual vase-painters, was significant enough for there to be both a ‘Hobart Painter’, and an ‘Elliott Painter’ attributed to vases in the museum. The John Elliott Museum is a delight, and I asked Neil Apted, the curator, if he would be able to provide me with some material for *Nova*.

His article fits well with the interviews with current interns at the University of Queensland’s R D Milns Antiquities Museum as well as with the Senior Museum Officer, James Donaldson. These have appeared in the Museum’s online journal, but I thought that *Nova* readers would appreciate the opportunity to read them.

An inconvenient bout of ill health made me take my eye off the *Nova* ball for a short time. If readers are concerned at the absence of some of the recent Sunday Series talks in this issue, I am in contact with the lecturers and hope to include their texts in the January issue.

Please note the lectures that are already on the program for next year listed on the back of this issue of *Nova*. Also, we look forward to seeing you at the Friends of Antiquity Christmas Party on Sunday 22 November at Women’s College. The flier, with booking form, is included with this *Nova*.

On 9 August, Trevor Bryce spoke on ‘Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon’. As always with Trevor, this address was learned and polished and humorous. On the same day, we received the lively report of the 2014 Betty Fletcher Scholar, Johanna Qualmann, who had applied the funds for extensive and rewarding travel and investigations in Turkey, the UK, Germany and Finland. On 13 September, in collaboration with the discipline, we hosted Dr Julia Kindt from our sister department at the University of Sydney. She spoke on ‘Oracular Shrines as Places of Religious Experience’. This was an eye-opener about which I am happy to give further details, if you would like to apply an ancient fortune-telling technique to your own situation. And if you would like to see Julia in action, go to [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Du4wTkfMBJ4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Du4wTkfMBJ4)

On 21 September, I attended my first meeting of the executive of the Alumni Friends of UQ and had the pleasure of meeting the 2015 Alumnus of the Year Dr W R B (Russ) Morrison AM, a remarkably talented, engaging and down-to-earth man. I was delighted to hear President Jason Yu describing FoA as ‘the most active of the special interest groups’.

By the time you read this, several Friends should have recovered from a Garden Party organised by the Classics and Ancient History Society. Do check their site - [http://cahsociety.com/](http://cahsociety.com/) - or let me know if you would like hard copy of what’s there. As they say:

CAHS is a society that aims to create a fun space for students to connect and engage with other like-minded people on all things historical. We provide the social events and learning support you need to get you through your time at uni – whether you’re a Latin, Greek or Ancient History major, or just interested. Although most of our academic support is aimed at undergraduate students, we welcome all members to our social events – regardless of whether ancient history is your major, your lifelong passion or just a hobby.

They are an eclectic and electric group of students and other interested people whose interests complement our own in many ways. I urge you to become a member.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

**Denis Brosnan**

Your Program Committee has held several meetings to plan activities for 2016, so another year of stimulating and engaging talks is nearly in the bag. We have already locked in the topic for Ancient History Day 2016, 16 April: ‘Plague, Filth and Garbage in the Ancient World’. If that does not attract a crowd, I don’t know what will. Please put this one in your diary.

Finally, your executive’s decision to hold their meetings immediately before the lectures of the Sunday Series is already working well: it certainly saves members’ time and petrol. If ever Friends wish to attend, you would be warmly welcomed: Room E319, Forgan Smith at 12:30.
NEWS FROM THE DISCIPLINE

Alastair Blanshard

There have been many exciting developments in the discipline over the last few months: we have a new member of staff; my colleagues have been away travelling and researching; and we’ve been lucky to have had a wide range of visitors.

Welcome to our new member of Staff – Shushma Malik

I’ve asked Shushma to write a few words describing herself and her research.

Shushma Malik

‘Having moved to Australia from the rather grey climate of the North of England, I am extremely happy to see the sun again! I am also, I should say, delighted to be the newest member of UQ’s Classics Department. I have come to UQ for two and a half years (covering for Dr Caillan Davenport during his research leave) from the University of Manchester, where I spent two years teaching Ancient History and Latin, making some very good friends, and yearning to see the sun again! Before Manchester, I studied for all of my degrees (BA in Ancient History, MA in Classics and Ancient History, PhD in Classics) at the University of Bristol, where I was lucky enough to work with some brilliant and inspiring people, most notably Dr Shelley Hales and Prof Gillian Clark. Bristol’s Classics and Ancient History Department is known for its strengths in the field of classical reception, so it is perhaps unsurprising, given that I spent nine years there, that my interests too lie in this field.

‘My doctoral work offers a re-interpretation of the association established between the Emperor Nero and the eschatological Antichrist in late antiquity, and the subsequent revival of the paradigm in the nineteenth century. It provides an in-depth study of Nero as the Antichrist from the perspective of ancient history rather than theology, and makes use of recent scholarly trends in historiography since Hayden White’s Metahistory (1973). I argue that Nero’s association with the Antichrist was not necessarily written into biblical scripture in the first century AD, as previous scholarship suggests, but is more likely to be a product of late antiquity, when the figure of Nero could act as a useful didactic tool for early-Christian bishops with which to explain the nature of the Antichrist to wide audiences already familiar with the infamous emperor. This apocalyptic portrayal of Nero was renewed in the nineteenth century in the works of philosophers and theologians like Ernest Renan and Fredrick William Farrar because it was once again helpful for informing debates and addressing the era’s religious concerns. I am currently revising my doctoral thesis for publication as a monograph intended for Cambridge University Press ‘Classics after Antiquity’ series. For my next research project, I want to move from condemnation to vindication, specifically the proliferation of vindications of Roman tyrant-emperors (including Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, Domitian and Elagabalus) in the late nineteenth century. I am looking forward to beginning this research whilst here at UQ.

