Classical Studies: *Black Athena*: Does Martin Bernal’s *Black Athena* make an important contribution to our understanding of the ancient world? 1

Yes. *Black Athena* makes a critical contribution to our understanding of the ancient world by significantly challenging the questions we ask of the past and our motivations for asking them. (*Patrice D. Rankine*) 2

No. *Black Athena* does not make a critical contribution to our understanding of the ancient world because Martin Bernal’s study of the past, which includes his use of myth and source criticism, is fundamentally flawed. (*Patrice D. Rankine*) 6

Classical Studies: *German Philological Tradition*: Does the German philological tradition offer a superior knowledge of antiquity to that of British amateurism? 11

Yes. German philology far surpasses the British tradition in the production of useful knowledge about antiquity. (*William M. Calder III*) 12

No. British scholarship produces superior results in the long run, both in terms of a well-rounded knowledge of antiquity and of the resulting education offered to students. (*Ward W. Briggs Jr.*) 15

Classical Studies: *Homosexuality*: Did the concept of homosexuality exist in the ancient world? 19

Yes. Homosexuality was a meaningful concept in the ancient world, even if the word itself did not exist. (*Amy Richlin*) 20

No. While sexual acts between members of the same sex were common in antiquity, homosexuality did not exist as a category of personal identity. (*Jerise Fogel*) 23

Classical Studies: *The Marxist Approach*: Does Marxism remain a valid historical approach to the ancient world? 29

Yes. Marxist concepts have proven their worth in the understanding of ancient history and culture, even as Marxism continues to offer a coherent theoretical rationale for a holistic understanding of the ancient world. (*Peter W. Rose*) 30

No. The historical record does not permit a classical Marxist interpretation of history, and Marxism’s heuristic value has been largely superceded by feminism, cultural studies, and other nontraditional approaches. (*Charles Platter*) 33

Classical Studies: *Modern Critical Theory*: Is modern critical theory a useful tool for understanding the ancient Mediterranean world? 38
Yes. Contemporary literary theory offers new insights into Greek and Roman literature and culture and provides a means for linking the ancient world to the world of today. (Carl A. Rubino) .......................... 39

No. Critical theory is a form of obscurantist terrorism that is harmful to humanistic study as a whole and particularly deleterious to classics. (Steven J. Willett) .......................... 41

Classical Studies: Translation: Does translation inevitably distort our engagement with the ancient world? .......................... 47

Yes. Translation distorts our engagement with the ancient world because modern English does not offer the linguistic resources to convey classical culture. (Elizabeth Vandiver) .......................... 48

No. Since ancient languages are no longer spoken, texts in those languages are fixed and more accessible through translation. (Paul Allen Miller) .......................... 52

Greece: Aeschylus: Does democracy ensure the triumph of right over might as Aeschylus maintains in the Eumenides? .......................... 56

Yes. In the Eumenides, Aeschylus presents the foundations of a concept of justice based on law and procedure. (Yves Citton) .......................... 57

No. The institution of law and procedure is merely the formalization of power. (Yves Citton) .......................... 60


Yes. Alcibiades was a megalomaniac who overturned the conservative policies of his protector, Pericles, in favor of reckless Athenian expansion. In the end, he was less Athens’s savior than a cause of its downfall. (Joel Allen) .......................... 66

No. Many of the stories told about Alcibiades are fictitious. In fact, his life was filled with many worthy achievements. (Joel Allen) .......................... 68

Greece: Aristophanes: Was Aristophanes a reactionary? .......................... 72

Yes. Behind the evident levity that pervades the work of Aristophanes lay the political attitudes of a man deeply suspicious of the Athenian democracy and with pronounced conservative politics. (Charles Platter) .......................... 73

No. Although his comedies have a conservative side, Aristophanes faced many pressures in order to be a successful dramatist, and it would have been of only limited use for him to espouse one political position over another. His heavy use of allusion and parody combine to produce texts that are highly ironic with multiple meanings. (Charles Platter) .......................... 76

Greece: Aristotle versus Plato: Did Aristotle make a more lasting contribution to philosophy than Plato? .......................... 81

Yes. Aristotle has a more coherent theory of the good. (Chad Wiener) .......................... 82

