

Some Brief Statistics on Women in Classical Archaeology

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The initial keynote panel at the 19th International Congress of Classical Archaeology, held in May 2018 in Cologne/Bonn, was composed of 100% male speakers (n=9). The subsequent debate that arose over the need, or lack thereof, of gender parity in such prominently visible spheres provides an opportunity for the wider consideration of the current presence of women in classical archaeology. The International Congress of Classical Archaeology, organised under the auspices of the Associazione Internazionale di Archeologia Classica (International Association for Classical Archaeology), provides a way to track gender balance in classical archaeology over half a century. The conference was first held in Athens in 1905, and later organised by AIAC, itself founded in Rome in 1945.¹ ICCA has occurred at 5 year intervals since, usually held at locations within Europe but also in Izmir, Turkey and Boston, USA.²

The first step in confronting issues of diversity in a discipline is the collation of data to survey if there is indeed an imbalance.³ This paper serves as a first step in such an assessment for classical archaeology. Many of the ICCA conferences have resulted in the publication of conference proceedings. Here, I use ICCA and UK classical archaeology as data sets to assess current gender balance in classical archaeology and provide a baseline to assess these against in the future.

The initial organisation of an all-male ‘manel’ keynote panel was the impetus for the organisation of the session *Diversity in the Past: Diversity in the Present?* This paper from the panel focusses on questions of gender balance, in part as this was the initial impetus to organising the panel, and in part because the data is most readily available and enables an initial assessment of one aspect of diversity.

Previous Discussions of Gender in Classical Archaeology

‘Classical’ archaeology falls between the disciplines of classics, ancient history, archaeology and anthropology. AIAC serves as the major academic meeting for the global north, alongside the American Institute of Archaeology. Issues of diversity have received limited attention in previous AIACs. At Boston in 2003, Allen gave a paper on women in classical archaeology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.⁴ Beyond Susan Allen’s paper in 2006, no discussion of the composition of the academic community of classical archaeology appears in available recent AIAC programmes. Other major conferences for Greek and Roman archaeology include The Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference and the Roman Archaeology

Conference, where explicit discussions of equality and diversity have also been limited.⁵

Gender Balance in Archaeology

In contrast, there has been a long history of recognition of gender inequality in archaeology.⁶ A range of reviews have assessed archaeologists working in the UK.⁷ A recent review from the UK enables an assessment of gender balance. At the time of the survey in 2012–13, 46 per cent of archaeologists were women.⁸ Statistics for women in academic archaeology synthesised in 2014 showed 12% of the UK professoriate was female in 2000s.⁹

Here, a broad assessment is made of academic staff working in UK institutions whose work falls within the category of ‘classical’ archaeology, taken as Greek or Roman archaeology.¹⁰ Binary gender categories were assigned on the basis of forenames. This is problematic due to the existence of a range of gender categories but enables a broad characterisation necessary to begin an assessment of current gender diversity. Figure 1 shows that out of 92 academics, 46% are women, showing near gender balance. However, when the proportion of professors is considered (fig. 2), the proportion of women decreases to 39%.

Gender Balance at AIAC Past and Present

Given this basis, of an albeit limited sample from the UK, it could be expected that there would be broadly equal proportions of men and women speakers at an international classical archaeology conference. Here the diversity of participants within the ICCA conference is assessed on the basis of the programme available on the conference website,¹¹ and the conference proceedings published from previous ICCAs.¹²

The impetus for the session *Diversity in the Present: Diversity in the Past* was the initial keynote panel line up of 9 men. After criticism from a range of classical archaeologists and beyond,¹³ the keynote line up was adjusted to consist of 7 men and 4 women. The contextualisation of this pattern through time is not straight forward, as there is a wide range of key note speakers at different conferences. At ICCA 1978 in London there were six plenary papers given by Manolis Andronicos, Masimo Pallottino, Lilly Kahil, Nicholas Yalouris, John Bryan Ward-Perkins and A.L.F Rivet. In contrast, the congress in Berlin in 1988 had a single keynote from Nikolaus Himmelmann, whilst the 1998 conference in Amsterdam had five male keynotes (Stephen Dyson, Manolis Korres, Ian Morris, Alain Schnapp, Paul Zanker), and one female keynote (Maria Bonghi Jovino). Considered in the long term, the