‘Away from the university, I am very much enjoying getting to know Brisbane. So far, I have visited some wonderful art galleries, including a selection of independent galleries in Fortitude Valley, the Gallery of Modern Art on the South Bank, and UQ’s own Art Museum. It was in the Botanical Gardens in the CBD that I encountered my first water dragon. With so much to see in the centre, I have yet to explore the surrounding areas, but I am especially looking forward to my first visit to the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary – I’ve a feeling I’m not in the UK anymore!’

Caillan’s Travels

As Shushma is covering Caillan Davenport’s teaching for the next couple of years, this has freed Caillan to undertake some long overdue research leave and visit some important sites and museums. Below he outlines some of his activities.

‘In Semester 1, I travelled to Europe for six weeks as part of my Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) project on ‘Popular Perceptions of Roman Emperors from Augustus to Theodosius I’. This included a conference in Frankfurt on ‘The Imperial Presence in Rome in Late Antiquity’, where I gave a paper exploring how Rome fitted into the rhythms of imperial life from the mid-second to early fourth century AD.

‘I then travelled to Croatia to visit Diocletian’s Palace in Split and the ancient city of Salona. The archaeological museum featured wonderful
Tetrarchic ‘herms’ from the city (see picture below). From Croatia, it was off to Rome, where I visited the late antique Sessorian Palace and Nero’s magnificent Domus Aurea, as well as spending several weeks researching in the library of the British School at Rome. The visit to the Domus Aurea required a less than flattering hair net and hard hat for all participants, lest Nero’s frescoes came tumbling down on us! Finally, it was off to the UK to conduct research in the Sackler and Bodleian libraries at Oxford, and to visit the Ashmolean and British Museums.’

Amelia’s Voyages

In February, I returned from maternity leave to resume the first year of my three-year DECRA. My research project is entitled ‘Like frogs around a pond: Maritime Religion and Seafaring Gods of Ancient Greek Culture’.

In April and May, I visited the major ancient cities and museums of southern Italy and Sicily as part of this project, from Bari in the east, around Apulia and Calabria to Reggio, and then across the straits of Messina to the first Greek colony on Sicily, Naxos. I found lots of evidence for maritime religion, and explored the ruins of harbour-side temples at Egnazia (where Gnathian ware originated), Brundisium, Tarentum, Heraklea, Croton, Locri and Kaulonia. Then later I gave two papers on my research so far: The first was at Trinity College, Dublin, at ‘Spatial Analysis of Ritual and Cult in the Ancient Mediterranean’, a workshop run by the research network ‘Unlocking Sacred Landscapes’. The second was at the University of Erfurt: ‘Religion on the Ground’, a Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions Colloquium at the XXI Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions.

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As you can see, it is a busy time in the discipline. Not only have Caillan and Amelia been away, but David Pritchard has been awarded a visiting fellowship at the University of Strasbourg. We look forward to hearing about his experiences when he returns in the middle of next year.

R D MILNS ANTIQUITIES MUSEUM

Janette McWilliam

As we head towards the end of Semester Two, our 2015 undergraduate interns are in the last stages of curating their mini-exhibition ‘Roads to Rome’, focusing on Roman Trade.

The exhibition will be launched in conjunction with the Museum’s end of year Saturnalia event, also featuring a talk by Dr Amelia Brown on ‘Travel, Trade and Roman gods.’

The Museum Gallery and Workroom continue to be a hive of activity. Visitor Numbers to the end of September 2015 came in at an impressive: 7,937 (our total for 2014 was 7,999).

Our 2015-2016 Exhibition ‘Cyprus: An Island and A People’ was visited recently by Her Excellency Mrs Ioanna Malliotis, High Commissioner of Cyprus to Australia and Mr Nicos Kouyialis, Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Republic of Cyprus. On both occasions members of the Cypriot Community Association of Queensland...
were also in attendance, including its President, Mr Stathi Zambas.

Our Saturday Series Event on August 13th, held in conjunction with our Cyprus Exhibition, ‘Doing Archaeology on Modern Cyprus’, was a great success. Dr Craig Barker Co-Director of the University of Sydney's archaeological excavations in Paphos and Dr Andrew Sneddon, Co-Director of the UQ-Alambra Archaeological Mission were truly ‘in conversation’ with a very engaged audience.

Ms Jessica Dowdell, our former Outreach Officer, now has a position in England as Collections and Learning Curator in the Colchester + Ipswich Museums Service. The Museum Team would like to wish her well in her new role.

INTERVIEW WITH THE 2015 MUSEUM INTERNS

Sarah Dickinson, Bethany Hawkins, Linc Morse, and Dominic Ragonesi

In this interview the 2015 Museum interns, Sarah Dickinson, Bethany Hawkins, Linc Morse, and Dominic Ragonesi respond to a series of questions:

• Can you tell us a bit about yourselves, your studies, and any previous involvement with the Museum?

Bethany: I am an Ancient History student, in the second year of an Arts degree majoring in Ancient History and Writing. This is the first time I have worked within the Museum, but I am looking forward to volunteering regularly in the future.

Dominic: I am in the second year of a dual degree comprised of a Bachelor of Arts (majoring in English and Ancient History) and a Bachelor of Secondary Education. I am also completing a Diploma of Classical Languages, as I enjoy studying Latin.

Linc: I am a third year Arts student, majoring in Ancient History and Archaeology. I began as a collections volunteer this year, and am working to rehouse objects within our collection in new, specially-designed enclosures. I enjoy assisting with Museum events, and a highlight of my studies was participating in the Museum field school in Grosseto, Italy.

Sarah: I am in the final semester of a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Ancient History, and a minor in Archaeology. This year I began volunteering as a gallery attendant, and I have enjoyed conducting research for upcoming exhibitions. I have also travelled with my degree, attending the UQ study Tour in Greece in 2012, and participating in the 2015 field school in Grosseto, Italy.

• Can you tell us about the internship program and what it entails?

