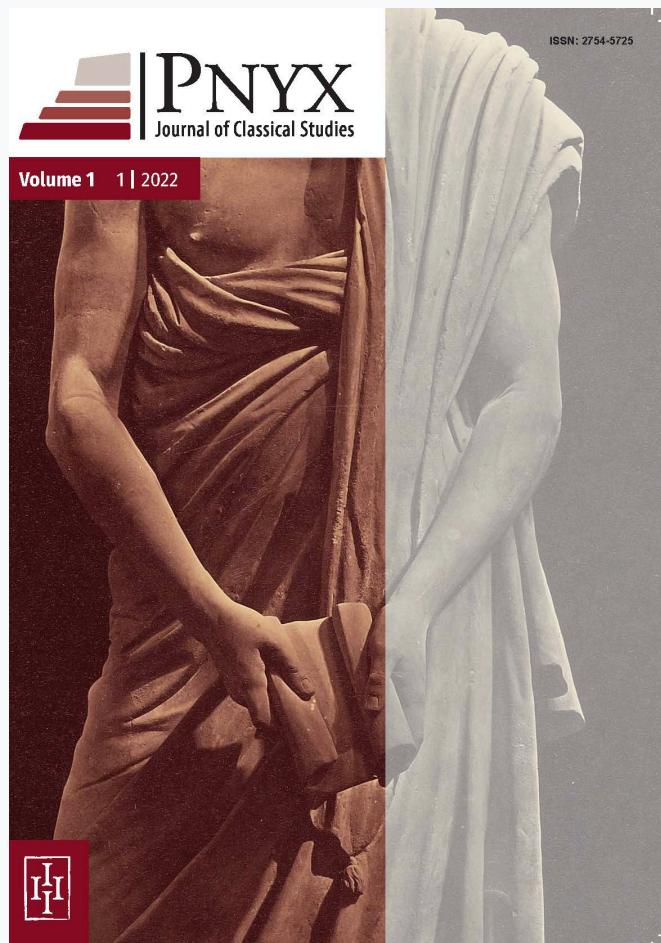


Pnyx: Journal of Classical Studies

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Pnyx: Journal of Classical Studies (Inaugural Issue)



Preface: Introducing Pnyx

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Preface: Introducing *Pnyx*

PNYX is a digital-only, double-blind peer-reviewed, free-for-all, Open Access journal for Classical Studies, Archaeology, and their Receptions that publishes research papers in English and offers full editorial services to authors. We understand that every term used in the previous sentence invites debate and in what follows we address each one separately. Before we proceed, we must say that we are proud of our Advisory Board, which spans three continents and a dozen countries, whose numbers are tilted in favour of female, non-Anglophone members. It is indicative of our vision of Classical Studies and the slightly different way we do things. We thank them for their support, insight, and confidence, and we look forward to the wonderful journey ahead.

Why Digital-only?

No crisis is an opportunity, yet the pandemic has removed us from libraries and brought us closer to electronic resources. Many more colleagues are happy to read PDFs and libraries across the world continue to invest heavily in electronic copies, following the trend that had developed a few years before Covid. Besides the apparent positive effect on the environment, digital print makes the material available worldwide with the click of a button. Thanks to specialised software, digital texts become easily accessible to readers with impediments. Portability is another factor, as not everyone has enough space to store publications or pack copies in suitcases. In less noble aspects, digital print is cheaper and facilitates faster production.

Why Two Rounds of Peer Review?

Colleagues active on social media may be aware of a growing discussion over the unpredictability of reviewers. As publishers, we choose to orient reviewers' work towards the positive changes they bring to the table: constructive criticism and meaningful suggestions. Of course, their views continue to weigh in significantly, but the decision to publish a paper is, and should be, editorial. For this, a broad Advisory Board and editors' commitment are absolute necessities. The publishing house and the journal are scholarly-led endeavours, and the editors-in-chief work full-time to ensure that authors receive the best service possible, inclusive, fair, high-quality, and free. During the internal review, editors and Advisory Board members read papers, make suggestions to authors, and decide on publication. External reviewers are then asked to pinpoint errors and/or slips, but mostly to suggest improvements and different viewpoints to authors in a genuinely collaborative manner that many colleagues are happy to experience and be part of.

Why Free?