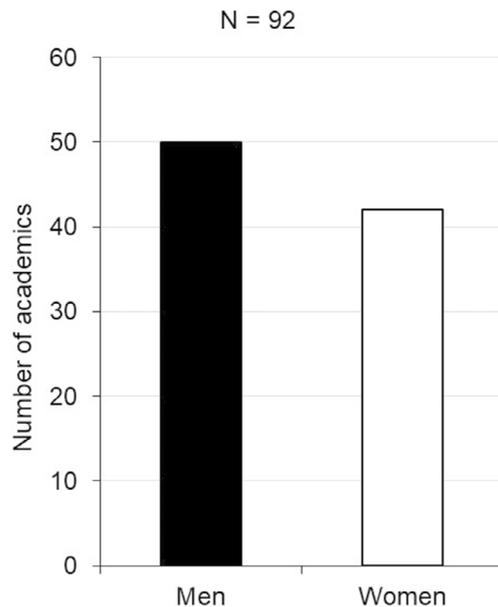


Fig. 1: Bar chart showing number of men and women in classical archaeology in academic positions in UK departments. See note 10.

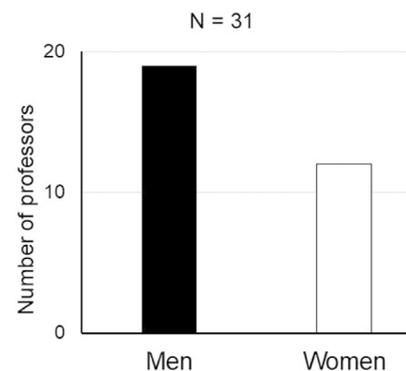


Fig. 2: Bar chart showing number of men and women professors in classical archaeology in UK departments. See note 10.

gender balance of the 2018 original keynote line up does not appear atypical, and points to long term problems in the under-representation of women in the most prestigious conference positions. Manels have received widespread criticism, on the basis that they are unreflective of the range of researchers currently working within a discipline, and silence women's voices.¹⁴

Keynote speakers at academic conferences are selected by the academic organising panel, who also have clear symbolic role at each conference. Past AIAC conferences have feature a range of committees. For instance in London in 1978 there was a committee of honours and a national organizing committee, and in Bonn/Cologne in 2018 a scientific committee and an organising committee. Here all members of committees have been included. Figure 4 shows the changing membership of these committees through time. In London, out of 56 members of the Committee of Honour and the National Organizing Committee, only 4 were women – Dame Kathleen Kenyon, Dr Ann Birchall (secretary), Joyce Reynolds, and the Rt Hon. Mrs. Shirley Williams MP. The gender balance of committees broadly improves through time, with actually a high number of women organising the conference in Boston in 2003, with the publication edited by Carol Mattusch, Alice Donohue, and Amy Brauer. In contrast, the 2018 organising committee consisted of 10 men. The trend over previous conferences was towards gender balance on organisational committees was reversed in 2018. The reasons for a reversal in the trend are unclear.

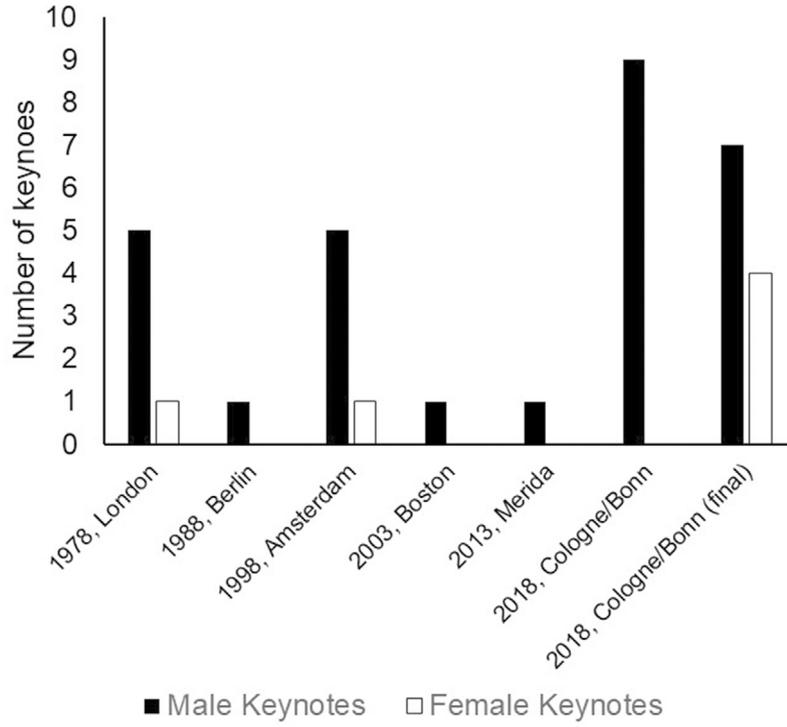


Fig. 3: Gender balance of keynotes through time.