Sarah: The program requires us to design and create a museum exhibition that draws upon the themes explored within ANCH2280: Roman Society and Civilisation. This entails researching trade, which we have chosen as the exhibition’s central theme, and the Museum objects that will be included within the display. The project requires a lot of teamwork and communication skills, and I have gained a greater understanding of the Museum’s operations and collection management.

Linc: The internship program has created an opportunity to apply my knowledge of the Museum collection gained as a volunteer. The internship has really sparked my interest in future museum work and I am looking forward to working closely with the collection again in the future.

• What has been the most interesting thing you’ve learned so far about curating a museum exhibition?

Bethany: Learning the ‘behind the scenes’ component of exhibition creation has been eye-opening. I hadn’t realised the amount of consultation, research, and discussion that is required to create a museum exhibition.

Dominic: I have found handling the artefacts very interesting. Curating exhibitions of ancient artefacts presents the unique challenge of thinking of new ways to present objects that are thousands of years old.

2 The interview below can be found on the Museum’s website, at: http://www.uq.edu.au/antiquities/news-events
• **What are your favourite objects in the collection and why?**

*Sarah:* I have great affection for many of the beautiful objects in the Museum, however, a recent favourite is the fragment of an Egyptian stele which contains the cartouches of the Aten and Nefertiti (12.001), as it is an artefact that draws upon my strong interest in the Amarna period of Egyptian history. Photographing this object for an upcoming exhibition was a volunteering highlight for me.

*Dominic:* I first became aware of the Museum through its coin collection. I really like the coins struck by Julius Caesar and Brutus that were recently on display as part of the exhibition *Ab Urbe Condita.*

• **Why do you believe museums are valuable in today’s world?**

*Bethany:* Museums are a unique blend of education and entertainment, which allow us to learn about ancient people and societies in a practical, tactile way, and to observe continuities between ancient and modern people.

*Linc:* As a person with a strong interest in the material culture of ancient civilisations, I believe the value of museums in today’s world lies in their role in the preservation of cultural heritage, both in Australia and on an international scale. It also allows us to connect to past on a material level, and they inspire future generations to pursue studies in archaeology.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES DONALDSON, SENIOR MUSEUM OFFICER**

James Donaldson was also interviewed, answering questions about himself as well as his work with the Antiquities Museum.

• **Can you tell us a bit about your background and what your role is in the Museum?**

I started out studying for a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Archaeology before reskilling into Ancient History and Museums after I completed my Honours degree. In 2013 I finished a Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies with Deakin University and in 2014 I graduated from a Master of Philosophy (Ancient History) program with a thesis examining the marriage strategies of the Herodian dynasty in ancient Judea.

At the R D Milns Antiquities Museum my role is mainly in making sure that our operations run smoothly, and I also manage the Museum’s collection and its exhibition program. I’m responsible for a few of our events too, such as the Museum’s ‘Saturday Series’ program and I do a fair bit of administration as well.

• **What is your favourite part about working in the Antiquities Museum?**

It’s really amazing to work directly with the Museum’s collection, including a lot of material that isn’t always on public show. When we are developing exhibitions, like our current ‘Cyprus: An Island and A People’, I get to spend a lot of time researching individual pieces, photographing them and studying them. It gives you a great connection to the past and you get to know the ancient and modern stories of an object by such intensive study.

Recently I have been researching an object purchased with funds bequeathed to the University by Associate Professor Stanley Castlehow, whose grotesque stands guard over the Michie Building in the Great Court.

The object is a small Athenian owl cup (72.001) and in researching its history with the Museum I turned up a previously unknown portrait of Associate Professor Castlehow in a Brisbane archive and Castlehow’s original obituary that records many details of his life with the University of Queensland that were previously unknown to us.
What has been the most notable project you have worked on?

Our current show, ‘Cyprus: An Island and A People’, has been a watershed for the Museum’s relationship with one of its key audiences. Apart from putting on a great show about the history and archaeology of ancient Cyprus, it has been incredible to work with the people of the Cypriot community in Brisbane and to share their stories about Cyprus. The Cypriots have a really strong connection to their island heritage and to their ancient roots. I’ve spent many hours now talking to people with some connection to Cyprus, learning about the modern stories of the island, sampling its food (one of the perks!) and also getting to know the really stunning material culture that the island has to offer. One person said to me that they have tried their entire life to explain where Cyprus is and why it is an important place, and finally it was all here in a little show at the RD Milns Antiquities Museum. Connecting our audiences to the past in this way is one of the most rewarding aspects of our work.

What is your favourite object in the collection and why?

I think one of my favourites has to be a limestone votive head of a man from the JH Iliffe Collection. We acquired this piece in 2012 along with two other artefacts and it is a great example of its type. You can look into the 2000-year-old face and imagine that it was carved in someone’s likeness by the ancient artist and the eyes, nose and mouth are still really crisp.

The piece also came with a big archive of photographs, notebooks and newspaper clippings belonging to JH Iliffe who was a little known archaeologist and museum curator in the middle east at the end of the British Mandate in Palestine. In fact, he was the first Director of the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem and was wounded in an attempted assassination in 1939. He went on to be awarded the Order of the British Empire and finished his career at the Liverpool Museum. The whole collection is now housed in the Fryer Library.

Why do you believe museums are valuable in today’s world?

I think that museums are a great place for people to broaden their horizons and be inspired by works of art or artefacts from the ancient world. It is always very refreshing to visit a new museum and explore its wonders for the first time, or revisit a collection that you thought you knew and find some new treasures. This concept of wonder was very important to the ancients too. The Greeks knew it as *thauma* and during the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods, a time of great change in Greek art and intellectual thought, the theme of wonders was a major concern of many ancient authors as they moved out from Greece and into the wider Mediterranean, collecting the wonders of the world. I think museums have that same power to evoke wonder and inspire modern audiences by creating spaces to be captivated by objects and ideas.