Let us be clear: there are no hidden fees anywhere, at any point of the production and service. Our authors receive a CC-BY 4.0 license and editorial services for free. We believe that no one should pay to publish their work. Open Access should make things more inclusive and accessible hence we opted for a different model that relies on donations and sponsorship from third parties. We reach out to the public for donations and go directly to funders and donors to receive support and ensure that we continue to provide our services for free. Access to institutional or private funding should not be the litmus test for publishing one's work: rigour, value, and substance should.

Why Open Access?

Over the last few years, the direction of scientific publishing has become clear, as an increasing number of funding bodies require funded research to be freely available to the public. It is the way of the foreseeable future, and publishers have a duty to facilitate the free and fair dissemination of research. We are committed to our principles and vision¹ for our field, and we firmly believe that Open Access must be a facilitator available to all. We hope that innovative business models will alleviate the financial burden and other barriers from the shoulders of scholars, students, readers, and libraries worldwide.

Why All Those Disciplines?

As scholars, we believe in a holistic approach that embraces as many aspects of the ancient world as possible. The examination of different kinds of evidence from different perspectives only benefits research in a scholarly environment that has long been subjected to the demand for cross-disciplinarity; addressing the full spectrum of Classical Studies feels like the logical step in that direction. No genre, discipline, or field operates in a vacuum.

Why English Only?

There may not be enough cyberspace to address this issue fully. For Anglophone colleagues and readers, this choice is expected, given the base of operations of the journal and the publishing house. More widely, despite polyglotism in our field, English is the language of convenience and, arguably, main language of research. Authoring research in English ensures wider dissemination of one's work, and the demand to publish in English is increasing rapidly. Whereas as editors we are happy to work in several languages between us, we decided to tailor our editorial services to non-Anglophone authors who publish in their native language but look to publish in English. Often, they face substantial costs to meet the requirements of English academic style (for whatever that means in the age of International English), as they hire the services of professional editors with unpredictable outcomes. A substantial investment of time and money does not guarantee success. We decided to break this vicious circle and offer language editing services to our authors for free. Upon acceptance for publication after the internal review, papers undergo language editing before forwarding them to external reviewers. In our view, Global Scholars who author their research in English already make a giant step in exiting their comfort zone; therefore, they should not be the ones that have to bear all costs to tailor their manuscript to requirements of language and style.

At *Pnyx*, no author will be sent away, and no submission will be rejected on the grounds of language or style. Instead, we work with authors constructively to improve their work and bring it closer to Anglophone academic standards, always respecting the author's voice and affinity to other research traditions and environments. Our decision to publish manuscripts depends on merit, originality, and value alone. If the idea is there, we work with authors on style. In our vision for Classical Studies, colleagues can focus on what they do best: researching, thinking, and writing.

¹ Available here: <https://isegoriapublishing.co.uk/our-purpose>.

Why (Do we Need) Another Journal?

It may be clear that this is not just another journal, but an innovative model, a service provided by scholars to scholars, an initiative that addresses the most critical aspects of our profession: fairness and inclusivity, beyond costs and style. *PNYX* offers free language editing, a free Open Access Licence, and the opportunity for authors, Advisory Board Members, editors, and reviewers to work collaboratively. We are interested in finding reasons to publish a paper, not to reject it; we focus on the idea and help with style and presentation; we welcome contributions from members of groups currently under-represented in our field and enjoy pulling down barriers. The current issue is indicative of our vision for Classics: fair, free, global, inclusive. We are proud that all three articles are authored by female, non-Anglophone colleagues and reviewed by non-Anglophone colleagues.

The title of the journal speaks volumes of our mission to create a platform where researchers can publish their work in English without much stress, able to enjoy the process of authoring and receive services we would all like to see. *PNYX* promotes a multitude of voices and perspectives, each with the right of expressing one's views freely and equally (*Isegoria*). More importantly, it moves away from the Ancient Athenian reality to include all scholars, especially those belonging to groups currently under-represented in our field. In the words of the Athenian herald, 'Who wishes to speak?', we are happy to receive your manuscripts, but please also get in touch to share your views and suggestions; this is how our projects develop. You are warmly invited to visit our websites to learn more about our story, vision, and work *ethos*.²

Stay safe, and enjoy reading our inaugural issue,
Manolis E. Pagkalos and Stefanos Apostolou
Nottingham, February 2022

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

We would like to dedicate our inaugural issue to the loving memory of Anna Ramou-Hapsiades (2021+), a teacher of teachers and a prolific Professor of Ancient History at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. We start with Demosthenes on the cover of the issue, with three papers authored by female historians, and two papers on ancient Athens. Mrs Anna would have liked that.