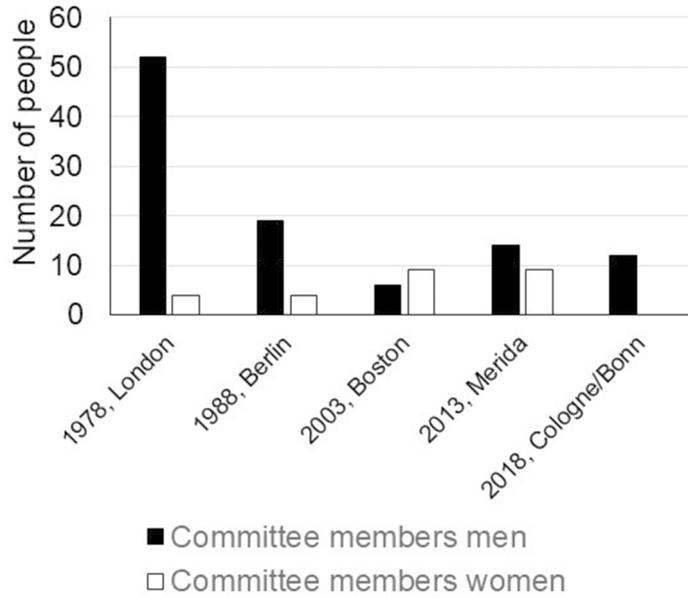


Fig. 4: Gender balance of AIAC organising committees.

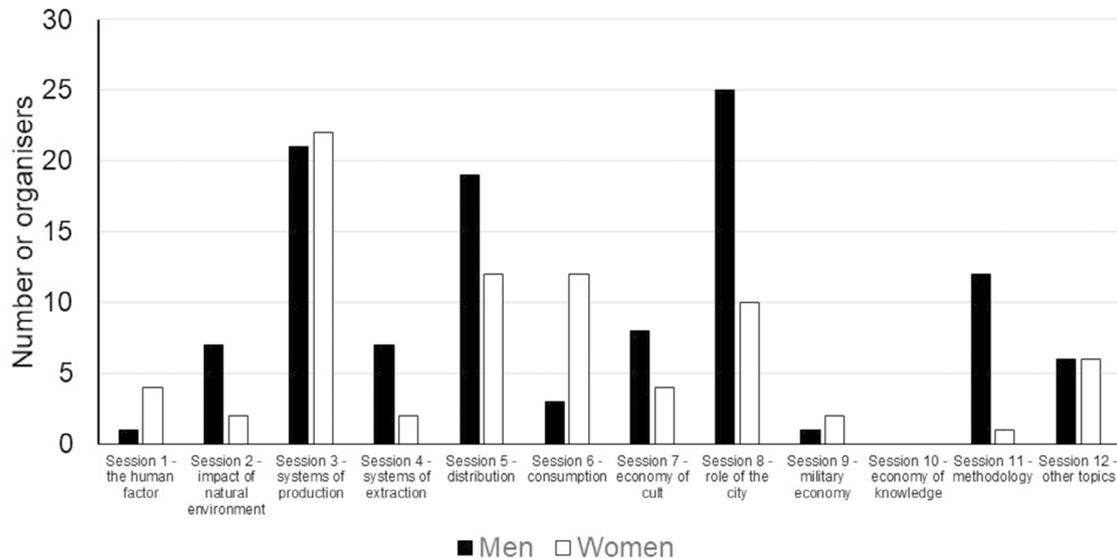


Fig. 5: Bar chart to show the gender of organisers by groups of sessions.