The Museum of Antiquities at the University of New England

James Donaldson

The Museum of Antiquities at the University of New England is another excellent Australian university collection well deserving of a visit. It was founded in 1959 and holds significant material from both Cyprus and Pella (Jordan) as well as the usual mix of fine Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities. From its beginnings in 1959 as part of the Department of Classics, the Museum has expanded to encompass an excellent selection of antiquities from the ancient Mediterranean and the Near East, complemented by objects and ethnographic material from Australia, South East Asia, New Guinea, the Pacific region, Mesoamerica and Africa.

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4 When I emailed James to ask permission to use his interview, he replied that he had just presented the Maurice Kelly lecture at the University of Armidale’s Antiquities Museum - so I asked for a few words about that Museum. Ed.
The John Elliott Classics Museum, University of Tasmania

Neil Apted

The John Elliott Classics Museum had its origins in 1954 when, on the initiative of Professor John Elliott, then Professor of Classics, the University of Tasmania acquired two ancient Greek pots. John Elliott had an abiding interest in the cultural context in which Greek art was produced and employed. This led to research on the painted colours of Greek sculpture and, in collaboration with the University Photographic Section, the development of techniques to reconstruct the original effect.

The collection was named in his honour in 1967 and achieved a permanent home in the University Centre in 1977.

The University of Tasmania had acquired its first antiquities some decades before Professor Elliott began the Classics Museum collection in 1954. An initial donation of 95 Roman coins was made by Andrew Holden in 1909.

Holden was working in the Egyptian Civil Service in the Ministry of Finance during the period of Britain’s de facto protectorate. He presented the coins to Robert Dunbabin, lecturer and later Professor of Classics. Holden had almost certainly been taught Latin by Dunbabin at The Hutchins School and the University.

Holden acquired the coins from Kingdon Tregosse Frost, an Englishman also working for the Egyptian Civil Service, in the Department of Public Instruction. Frost’s biography reads like something of a Boys’ Own adventure. After graduating from Oxford University in 1900 he excavated in Greece and travelled in the Near East while receiving a travelling scholarship to the British School of Archaeology at Athens.

Frost established the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at Queen’s University Belfast before his death at the Battle of Mons in 1914.

Always in conception an art collection, the John Elliott Classics Museum was established to provide...
a teaching resource for the University and a publicly accessible collection of antiquities for Tasmania. The collection has expanded to include examples of the art and culture of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Etruria and Rome, a collecting focus which spans some three thousand years of the ancient world.

Greek pottery has formed the core of the collection from the beginning. Representative pieces were acquired to trace developments in Greek art from early Mycenaean ware through the archaic geometric decoration of the 8th century BC, the black figure style of Corinth and Athens of the 6th century BC to the red figure style developed at Athens in the 6th and 5th centuries BC. Pottery from the 4th century BC is represented by a number of pieces from Greek colonies in Italy whose artists developed a distinctive style.

The Near Eastern collection contains antiquities from Mesopotamia such as personal seal stones dated to the 3rd millennium BC and a clay receipt inscribed in cuneiform, complete with ‘envelope’. Additional artefacts include a number of items of jewellery from an archaeological dig in Amman, Jordan in which the University of Tasmania participated in 1966.

A limestone false tomb door, the point of exit and entry for the tomb’s resident spirit, is the largest of the Museum’s Egyptian items. Other pieces – amulets, ushabti figures, statuettes and personal items – provide some insight into the religious beliefs and daily customs of ancient Egypt.

The Roman collection focuses on smaller domestic or everyday artefacts including glassware, red-glaze pottery, oil lamps, bronze household statuettes, jewellery, and items used for personal grooming, but also contains larger pieces such as a military sword, marble sculpture, and a section of a mosaic floor.

The Etruscan items of interest include a terracotta female head in the archaic style, a bronze mirror engraved with figures of deities, and a bucchero ware chalice.

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In her editorial, Ann reports on our startling discovery of the John Elliott Museum in the bowels of the University of Tasmania. It was hidden up a narrow staircase behind a coffee shop which had been an art gallery in happier or more prosperous times. This visit was a truly civilizing experience. Neil Apted, who showed us around, has provided an overview of this museum, but Ann has invited me to add a comment about my memories of studying under John Elliott.

Sixty years ago, I had the considerable pleasure to study for three years under the eponymous Professor Elliott. Before that, I had studied and then repeated a matriculation course in Ancient History for whose curriculum design he could also claim credit.

As explained in the article by Neil Apted, Elliott was a pioneer in establishing both at school level and at university the study of ancient texts in translation both as history and as literature. There was little Latin and even less Greek language taught in the schools, so he performed a civilizing mission to the great unwashed and culturally stunted Tasmanians, still mentally manacled to their convict irons or stump-jump ploughs.

This innovation had the incidental effect of allowing all manner of school teachers to thrive, unencumbered by their own linguistic limitations. At my own school, the headmaster was able to draw upon his Oxford degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics to create a hinge between the classical civilisations and contemporary political analysis, given a bluish and patriotic tinge arising from his distinguished military service in the western desert.

At the University itself, the term 'ancient civilisations' proved labile enough to incorporate the pre-classical societies which underpinned Western Europe. (The Near East as the normal label signalled the alien character of contemporary Far Eastern civilization - and Latin America was absolutely terra incognita.)

This breadth of approach meant that Elliott was able to give full expression to his interests in Egypt as an artistic precursor of the Minoan and the Cycladic arts. He also could relate history, mythology and drama to the surviving illustrations on vases without worrying us about the finer points of language in the inscriptions. And what vases they were - much lauded, as I discovered later, by experts such as A D Trendall and Sir John Beazley.
As Neil Apted writes, Elliott’s interest in architecture included a specific and (at the time) unusual interest in the contemporary reality of colour. We studied the vestiges of colour on some of the originals he brought to class and marveled at, or were even repelled by, his ‘magic lantern’ slides of major Greek and Roman buildings adorned in their original livery. The vivid harshness of the reds and blues seemed wholly out of character with our somewhat muted assumptions of behaviour and tone related to bare marble. He did suggest that there was some cultural continuity in Hobart with the garish suburban palazzos created by the recent immigrant Italians escaping by hard yakka from the labour camps of the Snowy River.

