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Manolis Pagkalos

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Editorial

The current issue denotes the second year of *PNYX: Journal of Classical Studies*, the digital-only, double-blind, peer-reviewed, Open Access journal of *Isegoria Publishing C.I.C.* As such, we think this is a proper time to reflect on the previous year and discuss new beginnings.

In Retrospect

In our inaugural issue, we discussed why, in our view, the discipline needs another journal. We argued that we operate an ‘innovative model, a service provided by scholars to scholars’ to address critical areas of academic research dissemination: fairness and inclusivity while working collaboratively with our authors and reviewers, both internal and external. We believe we have stayed true to this, and we hope that we already made a small mark in Open Access publishing in Classical Studies, at the very least for our authors and (some of our) audience.

Since our inaugural issue and the call for contributions, we have proclaimed that we welcome contributions from members or groups currently under-represented in Classical Studies (widely defined). In the first two issues, seven articles were published with authors originating from six countries, namely (in order of appearance): Greece, Colombia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Croatia, and Mexico. Three of these articles are authored by female colleagues working outside of anglophone academia. All papers are published in English but offer an extended abstract (or a short overview) in the author’s language of choice, delivering a message to international and national audiences. The network of collaborators for the academic review of the papers is further expanded with the external reviewers, who are acknowledged for their service in the respective issue. Our dual-stage, blind peer review approach, an internal (editors and Advisory Board Members) and an external (topic specialists), has benefited the works under publication and has been well-received by all parties – authors, editors, internal and external reviewers alike. The articles are published under a Creative Commons Attribution License CC-BY 4.0, with authors retaining full copyright and being able to share their work freely on all institutional, professional, social, and private platforms. Finally, metrics from our platforms indicate a stable number of visitors and downloads of the papers, with a clear preference for the PDF format and healthy numbers for the HTML/XML and EPUB files, demonstrating that offering those options was a great decision from the outset.

Overall, when we look back at the first year of the life of *PNYX*, we are grateful for the support received by colleagues for our decisions and approach. Along with our (free) language editing, we have created a simple workflow that benefits the outcome while keeping the author at the very core of the procedure. Whereas this is a welcome reflection, we are constantly moving forward, planning the next moves while not being afraid to take risks. We rely on our community for feedback and support; thus, we look forward to your communication and comments.

New Beginnings

To further the aims of *PNYX* to provide a service to the community beyond costs and style, we transformed its parent publisher, *Isegoria Publishing*, into a not-for-profit organisation, a Community Interest Company, under British Law. We proceeded to do so because we understand that as a guarantee for our audience, readers, and (potential) authors. We define our Community as scholars and students of the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Classical Studies (broadly defined), members of the public with similar interests, and any institution, organisation, and company aligned to similar aims.

To further solidify our academic quality and cover sub-fields of Classical Studies, we expanded our Advisory Board, which comprises 30 members from 18 countries worldwide. These numbers (and countries) grow even more if we consider the number of our reviewers. More so, aligning with our objectives, as discussed above, we have been expanding our connections and collaborations. We are formally Port Ancient Partners of the Saving the Ancient Studies Alliance (SASA), and we are moving forward to several projects, from outreach and discussions on the ways forward for the Humanities (on the upcoming SASA Annual Conference 2023, for example) to further supporting the dissemination of scholarly work by publishing papers and special volumes.

The second year also marks the move to the National Documentation Center of Greece (EKT),¹ which welcomed our international initiative and currently hosts our journal's site, utilising the Open Journal System developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP). While this meant a slow and tedious move from our previous host (PKP) to the new one, which impacted the number of published papers on this issue, it offered *PNYX* the opportunity to demonstrate its collaborative nature. As a parent publisher, *Isegoria*, a British Publisher, is documented by the EKT, a national, public, Greek infrastructure that has supported 'Access to Knowledge' since 1980. This move also synergises well with our two forthcoming volumes by *Isegoria*, to appear in *Isegoria's* Open Monograph Press, hosted by EKT, too. Things have now settled, and we expect to return to producing academic papers and a series of targeted publications currently under work.

Despite the limited publication of articles in this issue of *PNYX*, it introduces a key section that we will be populating looking forward: a (academic) 'Reviews' section with a twist. The Reviews section is what is often found in academic journals; it provides a (peer-reviewed) evaluation of scholarly production in terms of monographs, edited volumes, conference proceedings, etc., to alert the audience to new publications, but also to provide a critical overview and a discussion of the main strengths and weaknesses of the academic work under review. We wish to move a step forward by giving a voice to the author(s) or editor(s) of books under review to discuss the journey towards the book's creation. Thus, we introduce an Interview (i.e., for *PNYX*, this is the 'Reviews & Authors Profile' section) element to the book reviews to provide a humane, sometimes out of the specifically 'academic' perspective, profile of our colleagues. We intend to shed some light on the other side of the coin: if the book review focuses on the academic impact of the work, then the Authors' Profile offers a glimpse at the people behind it. This is a short space to discuss the joys and pitfalls of working towards such a milestone (for academic production, professional development, or personal achievement – most often altogether). Along with the voice of the authors or editors discussing their journey towards the publication of the(ir) work, we offer their short biographies and profile pictures so that the

¹ <https://www.ekt.gr/>.

audience who may read the book manages to connect the authoritative voice with an actual person, not just a name among others in the scholarly stage. We find this even more important for early career researchers and non-anglophone colleagues, both of whom we wish to support in their academic journey. In our minds, the two sections work *in tandem* to promote the work of the community we serve and support.

Our call remains open: we look for like-minded colleagues, within or outside strict academic structures, who work on any aspects of the Classical World and its Reception. Our Advisory Board members and editors offer a collaborative environment that aims to make the authoring process enjoyable while working towards improving arguments and research. We also look forward to the community's feedback – your views and suggestions shape our initiatives; this is how we develop and transform. Thus, we invite you to visit our websites,² contact us or our team members, or submit your manuscripts; we look forward to working with you.

With collegial regards and wishes to enjoy reading this issue,

Manolis E. Pagkalos

Nottingham,

June 2023

² *Pnyx: Journal of Classical Studies*: www.pnyx.co.uk; *Isegoria Publishing*: www.isegoriapublishing.co.uk.

