



FACULTY OF ARTS

Adelaide Summer Research Scholarship 2021-2022

Fear, Anger, Disgust: Unpleasant Emotions in the Greco-Roman World

Supervisor: Professor Han Baltussen

**Department of Classics, Archaeology and Ancient History
School of Humanities**

In recent decades, the historical study of emotions has become a booming research field and pioneering studies such as D. Konstan's *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (2008) have done much to evaluate the evidence from the ancient world. Building on such important studies and my own earlier research into grief (ARC funded project; book in progress), I ask more broadly how the ancients tried to cope with unpleasant emotions and forms of distress. The new focus extends existing research by looking at both the public and private sphere. In a recent talk I exposed a tension between Cicero's real-life experience of fear in politics against his philosophical musings on unpleasant emotions. By extending the scope to undesirable emotions, we gain a better understanding why they were seen as 'unpleasant' and how humans in general may cope with them.

Ancient authors had variously reflected on the appropriate response to anger, fear, and disgust. While the overall project seeks to come to a comprehensive understanding of these feelings and the views on the right response so as to determine how one can deal with negative emotions, the scope for ASRS will be limited to an exploration of terminological and conceptual questions in a small number of key texts (e.g., Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* 3-4) and to seeking out and assessing relevant secondary literature. We shall ask: how can modern analysis access ancient emotions reliably? What method is best suited to the subject to avoid the risk of projecting back modern notions? To what extent does our sense of fear, anger etc. map onto the ancient descriptions?

The work involved for this Scholarship is ideally suitable for a high-achieving student at level 2 or 3, who is familiar with Classical scholarship and methods (Classics major) and has an interest in intellectual history.

The student will gain the following research skills and experience;

- Co-publication with the supervisor
- Compiling bibliographical data
- Online scanning and translation of foreign language articles
- Discipline specific skills of comparative analysis of crucial texts (writing summaries)
- Understanding how to structure a major project description for grants, in particular one of a multi-disciplinary nature