

Other infelicities include the inconsistent use of font sizes for headings and sub-headings and inconsistencies in the use of author's initials and first names in the Table of Contents and at the beginning of chapters. Furthermore, the book opens with some items that would be better placed as appendices, such as the names of current members of the Council of the University and a list of Vice-Chancellors from inception until 2022. A major omission is the updated list of graduates of the university from 1987 to 2022. The Silver Jubilee publication edited by O. Omosini and A. A. Adediran (1989) provided such a list, from the first graduands in 1965 to 1987. An updated list of graduates from 1988 to 2022 would have been a valuable contribution.

These reservations notwithstanding, this volume is undoubtedly an important addition to existing literature not only on the history of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, but also on the history of university education in Nigeria, a record of one of Africa's leading universities of the twenty-first century – self-styled 'Africa's Most Beautiful Campus' – Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

The Book can be ordered by contacting the University Librarian at librarian@oauife.edu.ng.

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Samantha Masters, Imkhitha Nzungu and Grant Parker (eds), (*u*)*Mzantzi Classics: dialogues in decolonisation from Southern Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds and Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, (pb R300 – 978 192 8 50230 2, (ePDF) 978 192 8 50231 9). 2022, vi + 274 pp.
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What has Classics to do with southern Africa? What has southern Africa to do with Classics or with “ancient studies” which has emerged as preferred nomenclature in some universities? This volume, its shape owing something to a Socratic dialogue and something to the tradition of *Ubuntu*, had its origins in a workshop on ‘Metamorphoses: classical reflections of a changing South Africa’, held in Oxford in 2018. Other contributions were added to the original papers and editing and rewriting allowed the published book to add updates, including notes on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on teaching and outreach projects. Contributors are mostly established or early career academics or students at South African universities. Two come from the University of Zimbabwe. Unfortunately there are no representatives from Malawi, although Dr Banda greatly favoured a classical education in his elite academy.

The book was born in the aftermath of the ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ and ‘Fees Must Fall’ campaigns – in which the contributors were participants or close observers. They probe ways of framing Classics to demonstrate continued value and vitality. They tackle the historic ‘baggage’ of Classics – racist, colonialist, elitist – and debates over decolonization of the curriculum, pedagogy and language policy in a thoughtful,

nuanced, non-strident and not overly defensive manner. They know that, as Jo-Marie Clausen puts it in her chapter, 'Classics for the Third Millennium: African options after the Fall', a 'kind of intellectual decolonisation accompanying political decolonisation still often involves stringent attacks on a discipline considered the definitive Eurocentric study, and seen as particularly superfluous in a time of existential distress' (87). Classicists have to deal with this and these contributors do not shrink from confronting the issues.

Discussion of the lasting impact, legacy and continued relevance of classical (i.e. ancient Greek and Roman) studies in southern Africa is grouped into four 'dialogues'. These are: On Baggage; On Intersecting Identities; On Classics and the Canon; From Reception to Reimagination. Each contains two or three articles and a 'conversation', in which young scholars of various ethnic backgrounds reflect on their pathways into Classics and their practice of teaching and research. Christiaan Bronkhorst, from an Afrikaner background and an Anglican school, was first drawn to Classics by his love of Asterix the Gaul. Amy Daniels, now teaching at Stellenbosch and researching Augustine of Hippo admits: 'My falling into classics actually began with a bout of laryngitis where I lost my singing voice and so could not do a BMus' (178).

Obert Bernard Mlambo and John Douglas McClymont in a wide ranging chapter, 'Imagining Africans through the lens of a classical education: the politics of colonial administration in Southern Africa', trace the colonizers' awareness of classical precedents and their understanding of civilizing Romans and primitive ancient Brits. They consider training in classical philology and its influence in providing scripts, literacy and standardization for African languages. They look at similarities and differences (including different attitudes to religion and race) between Roman imperialism and European colonialism.

Other contributors are interested in the Roman presence in and perceptions of Africa (one speaks of 'great Africans from Hannibal to St. Augustine'), comparative mythology, and classical references in contemporary African literature: 'African classicists are ahead of their European, Asian and North American colleagues in cross-cultural comparison, in access to living cultures from a different tradition, but similar to those of ancient Greece or early Rome' (104).

Examples include comparing Aeneas' offerings to his father's spirit with African offerings to the ancestors, land redistribution to military veterans in Zimbabwe and in the Rome of the Gracchi, and African praise poetry and archaic Greek poets, notably Pindar.

Others trace the role of Classics and the classical languages (Greek for theologians, Latin for lawyers) in the education of colonial administrators and elitist professions, and neo-classicism in architecture and art. Rhodes, nicely described as 'a cross between Caesar and PT Barnum' (245), had strong classical interests. After reading Gibbon in 1893 he commissioned Hatchards to produce new translations of each ancient and Byzantine work cited in the footnotes of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (245). He was reading Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* on his deathbed.

Contributors re-examine this baggage and the changing profiles, preferences and aspirations of school and university students and re-claim Classics as a means of educational empowerment. Reshard L. Kolabhi and Shani C. Viljoen describe the Stellenbosch University Latin Project, an outreach project 'consciously driven by social justice' (120), inspired by Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Underprivileged kids are brought into the University's halls to learn the Latin language (they are encouraged to speak it to each other!) and explore themes in Roman life.

Time and time again contributors demonstrate that 'Classics is good to think with.' Christiana Bronkhorst sees the biggest strength of the discipline in its cultivation of empathy.

There's the ability to get into the mind of someone who lived so long ago, in a different part of the world and who is so different to us and so "alien" . . . It is a wonderful mechanism for building empathy and for building the ability to reach out and think about what another human being is going through or might be going through (78–89).

Nuraan Essop writes: 'If there's something that you're thinking of there's probably something related to it in ancient studies.' (234) Madhlozi Moyo encouraged his Zimbabwean students to think about current events and the moral dilemmas of living in a corrupt society with Cicero. *De Officiis* [*On Duties*] 'was received by young Zimbabwean men and women with astounding success!' (164) Samantha Masters used Roman practice around statues, memorialization and *damnatio memoriae* as a way into debating issues around Rhodes Must Fall, Black Lives Matter and the toppling of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol (UK). Grant Parker reflects on similar themes by way of Ovid.

The book is well produced with well-chosen and well-reproduced illustrations. There are plentiful notes and references so it is easy to follow up ideas and debates. The copy editing and proofreading is of a consistently high standard. I enjoyed this book. I just wish there was an index.

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