

Report by the Director and the Director of Studies on the 48th JACT Greek Summer School, held at Bryanston School 26 July - 8 August 2015

The 48th Greek Summer School was almost exactly the same size as last year, with 328 students. Three of these were in employment and a further 26 were undergraduate or postgraduate university students (including one from the Charles University in Prague, one from the Complutense University in Madrid, one from the Monteavila University in Caracas). The remaining 299 were at school or had just left. Our students included young people educated in Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, and the USA, and 77 from maintained schools in the UK.

There were 88 Beginners in 12 groups, 54 Intermediates (i.e., pre-GCSE) in 8 groups, and 186 Advanced students (from immediately post-GCSE to university level) in 23 groups. No group had more than ten students, but the Beginners groups were kept to a maximum size of eight thanks to a special grant from the Cambridge Classics Faculty. The Beginners used *Reading Greek*, as did most of the Intermediates, though some of the latter used the Taylor course if that was what they had used previously. Favourite authors and texts read by Advanced groups included: of the many books of Homer that were read, *Iliad* 3, *Iliad* 6 and *Odyssey* 6; of prose authors, Plato, Lysias and Herodotus; of the dramatists, Euripides was the most popular, especially his *Alcestitis* and *Bacchae*, but six groups this year read Aeschylus' *Persians*, inspired by the production of that play at the end of the fortnight.

There were 43 tutors, including 18 from universities (Oxford, Cambridge, Cologne, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan, Reading, Tel Aviv, and Warwick), four teaching at the Summer School for the first time, one of these four having been a Prospective Teacher at the Summer School in 2014. One tutorship was again generously supported by Trinity College, Cambridge. Two Potential Teachers were with us for the second week, shadowing and sharing teaching at all levels, thanks to the scheme superbly administered by Claire Le Hur. Heather Sanger in her sixth year as our matron was again supportive and reassuring to students and tutors alike. Alexandra Liddell, James Aung, and Thomas Kelly were wonderfully reliable, energetic and efficient Director's Assistants. Visiting lecturers were Tom Harrison on the reception of Herodotus, Peter Thonemann on echoes of Solon's approach to debt in contemporary Greece, Alastair Harden on depictions of Persians in classical Greek art, and David Raeburn demonstrating the Sound of Greek in a sell-out afternoon seminar. The home team was represented by David Langslow on Patterns in Homer, Nick Denyer on the decoding of Protagoras' myth, Angus Bowie on Aristophanes' *Birds*, Philomen Probert on the history of the debate whether to pronounce Greek by accent or by quantity, and Anthony Bowen on Aeschylus' *Persians*. The early-afternoon seminar programme again broke all previous records for the number and variety of topics on offer: scansion, Epicureanism, the myth of Hero and Leander, Greek history writing, accents, ecphrasis, inscriptions, Linear B, ancient medicine, prose composition, ancient reading and writing (practical), literary criticism, Greek literature and the Bible, Heraclitus on why peace would be a bad thing, and a rehearsed read-through of the *Persians* in English. There was as usual lively and entertaining competition between some forty strikingly named teams in the Greek and general knowledge quiz, masterminded and brilliantly compered by Emma Woolerton and Tom Ford. There was a walk designed and led by Philomen Probert, Eleanor

Dickey and James Thorne to the Iron Age site of Hod Hill, and an excursion to Salisbury. About 50 students took part in the lawn tennis tournament organized by Andrew Downey. A moving and beautiful concert was held in the new auditorium, including performances by two choirs, a string band and an orchestra coordinated, rehearsed and conducted by Clive Letchford and Jeffrey Swales. Aristophanes' *Birds* was a Summer-School first, hilariously and professionally produced by Adrienne Gould with a vastly talented cast and production team. The Greek play in the open-air theatre on the final evening was a grippingly watchable and beautifully spoken performance of Aeschylus' *Persians*, lucidly and imaginatively directed by Rob Colborn with Rowena Hewes, Georgina Longley and Emily Clifford. Clare Sharp and her large team of industrious helpers headed by Anne Bowers and Nick Denyer produced literally spectacular costumes and props for both plays (including notably Persian trousers and head-dresses and about 20 bird-masks).

132 students (40%) returned questionnaires, with almost all their feedback extremely positive. 68% felt that they had made *more* progress with their Greek than they had expected, and almost all the rest that they had achieved at least as much as they had hoped. It was a typically industrious cohort: 91% of respondents said they had devoted at least three hours per day to independent study, 68% over four hours, and 33% five hours or more. The vast majority said that they had found the pace challenging but rewarding, the teaching clear and the environment supportive. Almost all respondents had attended many of the lectures and seminars on offer, and many had also found time to participate in the musical, dramatic or sporting activities. As in previous years, there were many unsolicited comments praising individual tutors and the course as a whole. We are once again very heartened by the students' appreciation of the work of the Summer School.

We gratefully acknowledge support from the Cambridge Classics Faculty, the Oxford Faculty Board of Classics, the Craven Committee (Oxford), the Jowett Copyright Trust, the Classical Association (which funded two Classical Association Bursaries), Trinity College Cambridge, the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, the JACT Greek Project, the Gilbert Murray/Cromer Trust and several private benefactors.

The Summer School is, as always, grateful to Bryanston School, whose staff in all departments do everything they can to be helpful, and of whose world-class facilities we have virtually free run. The Summer School relies also on the commitment and dedication of many individuals throughout the year. Special thanks are due to our Treasurer, Andrew Downey, who is handing over in the coming year after an unbroken stint of 23 years. We owe a particularly large debt also to Cathy Bothwell, the Course Secretary, this year in her first year sola, and to her assistant Susan Swales. From autumn to late summer Cathy arranges practically every aspect of the Summer School, from initial publicity through the applications process and living arrangements at Bryanston to the coaches which transport people away at the end, and both she and Susan are on hand throughout the fortnight to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Cathy is leading the project to create a new website for the Summer School including the facility to move all applications online in the coming year. Ideas are already being canvassed and considered for the Summer School's golden jubilee in 2017.

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