The range of session organisers is in part due to who submitted sessions, and in part due to which sessions were selected by the conferences organisers. Figure 5 shows the gender of session organisers grouped into the 12 conference themes, all related to the economy. A higher number of male organisers can be observed in sessions on extraction (session 4), the city in the ancient economy (session 8) and methodology (session 11). A higher number of female organisers can be observed in sessions on consumption (session 6) and the human factor (session 1), which in part may be linked to the higher proportion of women in archaeological specialisms such as bioarchaeology, ceramics, small finds, and other specialist scientific disciplines.¹⁵

Statistics on overall conference participants have been provided by the conference organisers.¹⁶ The balance of speakers was given as 49% male and 51% female, and for panel organisers as 45% male and 55% female. The allocation of travel grants, which are usually for students, was 40% male and 60% female. These statistics are reflective of the statistics previously quoted for UK archaeologists and classical archaeologists.

Discussants have important roles in conference sessions, acting as visible symbols of authority in an academic field. They are typically senior academics, who have been invited to provide critical feedback on the papers presented. Not all sessions at AIAC 2018 had discussants, but of the 42 who had discussants listed on the online programme, 33 of those discussants were men, and 10 were women (fig. 6). Just one session had a male and female discussant, with four having two male discussants. This pattern confirms the picture provided by the uneven gender balance of the keynote panel and organising committee.

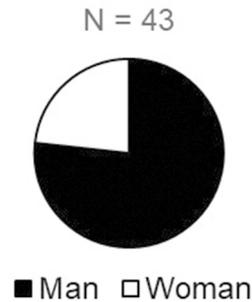


Fig. 6: The proportion of female and male discussants in sessions.

Gender Balance in Classical Archaeology Publications

The gender balance at conferences is influenced by a range of factors, including cost, access to care facilities, and unconscious and conscious bias. A contrasting insight into current gender balance in classical archaeology can be gained through a brief assessment of current publication practices. Figure 7 shows the gender of contributors to recent edited volumes in classical (mainly Roman) archaeology with an emphasis on the economy.¹⁷ All publications have a higher number of male than female contributors, and in all but two examples, the authorship is over 70% male. Whilst this is only a small sample of the huge range of publications in classical archaeology, this does indicate a consistent trend in the under-inclusion of women, and the need for continued observation and positive action to ensure women are invited to speak at conferences and contribute to subsequent publications.

This paper has provided a brief survey of current gender balance at AIAC conferences. A key conclusion on the basis of the initial keynote panel line up, the proportion of discussants, and the makeup of the organising committee, is that there is an imbalance in the presence of men and women that is not reflective of current statistics available at least for classical archaeology in the UK. In order to ensure that conscious or unconscious bias is not acting against the representation of women in conference spheres the diversity of conference organisers, keynotes, panel organisers, discussants and speakers should be continually observed.

Recognition and subsequent action on gender imbalances in academic conferences has occurred across numerous disciplines in recent years. Guidance is available on how to avoid all male panels, for instance as provided by the Women's Classical Committee.¹⁸ A widely adopted way forward to mitigate against such imbalances is the adoption and implementation of a conference speaker policy.¹⁹ The recent example of the discussion around the forthcoming FIEC/CA shows the importance of making policies clear and engaging with the community on the details of the policy.²⁰

More broadly, important work is taking place within archaeology²¹ and classics²² on issues of both gender equality and broader issues of diversity and equality, providing

