Welcome to this supplementary issue of the Rosetta Journal, and my first after taking over responsibilities as General Editor. Included are the proceedings from two conferences: The Universities in Wales Institute of Classics and Ancient History (UWICAH) Colloquium, held at the University of Swansea, and the Classics, Ancient History, and Archaeology (CAHA) Colloquium, held at the University of Birmingham.

First I would like to thank the former editorial committee, especially the General Editor Frank Simons and Articles Editor Edward Mushett Cole, for their exceptional work, not only in publishing past issues, but also in ensuring that the Rosetta Journal can move forward; providing ongoing advice for the new committee. I would also like to thank the current committee, especially Charlotte Booth, whose tireless work as Articles Editor is matched only by her keenness in promoting the Journal.

Through the long process of research that we all undergo, it can sometimes be easy to isolate oneself; to settle into that academic niche and forget about the wider discipline. While we can be proud as a journal to publish articles with a huge scope of research, it is in conferences that we as researchers can truly engage with the field at large. As such, we are very happy to present extended abstracts from these conferences.

The newly formed UWICAH conference shows great promise and is sure to be an important platform for research over the coming years. The high aim of improving the postgraduate community in Wales, whilst also forging links with researchers and institutions in the rest of the country, allows greater cohesion. The shared topic of “Transformations” demonstrates how research in a specific topic is useful and relevant to other fields. The papers that evolved from those delivered, those we are fortunate enough to publish, show the importance of the opportunity to present at conferences. The topics demonstrate the most current research in many fields: Zuzanna Bennett discusses the designation of demons in Egyptian texts, shedding light on an often obscure area through detailed philological analysis; Alex Ferron alters our interpretation of Xenophon and shows that we must view Classical texts critically to determine their true nature, rather than merely follow the opinions of
former critics; and two papers on fourth Century AD Christianity are vastly different in location, with Nicholas Mataya exploring transformation of Christianity in the Balkans and Jill Mitchell discussing the transition from a cult of superstitio to the religio uera in the Roman Empire. Both show the extent of research and methodology available in a related field. I offer my thanks to Zuzanna Bennet, Rachel Bird, and Alex Ferron for organising the conference, and look forward to seeing it flourish as a nexus of academic thought.

The CAHA Colloquium has been running for a number of years and allows second Year PhD students at the University of Birmingham the chance to present their research to peers, and to gain ever-useful practice at presenting. Having attended the colloquium myself, it was enlightening to see the research currently being undertaken at the University. Seeing some of the speakers develop these into articles demonstrates the significant impact presenting can have on further academic discourse. The topics were truly diverse: Varick Harrison’s paper on the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius provides insightful comments, while Abigail Taylor’s work on identifying cultural identities for Anglo-Saxons in the fourth Century AD shows how the Portable Antiquities Scheme data is a useful research tool to elucidate the “Dark Ages”. Josephine Wall investigates the development of nineteenth Century garden cemeteries, providing interesting preliminary findings and promising further dividends as the fieldwork continues. David Callaghan’s discussion of English heritage sites in the 1990s and 2000s shows how considerations of the heritage sector impact on our understanding of cultural identity. Lastly, M. Nihal Gunes discusses eighteenth Century AD Egyptian economy under the Ottoman Empire, showing that an individual state within an empire can have very different fortunes to the empire as a whole.

With this range of topics it is a testament to the opportunities for study available at the university. I would like to extend my thanks to the committee for organising the event, especially Phillip Myers and Ruth Leger for their tireless work.
It is heartening to see so much effort go into the organisation of conferences, and the response afterwards to publish articles, as without those tireless efforts we would not be able to publish the progressive research we do.

Great credit also goes to the Specialist Editors, some of whom have been really tested by the breadth of research presented here, showing how innovative our contributors are in developing their subjects. It is in our ability to peer review that we as a journal can assist the development of postgraduate researchers, and without Specialist Editors we could not provide this valuable resource.

Finally, I would like to look forward to our next issue. The Call for Papers was met with eager application, and it promises to provide great insight into many disciplines. With a further push for Archaeological reports, and a burgeoning number of Book Reviews, I hope that the Rosetta Journal will continue to be recognised as a great resource, whether providing opportunities for publication or allowing access to articles for further research.

Best Wishes,

Guy Kirkham-Smith

General Editor