There was no sense at the time that this was a remarkable collection of artefacts, just the sort of teaching material any old professor might bring to class. But then we students all felt Tasmania was a backwater, not the tourist magnet it is now.

THE ECONOMY MAY BE STAGNANT, BUT NOBODY SEEMS TO HAVE TOLD THE BRIDAL INDUSTRY

Alastair Blanshard

While wage increases remain low, the cost of the modern wedding continues to soar. The average bride currently spends over $65,000 on her wedding. Photographers, bridal boutiques, wedding venues, and caterers all know how to part the happy couple from their hard-earned cash.

For the modern bride, nothing is impossible, provided that you are willing to pay for it. Motorcades of sports cars, grooms arriving by helicopters, fly-pasts by fighter jets, brides travelling in Cinderella-inspired crystal coaches, champagne fountains, all of it can be yours. Doves and butterflies can be released to symbolize your dreams - or more accurately your credit-card bills - taking flight.

It is hard not to feel that somebody should be doing something about this insanity. Surely when people can’t help themselves, it is time for government to step in. Sadly, the example of the Greco-Roman world would suggest that we’re setting ourselves up for disappointment if we think legislation can help in this matter.

In the ancient world, laws attempting to limit people’s expenditure occur frequently. Almost from the beginning of society, communities have tried to rein-in extravagant, profligate spending. Not only is such spending wasteful, it is also socially divisive. In a world where the gap between rich and poor was huge, grotesque displays of wealth could easily be a spark for resentment and revolution.

Parties always seem to have been a flashpoint. One of our earliest attempts to regulate them comes from the Greek world. The Athenian lawgiver, Solon, is famous for a broad range of legislation. He banned the cultivation of figs, preferring that people devote their energies to growing the much more profitable olive. He established public brothels for the community. He also attempted to regulate the flamboyance of women’s clothing.

In 6th-century BC Athens, laws were passed that forbade women from wearing more than three garments when they went outside. Moreover, women were not allowed to congregate in large groups nor could they carry any more than a small amount of food or drink to festivities.

The target of Solon’s laws seems to have been the aristocratic funeral. In ancient Athens, it was funerals rather than weddings that were the occasion when people showed off their wealth and finery. It was at the graveside that you flaunted your bling.

Rome also felt the need to regulate its citizens’ expenditure. Throughout the second century BC, we see a number of laws passed that tried to curb citizens’ appetite for luxurious living. These laws regulated the number of people that could attend a banquet, the number of days on which banquets could be held and the amount that could be spent.

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8 This article is an edited excerpt from a lecture ‘Lessons from the Ancient Past for Contemporary Australia’ presented by the Paul Eliadis Chair of Classics and Ancient History, Professor Alastair Blanshard as part of UQ’s Global Leadership Series.
My favourite law was one that regulated the type of food that could be served. It included a provision that in addition to mussels and wild birds, hosts were forbidden from offering their guests force-fed dormice (the legal status of plain, free-range dormice is unclear).

The regularity of the Roman legislation points to one important aspect of these laws. They never work. Time and again, laws were passed to minimal effect. At best, they produced short-term results, but there was never any long-term change in behaviour. If anything, these laws made extravagance ever more desirable. Forbidden fruit is always sweeter.

It requires deeper cultural change to bring about a change in attitudes. It requires society to reorder its priorities on a fundamental level. And that is a lot harder to achieve. It takes a certain type of courage to stand up to a wedding planner. They have the full weight of years of dreams and expectations on their side. It is a hard combination to beat.

The Wedding Painter (name vase)
Wedding of Thetis and Peleus. Attic red-figure pyxis, ca. 470–460 BC. From Athens
(Musée du Louvre, Atlas database: entry 5948)

MEDITERRANEAN MIRROR: CULTURAL CONTACT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (1200-750 BC)9

Andrea Babbi; Friederike Bubenheimer; Beatriz Marin-Aguilera; Simone Mühl

Roger Scott writes: ‘My day job has me poking around publications across a range of disciplines and some unexpected open access on-line scholarship. I thought the following might be of interest to Nova readers.

The authors listed are the editors of conference proceedings.10 There are numerous detailed chapters about each of the specialisations that I have highlighted in bold when reproducing the first half of the editors’ introduction.’

‘The Mediterranean Sea lies in the center of an area that forms a specific cultural landscape in space and time. Its waters divide and connect the various peoples dwelling on its shores and in the nearby hinterlands. In this way, the Mediterranean Sea is the heart of its own reality, the Mediterranean world.

‘This world, like all others, was subject to change over time – both slow, unnoticeable change, and rapid change with dramatic consequences for its populations. The latter has been true of late. A series of relentless events have upset existing political orders and social arrangements in a number of North African and Near Eastern countries since the winter of 2011.

‘These events can be seen as a result of the opportunities offered by a free and quick sharing of ideas and values, fostered by new technological advances, such as the digitalization of reality, and increasingly sophisticated and powerful search algorithms. The concepts of mobility, connectivity and de-centering aptly describe this era, and bridge the present and the past because they are at the core of recent historical analyses of the Mediterranean world in antiquity.

‘From 1200 to 750 BC, the Mediterranean world saw a period of change which resulted in the breakdown of Bronze Age civilizations, and the rise of Iron Age cultures in many locations. The chain of processes was also promoted by the intensive cultural and commercial interactions between the peoples all over the Mediterranean, from the Levant in the East, to the North African and Iberian coasts in the West. Like a mirror, the Mediterranean world of today seems to reflect conditions comparable to those of

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9 This can be downloaded as a PDF file from: https://www.academia.edu/12110194/The_Mediterranean_Mirror_Cultural_contacts_in_the_Mediterranean_sea_between_1200_and_750_BC
the Early Iron Age. And this is exactly what warrants further exploration into this most fascinating period of antiquity.

