

**Classics in Extremis**  
University of Durham  
6th-7th July, 2014  
Call for Papers

This conference aims to examine some of the most unexpected, most hard-fought, and (potentially) most revealing acts of classical reception: it will ask how the reception of the ancient world changes – and what the classical looks like – when it is under strain. Current debates in classical reception studies are increasingly focused on less assured and comfortable engagements with the past. Bringing together scholars with a variety of interests, this conference aims to move the debate beyond the specific case studies emerging in the field and to encourage the broader development of fresh methodologies and perspectives in thinking about the ‘classical’ as a troubled space – a space in which fraught and remarkable claims have been made upon the ancient world.

Confirmed speakers at this time include Rosa Andújar (University College London), Barbara Goff (Reading), Simon Goldhill (Cambridge), Constanze Güthenke (Princeton), Edith Hall/Henry Stead (King’s College London), Jennifer Ingleheart (Durham) and Jennifer Wallace (Cambridge).

Issues which papers might address include, but are not limited to:

- Extraordinary readers: Many have had to fight hard for access to knowledge of the ancient world – constrained by social circumstances, gender and politics. Why was antiquity worth fighting for, for them? How are their readings of the classics different from some of their more solidly-situated peers?
  
- Reading under fire: What happens to classical reception in extraordinary situations: under censorship, for instance, or in times of war? Does the past become more or less valuable when access to it becomes fraught and dangerous? Can translation or reception become a means of expressing alternative voices under repressive regimes or social structures?
  
- Recovery: The material culture of antiquity has often been pursued, recovered and displayed in the most unlikely circumstances. British officers conducted excavations in the middle of the Crimean war. Victorian travellers wandered Afghanistan in search of lost cities. How were acts of excavation, preservation, collection and plunder pursued, against the odds?
  
- Distance: What happens to classical reception in extraordinary places? How are the classics read, for instance, in exile – or several weeks’ journey from the nearest

library? Can distances in space or culture change the ways in which readers and reception communities conceive of distances in time, and the relationship between the past and the present? (Is Homer easier to find in St Lucia, for instance?)

Abstracts of 300 words (for papers of 40 minutes) should be sent to Edmund Richardson ([edmund.richardson@durham.ac.uk](mailto:edmund.richardson@durham.ac.uk)) by 31 January 2014. We hope to be able to offer a limited number of bursaries to postgraduate students giving papers.