No. Plato is a greater philosopher than Aristotle because he demarcated the intellectual domain that philosophy occupied and in which Aristotle’s own philosophic activity took place. Plato, moreover, created the conditions in which the mode of consciousness underlying Aristotle’s work was able to crystallize and express itself. (Matthew E. Kenney) .......................... 85

Greece: Demosthenes: Was Demosthenes’ call to Athenian resistance against Philip II of Macedon doomed from the start? .......................... 89

Yes. In spite of Demosthenes’ best hopes, Athens’s decline had been irreversible since losing the Peloponnesian War. It had neither the economic nor the political strength to mount a credible resistance to Macedonian hegemony. (Joel Allen) .......................... 90

No. Demosthenes’ resistance to Macedonian rule was not ill-conceived; his advice was heeded too late. (Joel Allen) .......................... 92
**Greece: Elgin Marbles:** Should the Elgin Marbles be returned to Greece? 97

Yes. The Elgin Marbles should be returned to Greece because their illegitimate removal from the Parthenon compromised the integrity of the temple. Moreover, the Greeks have begun to implement the conditions set by the British government for the return of the marbles, most notably the restoration of the Acropolis and the building of a new museum. *(Nancy Sultan)* 98

No. The marbles should remain in the British Museum because Lord Elgin’s legal removal saved them from destruction. They are available to a wider public than they would be in Athens, and their return to Greece would set a precedent that would empty many great museums of their collections. *(Nancy Sultan)* 101

**Greece: Euripides:** Was Euripides a misogynist? 106

Yes. Euripides’ work demonstrates misogynistic tendencies. His plays portray women either as monsters who would disrupt the family or the state, or as models of self-sacrifice. Those few female characters who are empowered in his plays merely act like men. *(Paul D. Streufert)* 107

No. Euripides’ plays demonstrate a sort of protofeminism rather than misogyny. The variety of strong and sympathetic women characters found in his plays demonstrates his commitment to critiquing patriarchal oppression in Athens. *(Paul D. Streufert)* 110

**Greece: Herodotus:** Was Herodotus the father of history? 114

Yes. Herodotus’s attempt to describe fully events of the recent past and to explain the causes of those events marks the beginning of historiography in the Western European tradition. *(Elizabeth Vandiver)* 115

No. Although Herodotus’s conception of the past as something susceptible to rational inquiry was groundbreaking, he did not provide a good example of how to put this concept into practice. *(William E. Hutton)* 118

**Greece: Hesiod:** Was Hesiod an oral poet? 123

Yes. Hesiod composed his songs without the use of writing. He did not inherit a written text, and he did not transmit one to others through writing. *(Apostolos N. Athanassakis)* 124

No. Hesiod composed his songs in writing; this non-oral method of composition might have included some written text inherited by him. *(Apostolos N. Athanassakis)* 126

**Greece: Homer:** Was Homer an oral poet? 130

Yes. The style of Homeric epic is not one of a poet who composed in writing, and comparative evidence from oral poetry in other cultures suggests traditional poetry is able to sustain large-scale compositions along the lines of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. *(Robin Mitchell-Boyask)* 131

No. Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are longer than oral poems are likely to have been, and both show evidence of a thoughtful reworking of traditional material that is probably the product of written composition. *(Charles Platter)* 134

**Greece: Library at Alexandria:** Were there repositories other than the Ptolemies’ Library at Alexandria of equal value in preserving Greek culture? 138

Yes. The existence of the Alexandrian Library was not a precondition for the production of standard texts of Greek authors or for the survival of Greek literature. Greek literary culture was widely diffused and practiced throughout the entire Mediterranean basin long before the conquests of Alexander and the beginning of the “Hellenistic” era. *(T. Keith Dix)* 139
No. The Ptolemies assembled the greatest collection of Greek literature from the classical period, during a time crucial for the transformation and transmission of the Greek cultural heritage, and they inspired imitators among the other Hellenistic dynasties and the Roman emperors. (T. Keith Dix) .................................. 141

Greece: Literacy: Was literacy a sufficient force for producing the cultural revolution in Greece? ................................................. 145

Yes. The coming of literacy produced a cultural revolution in Greece by changing the structure of language. (Paul Allen Miller) ................................................. 146