'The Mediterranean world is built upon different regions, all of which were eventually – albeit to different degrees – involved in the same historical processes taking place at around the turn of the second millennium BC.

'In North Africa, it is Egypt about which we are best informed, and consequently, with regard to which we can best understand how the formerly well-established networks and systems of the Bronze Age fell apart.

Egypt, although mostly spared from the destruction of palaces, which severely shattered the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean, was nevertheless subjected to transformations and profound political and cultural changes during the centuries between 1200 and 750 BC.

The period is characterized by the disintegration of the New Kingdom, a consequence of inner political and religious developments towards the end of the Ramesside period, and the gradual loss of central power in what is commonly referred to as the Third Intermediate Period from around 1080 BC onwards. Then, the country was divided between the two courts of Tanis in the north, and Thebes in the south, and later ruled by a number of Libyan kings, sometimes up to 20 sovereigns at the same time.

'The decentralisation and political fragmentation of Egypt was not so much understood as a period of disorder and chaos as it was in the Intermediate Periods before, but rather as something adequate, if not favorable. This appears to be linked with external factors. While new light has been shed on the inner political, cultural and religious situation in Egypt during the Third Intermediate Period in recent years, such external factors remain still largely obscure.

'As a matter of fact, Egypt shared many important developments with the other upcoming civilizations of the Early Iron Age. This can be seen in new settlement patterns, forms of urbanism and demographic mobility, in the emergence and diffusion of iron technology or in new forms of literacy, to name but some of the most striking phenomena. It is time therefore, to closer look at aspects of decentralization, mobility and connectivity linking Egypt, Libya, and North Africa with the rest of the Mediterranean world.

In Cyprus and the Near East, the beginning of the Iron Age is marked by socio-political and economic changes. The former palatial economies become replaced by larger territorial entities which are embedded into an open, wide ranging commercial network that extends cultural contacts over the whole Mediterranean world.

'The seafaring commerce of the Phoenicians served as a motor for spreading artefacts and ideas and went far beyond a sole distribution of trading goods. While earlier works on the Phoenicians in the Near East focused on art historical aspects, in recent years scholars have taken a closer look at urban sites and their contexts.

'This is true for Kiton on Cyprus or Tel Dor in Israel. In both regions, the Levantine Coast and Cyprus, the changing settlement patterns and the distribution of certain ceramic repertoires show an adaptation of commerce and economic relationships rather than a change of political and ethnic compounds. In any case, local systems serving the direct hinterland of the economic hub cities along the coasts are reflected in the archaeological material of the mainland. In the Aegean area, the collapse of the palatial system caused profound changes in the social organization. Consequently, the contact networks between this region and its neighbors changed as much in frequency and direction.

However, the earlier understanding of the centuries of transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age as a dark period of regression is definitely overcome. The continuity of life in some major settlements on Crete and Cyprus, as well as the evidence for a quickly recovering society run by ‘warrior’ elites who share the same system of representing and displaying their wealth and power, seem to confirm the establishment of a new framework.

Recent discoveries in the Ionic and Adriatic regions testify to the vitality of the Greek mainland communities, even after the fall of the palaces.
Similarly, the evidence from Rhodes, Euboea and Crete reveal that the newly established interactions extended far eastwards. As a matter of fact, the islands of the Dodecanese, Euboea, and Crete entered into a profitable multi-directional dialogue, which laid the foundations for the Phoenician presence at many places outside of Phoenicia early in the 1st millennium BC. In Italy, the changes in the Aegean and large parts of the East Mediterranean resulted in the reduction of the Aegean presence along the Ionian coast of the peninsula and on the shores of Sicily and Sardinia.

The evidence collected so far points to increased Cypriot and Levantine activity in the spread of foreign objects and models. At the same time, local artisans accepted new objects and models with two different attitudes: emulating the prestigious Aegean painted pottery, and re-elaborating various techniques and forms by adapting them to the technological and cultural needs of local artisans and customers.

The beginning of the 1st millennium BC corresponds to highly dynamic local communities. Sardinia especially carried out a lively and complex role of mediation being one of the most favorable meeting places between the Western and the Eastern Mediterranean regions. Recently, attention has been paid to Sardinia’s part in the newly established networks and their control over the sea routes. This direct and active involvement of the most prominent local individuals and families faded around the mid-8th century BC, when the role of Phoenicians and Euboeans became more significant.

The Iberian Peninsula has always been a crossroads between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, especially from 1250BC onwards. First, northwest Iberia and later the southwest were characterized by the Atlantic Bronze Age. Apart from metal exchange, however, the archaeological evidence is scarce until the transition to the Iron Age, which may be caused by the mobility of the people. The same approximate date, 1250 BC, marks the beginning of contact between oriental traders and craftsmen and western local communities.

In fact, Mycenaean pottery has been found at Montoro (Córdoba), wheel-made pottery has been discovered at different sites of the Iberian Southeast, and the first iron objects turned up in Portuguese forts such as Outeiro de Beijós and Monte do Frade. With the arrival of Phoenicians in the 9th century BC, permanent settlements and relations with Iberian communities were established. Concerning the archaeological record, foreign and local materials and practices have been documented side-by-side in both colonial and indigenous settlements. Thus, the finds bear crucial witness to the diverse processes which evolved between foreigners and native populations, and demonstrate that locals indeed played an active role in the colonial development.

Every region in the Mediterranean has thus always been connected. Cultural contacts in the Mediterranean region during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages have long been studied, but a number of major developments have taken place over the past decade. A wide distribution of certain artefact groups, pottery types or architectural features all over the Mediterranean region has been noted, and historical information on human activity, ie, trading, moving, and settling, has been collected in this period.

Revising a colonial narrative

The rich archaeological and textual evidence at hand has led scholars to offer sometimes divergent explanations referring to methodological and theoretical frameworks, which have evolved over the past few decades. During the first half of the 20th century, for instance, the idea of cultural diffusion was the cornerstone of culture-historical theories. The model was based upon temporal and spatial features of specific cultural phenomena, due to the means by which the origin and intensity of transmissions were detected.

However, this model was biased as it focused on the colonial narrative at the expense of indigenous populations. The acculturation model of the second half of the 20th century established uniform definitions in this respect, which took into consideration an essentialist notion of culture, and measured cultural change using foreign objects and techniques which appeared in local contexts. Scholars were mainly preoccupied with concepts such as ‘adoption’, and did not explore the informative potential of the indigenous responses displayed in ‘imitation’, and most of all ‘adaptation’ processes stemming from the autonomous transformative capacities of the interested parties.

Local agency was not considered, because less complex societies were deemed subordinate to others, and the idea of a spread of cultural influences from a center to what was considered to be the periphery prevailed. It was only at the beginning of this century that the idea of objects and techniques being transferred vice versa – from the periphery to the center – became apparent; it was also in this period where there emerged a wide range in the approach towards foreign objects, techniques, and practices, spanning from a rather passive adoption to a more active and intentional appropriation.
'Besides, the hierarchical and static tri-partite structure (core / semi-periphery / periphery) itself has been deeply reconsidered in light of the 'network theory'. Consequently, a multi-perspective point of view on the past is preferred today. Interactions are now merely seen as interplay between individuals, groups and social systems. Similarly, the appropriation of objects, techniques or practices becomes understood as an expression of transformative capacities rising from local needs, which often leads to a change in appearance, function and / or meaning of the originals.

'In fact, conceptual tools such as 'intentional hybridity', and more recently, 'cultural entanglement', have helped in the analysis of the different ways in which objects and ideas are creatively appropriated and ceaselessly re-signified by local populations in colonial or cultural contact situations. Such an understanding leads to the construction of so-called polyhedric identities apparently fluctuating between colonists' and locals' social and material realities. The ‘in-betweenness’ quality of such identities risks being too vague if not accurately investigated and connected with specific contexts of practice.

'These new lines of research, whose efforts are also reflected by neologisms and new concepts such as 'glocalization', 'sphere of interaction', 'contact zone', and 'networks with weak ties', aim at emphasizing not only the common grounds shared in different regions of the Mediterranean world, but also the importance of the local contexts and responses, that reveal the exertion of a lively transcultural inclination by different social actors (e.g. lesser rulers, craftsmen) in various Mediterranean communities.

'The period between 1200 and 750 BC which led to new patterns of people’s interaction indeed urges a plurality of scholarship, both geographically and theoretically, to adequately address the complex phenomenon of cultural contact in the Mediterranean Sea.

There is plenty to share and to discuss about this analysis as the Mediterranean Mirror Conference and Publication demonstrate.'

**THE EARLY ‘IMPERIAL ANNALISTS’**

**Kathleen Toohey**

The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* lists Aufidius Bassus, the elder Pliny, the elder Seneca, Bruttedius Niger, Cluvius Rufus, Vipstanus Messala and Fabius Rusticus under the heading 'Imperial Annalists'. However the inclusion of many of these names has been much debated.

![Image of an ancient book with text](courtesy of Wiki Commons Media)

The natural starting point for an attempt to resolve the problem is the elder Pliny, as much more has survived of, and about, Pliny’s works than of any of the others named above. Pliny’s place is confirmed by his own statement in the Preface to his *Natural History*, which refers to his ‘long completed and safely preserved … history of our times’. It has been argued that the social/political position of a Roman historian during this period was ‘the most important qualification for his historical standing’.

Such a view is understandable when Dio’s comment is remembered that (since the founding of the principate) ‘most things that happened began to be kept secret and concealed’ (53.19). The closer a historian’s personal standing was to the throne, the more accessible would those secrets be to him. In this regard, Pliny’s *auctoritas* could be considered weak, as we know of him holding only relatively unimportant equestrian offices under the Julio-Claudians, the period which seems to have made up the bulk of his history.

His position probably improved under the Flavians as he seems to have been personally acquainted with Titus. Possibly advancement under the Flavians may have provided Pliny with better material for his history, but his friend and probable patron, P. Pomponius Secundus may have also proved a valuable source of ‘secret’ information.

Pliny permits us to include in the Annalists, Aufidius Bassus, as he tells us that he began his history from where Bassus had ended. Bassus’ position is strengthened by his being named, together with Livy, as a source for the list of consuls between 8 B.C. and 31 AD, that appears in the sixth century chronicle of Cassiodorus.
However, apart from his writings, virtually nothing is known about Bassus. Wilkes says of him, ‘no precise date is furnished for any point in the life of Aufidius Bassus. There is no evidence that he held any public office, or even that he was a member of the Roman Senate.’ As for the elder Seneca, Wilkes includes him in his category of ‘Authors of Memoirs and Specialized Works’, though the evidence from the two fragments of Seneca’s work that have survived is inconclusive. One draws an analogy between the course of Roman history and that of a human life. The other is an account of Tiberius’s last moments, which some have ascribed to Seneca’s famous son (Suetonius Tiberius. 73). However, the fact that a fragment of his biography, written by his son, attributes to him a history that extended from the civil war to almost the time of his own death suggests that his relegation to that special category was unjustified. (Like Pliny, Seneca was a member of the equestrian order.) By contrast, the inclusion of Bruttedius Niger seems unwarranted on the available evidence.

Neither surviving fragment gives any indication that his writings covered the period of even Augustus’s reign. However, the implication in Juvenal (X. 83) that he had an unfortunate association with Sejanus does offer a possible explanation for his obscurity. The inclusion of the other three named in the list of annalists seems fairly certain. This is largely because of the evidence provided by Tacitus.