No. Literacy did not produce a cultural revolution in Greece. Such assertions are based on oversimplified notions of what causes cultural change and the difference between oral and literate cultures. (Paul Allen Miller) ................................................. 149

Greece: Plato as an Aristocrat: Was Plato an aristocratic sympathizer with the oligarchic factions within the Athenian state? .... 154

Yes. Plato was an aristocrat who favored rule by those with superior natures and thoroughly detested the democracy of his time. (Charles Platter) ................................................. 155

No. Plato, although an aristocrat of the highest pedigree, broke with his class when he met Socrates and developed a devastating critique of traditional aristocratic thinking about politics. (Charles Platter) ................................................. 159

Greece: Sappho: Does Sappho's poetry represent a departure from the traditional masculine view of love? ................................................. 164

Yes. Sappho's poetry departs from a traditional masculine view of love by presenting love relations as mutual and reciprocal, in contrast to the model of love relations found in Archaic Greek male poets. (Ellen Greene) ................................................. 165

No. Sappho depicts love relations as driven by domination and conquest. Her poems also treat typically male themes such as politics and philosophy. (Ellen Greene) ................................................. 167

Greece: Sophists: Did the sophists exercise a pernicious influence on Greek culture? ................................................. 172

Yes. Some sophists, by cultivating a program of moral relativism, propounded teachings that had deleterious effects on Greek political and social life. (Patrick O'Sullivan) ................................................. 173

No. The sophists expounded richly diverse views on a range of issues, not necessarily renouncing ethical principles but rather opening up new areas for critical speculation and debate that enhanced the intellectual life of their own times and beyond. (Patrick O'Sullivan) ................................................. 176

Greece: Sports: Were ancient Greek sports amateur athletics? 181

Yes. Ancient Greek athletes were not paid professionals, and the awards they received were usually honorary rather than financial. (David H. J. Larmour) ................................................. 182

No. Ancient Greek athletes frequently received monetary and material rewards, which effectively gave them a status similar to that of professionals. There is no ancient term that corresponds to the word amateur. (David H. J. Larmour) ................................................. 184

Roman Period: the Aeneid: Was the Aeneid Augustan propaganda? ................................................. 189

Yes. The Aeneid was written in response to Augustus's deliberate and explicit cultural program. In spite of the immense subtlety of the poem, its fundamental endorsement of Roman and Augustan dominance cannot be avoided. (Micaela Janan) ................................................. 190

No. Far from being a piece of propaganda, the Aeneid is a poem suffused with loss, suffering, and nostalgia. Virgil may well have
“believed in Rome,” but he was well aware of the immense costs involved in Rome’s triumph. (Carl A. Rubino) 194

Roman Period: Cato: Were Cato’s attacks on Hellenism purely political opportunism? 197
Yes. Cato’s attacks on Greek culture at Rome were undertaken purely to advance his own position in the Roman ruling class. (Philip Thibodeau) 198
No. Cato’s outbursts against Hellenism were based on a conviction that Greek culture had value but needed to be kept subordinate to Roman interests and customs. (Philip Thibodeau) 200

Roman Period: Christian Neoplatonism: Did Christian Neoplatonism evolve directly from the ancient philosophical tradition? 204
Yes. Christian Neoplatonists adhered to ancient philosophical traditions and gained enormous influence throughout the Christian world in the first millennium. (Carlos Steel) 205
No. Christian Neoplatonists rejected the tradition of open philosophical debate. (Jan Opsomer) 208

Roman Period: Cicero Versus Caesar: Were Cicero’s contributions as a political figure ultimately more responsible and significant than Caesar’s? 212
Yes. Cicero was a true statesman who dedicated himself to expanding the intellectual and moral frontiers of his compatriots. (Carl A. Rubino) 213
No. Cicero failed to recognize the fundamental currents of political change occurring around him. Caesar, by contrast, not only diagnosed the crisis correctly but was also able to act decisively to shape events. (David H. J. Larmour) 216