In his Annals (XIII 20), Tacitus cites Cluvius, Pliny (together presenting the same story) and Fabius (who gives a different account), and announces his intention to cite individual writers only when one’s account differs from the consensus of historians on a point. Their presentation here suggests that the three works were of a similar nature. It also seems likely that Tacitus would have given a more specific reference in the case of any one of these being other than a general history, as he did with Pliny’s history of the German Wars, Annals I 69. and the memoirs of the younger Agrippina, Annals IV 53.

Also, since the work of Pliny cited above is almost certainly his history, the works of Fabius and Cluvius may be regarded as probably being of a similar nature. Similarly, the appropriateness of Messala’s inclusion can be inferred from his being cited as an alternative source to Pliny in Tacitus, Histories III 28. His inclusion can only be tentative, as apart from this one citation, the only other fragment of his work(s) is a moralistic tale of how a son came to kill his father.

For Fabius, we have three further fragments in Tacitus, and, more importantly, Tacitus equates him with Livy. The case of Cluvius Rufus is much more difficult. Both Syme and Wilkes see Cluvius as a major historian. To G B Townend, he is just a writer of chronique scandaleuse. Townend’s arguments are largely circumstantial and extend over five different journal articles, and there is insufficient space here to examine them properly. Personally, I do not find them very convincing. One reason is that he argues that Cluvius wrote to win favour with the Flavians by denigrating their predecessors, and he clearly includes Nero in these. Such an interpretation does not accord well with the fact that we know that Cluvius defended Nero as regards the charge of incest, laying all the blame on Agrippina, Tacitus Annals XIV 2. Also, the foundation for Townend’s hypothesis seems to rest on his belief that Cluvius is to be identified with the source for a number of Greek quotations in Suetonius and Dio, but the evidence that he produces to back this identification is a single quote from Josephus, Antiquities XIX 1.13, where Cluvius is reported (and he is not implied as the source) as quoting Homer. Such a foundation seems to me to be exceedingly fragile.

We have already seen Rufus cited once in agreement with Pliny. At another point his story, in contrast to Fabius’s, is the same as ‘all the other authors, and popular belief inclines to it’, Annals XIV 2. As well, he clearly regarded his work as history, Pliny Letters 9.19.5. 28. His definite exclusion would thus seem to be unwarranted.

Drawing of the Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus by an unknown illustrator, based on an antique bust.

One other name should perhaps be added, M. Servilius Nonianus. That he was a historian is clear, Tacitus Annals 14.19. Quintilian 10.1.102. What is not clear is whether his work covered the early
(Imperial) period or not. Of these last four, Cluvius and Servilius were clearly important men of consular rank. Of Messalla, Tacitus tells us that he came from an illustrious family and that he was highly distinguished. He is reported to be in command of the 7th Legion, though only a (military) tribune, *Histories* III.9. According to Dando-Collins he was the senior tribune, and had taken command of the legion after the commander, Tettius Julianus had fled the command. Under Messalla, the legion then swore allegiance to Vespasian. This suggests that he was relatively young during the civil war. Tacitus also tells us that he pleaded for his brother though he was not yet of senatorial age, *Histories* IV.42. As his brother was Aquilius Regulus, one of them must have been adopted.

As to Fabius, we know virtually nothing other than that he was a friend of Seneca the younger, Tacitus *Annals* XII.1 20.

The backgrounds of the Imperial Annalists are varied. This in itself makes the question of what were the main characteristics of their work, difficult, especially as so little of that work survives. Much of any attempted answer must be built upon later criticism.

Both Dio and Tacitus have commented on the effect that the Principate had on the writing of history. Dio dwells on the secrecy and the influence of the men in power to distort the truth (53.19). Tacitus notes this also and reflects on the truth’s further distortion both by flatterers and by those who hate their masters, *Histories* I.1. These, though, are general comments. The degree to which they apply to the annalists is debatable and probably varies amongst them, though Tacitus was ready to collectively accuse the historians covering the civil war of being flatterers, *Histories* II.101.

It could also be argued from Tacitus that their work was filled with an excessive amount of trivial detail. In *Annals* III 65, he says that it is not his purpose ‘to relate at length every motion, but only such as were conspicuous for excellence or notorious for infamy. This I regard as history’s highest function’. It may be that he is here contrasting himself to his predecessors.

In *Annals* XIII 31, he attacks those who delight ‘in filling volumes with the praise of the foundations and timber work (of) the immense amphitheatre in the field of Mars’. This is now generally accepted as a reference to Pliny’s work, however, and need not be taken as symptomatic of a general malaise. The inclusion of omens and prodigies was probably also a feature of their work, though again the evidence is slim. Indeed so little survives that I feel that to go beyond this borders on fantasy, at least as concerns treating the group as a whole.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

WHAT’S IN A WORD?

Bob Milns

Two weeks of travelling in Portugal and Spain and what a wealth of words for a linguist, all of which show the Latin origin of both languages. Here are a couple of toponymical etymologies (what a mouthful).

Firstly, the name of Portugal itself is derived from the Roman name for Porto, viz. Portus Cale, the Harbour Cale. But what is Cale? There are many theories, but possibly a corruption of Callaicus, the name of the local Celtic tribe.

Second, there is a river on the outskirts of Barcelona, running into the Mediterranean, called Llobregat. Our guide informed us that the name was derived from the Latin Rubricatus, meaning ‘made red’ - the colour of the local soil and clay. Amazing!

POEM - THE STREETS OF OLD MADRID
(to be sung to the tune of Mother McCree)

Bob Milns

I love the rough cobbles that helped pave our street, That cause you to trip and to ruin your feet And I love all the traffic that can't move at all And the huge crowds of people in each street and mall.

And I love all the places that serve you good cheer, Like tapas, cerveza - the Spanish for beer.

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