Roman Period: Donatist Controversy: Did Donatist bishops fail to offer a convincing defense of their beliefs at the Conference of 411 C.E. in Carthage? 221
Yes. The irrational and erratic behavior of the Donatist bishops during their debate with their Catholic antagonists in 411 C.E. clearly showed not only the bad faith in which they agreed to the proceedings but also the lack of a logical and legal argument that they could employ to defend their case. (Erika T. Hermanowicz) 222
No. The Donatists, who were faced with a hostile imperial court and bureaucratic overseers whose mission was to ensure their defeat, employed various strategies in order to fashion a transcript of the meeting that could be used to their benefit in subsequent legal appeals. (Erika T. Hermanowicz) 226

Roman Period: Elegists: Were the Roman elegists protofeminists? 231
Yes. The Roman elegists presented their puellae (beloveds) as powerful, autonomous women who refused to assume accepted roles of submission to men. (Christel Johnson) 232
No. The Roman elegists may have bent conventional male gender roles, but they did not offer women equality nor did their poetry seek to change the place of women in Roman society. (Ellen Greene) 234

Roman Period: Fall of the Republic: Was Roman decline inevitable with the fall of the republic? 238
Yes. The republican constitution was what made Rome great; without that structure, decline was inevitable. (Mark A. Beck) 239
No. The notion that the collapse of the republic led to the decline of Rome is a manifest ideological fiction that cannot withstand a rigorous examination in terms of chronology, the instability of the republic, the benefits of the imperial system,
and the class biases of the ancient commentators.
(Paul Allen Miller) ......................................................... 242

Roman Period: Gladiatorial Contests: Was the purpose of the gladiatorial contests to satisfy the blood lust of the Roman mob?
Yes. The gladiatorial games drew upon the bloodthirsty urges of a populace hardened by continual warfare and were used by the emperors as a means of keeping the mob entertained.
(David H. J. Larmour) ..................................................... 249
No. Although they were spectacles of bloodshed, the gladiatorial games were designed as a manifestation of deeply rooted Roman values and aimed to display to the populace the power of their empire.
(David H. J. Larmour) ..................................................... 250

Roman Period: Ovid: Does Ovid’s exilic poetry represent a principled resistance to imperial tyranny?
Yes. In his exilic poetry Ovid subtly criticizes the ambitions of the emperor Augustus.
(Paul Allen Miller) .......................................................... 257
No. Although his exilic poetry is full of ambiguities, Ovid acknowledges and accepts the power and authority of Rome.
(Paul Allen Miller) .......................................................... 258

Roman Period: Ovid versus Virgil: Has Ovid’s Metamorphoses had a greater influence than Virgil’s Aeneid on postclassical literature?
Yes. Ovid’s Metamorphoses has had a greater influence upon postclassical literature, as exemplified through its many translations and stage adaptations.
(Christel Johnson) .......................................................... 265
No. Unlike Ovid’s epic, whose main theme is indisputably metamorphosis, Virgil’s Aeneid presents a nexus of themes that have supported a wide variety of interpretations.
(Sarah Spence) ............................................................... 266

Roman Period: Pausanias: Is Pausanias a reliable source for the history of ancient Greece?
Yes. Pausanias was an honest and diligent researcher; his Description of Greece preserves much valuable information from antiquity that no other source provides.
(William E. Hutton) .......................................................... 273
No. Pausanias wrote during an age when proper historical methodology was not observed or even recognized; the information in his Description of Greece is frequently inaccurate.
(William E. Hutton) .......................................................... 274

Roman Period: Plutarch: Is Plutarch the founder of modern biography?
Yes. Plutarch is rightly considered the founder of modern biography because he had a profound influence upon later practitioners of the genre, especially Samuel Johnson and James Boswell.
(Mark A. Beck) ............................................................... 283
No. Plutarch cannot be termed the founder of modern biography because his methods and concerns are not those of the biographer as the term is understood today. He wrote most of the Lives in pairs for the moral and philosophical instruction of his readers.
(David H. J. Larmour) .......................................................... 284

Roman Period: Tiberius Gracchus: Was Tiberius Gracchus a honest champion of the Roman underclass?
Yes. Tiberius Gracchus was a determined champion of what he saw as the best interests of the Roman people.
(Joel Allen) ................................................................. 292
No. Tiberius Gracchus was a failed aristocratic politician who manufactured a social crisis for his own political gain.
(Joel Allen) ................................................................. 293

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