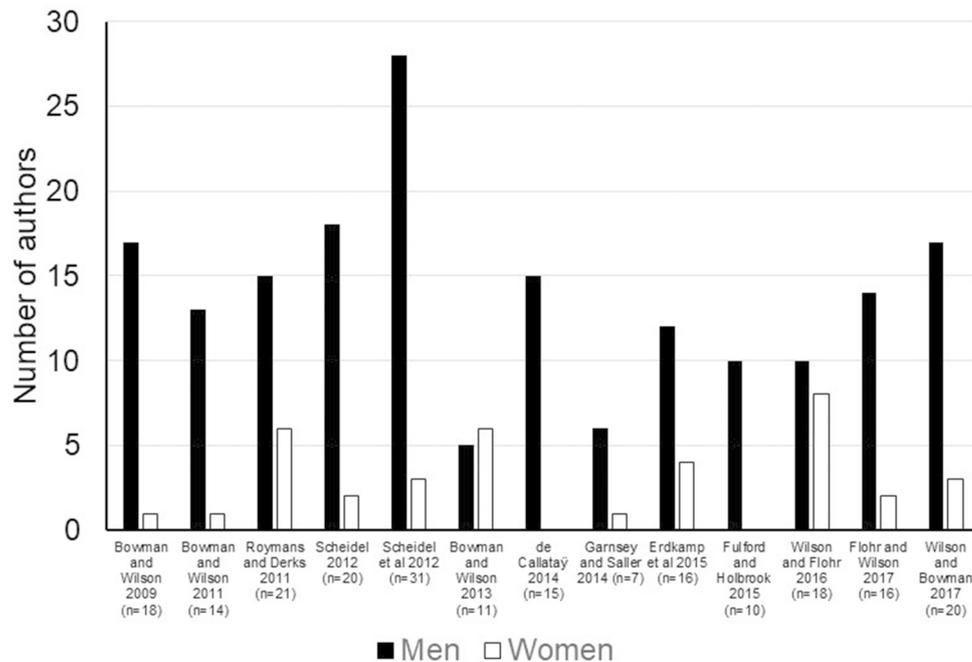


Fig. 7: Gender of contributors to recent edited volumes in classical archaeology.

models to adopt. A range of resources are available for identifying potential speakers and contributors, including the Women of Ancient History crowd-sourced database created by Sarah Bond, which provides a resource for finding women speakers. The Women's Classical Committee Wikipedia editing project seeks to raise the profile of women's scholarship in classics, including classical archaeology.²³ Beyond the speaker line up, a range of guidance is available on how to organise inclusive events, making conferences more accessible events despite caring responsibilities, financial limitations, or disability.²⁴

Beyond the gender imbalance, the initial keynote line up consisted of scholars from a very limited range of countries – UK, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands and Canada, as importantly highlighted by Katherine Blouin.²⁵ The number of countries represented by delegates was much larger with 1235 participants from 44 countries.²⁶ The under-representation of scholars from many of the modern countries where 'classical' archaeology is a major part of the cultural heritage (Greece, Italy, etc.) is notable. A range of intersecting aspects including ethnicity, disability, age, class and sexuality require much more consideration and action within classical archaeology. The initial observation of gender within the ICCA conferences, and classical archaeology publications is intended to contribute to a much more detailed and wider consideration of issues of diversity and equality in classical archaeology. At the overlap of archaeology and classics, classical archaeology should look to the range of important work taking places on these matters elsewhere in archaeology, classics, ancient history and beyond, to ensure that a wide range of voices are contributing to academic discourse.

Notes

- ¹ Bentz – Heinzelmann 2018, 10; Ward-Perkins 1977.
- ² Ward-Perkins 1977.
- ³ See a guide for achieving conference speaker balance – Martin 2014.
- ⁴ Allen 2006.
- ⁵ Lodwick et al. 2017; Scott 1998.
- ⁶ Eg. Gero 1985. For key scholarship see Shipley 2018.
- ⁷ Allen 2006.
- ⁸ Aitchison – Rocks-Macqueen 2013, tab. 68. 69.
- ⁹ Hamilton 2014.
- ¹⁰ Departmental webpages assessed May 2018: Oxford, Cambridge, Southampton, Exeter, Leicester, UCL, KCL, Reading, Royal Holloway, Cardiff, Newcastle, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Manchester, Nottingham, Kent, Lincoln, Durham.
- ¹¹ AIAC 2018 <<http://www.aiac2018.de/programme/sessions/#>>
- ¹² AIAC programmes consulted: London 1978 (Coldstream – Colledge 1978); Berlin 1988 (International Congress of Classical Archaeology 1990); Amsterdam 1998 (Docter – Moorman 1999); Boston 2003 (Mattusch et al. 2006); Merida 2013 (Barrero Martín – Pérez del Castillo 2013); Cologne 2018 (Bentz – Heinzelmann 2018).
- ¹³ Mol 2018; Blouin 2018.
- ¹⁴ Bond 2016.
- ¹⁵ Swift 2016; Gero 1985.
- ¹⁶ AIAC 2018.
- ¹⁷ Bowman – Wilson 2009, *Quantifying the Roman Economy*; Bowman – Wilson 2011, *Settlement, Urbanization and Population*; Roymans – Derks 2011, *Villa Landscapes in the Roman North*; Scheidel 2012, *Cambridge Companion to the Roman Economy*; Scheidel et al. 2012, *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*; Bowman – Wilson 2013, *The Roman Agricultural Economy*; de Callataÿ 2014, *Quantifying the Greco-Roman Economy and Beyond*; Garnsey – Saller 2014, *The Roman Empire*; Erdkamp et al. 2015, *Ownership and Exploitation*; Fulford – Holbrook 2015, *The Towns of Roman Britain*; Wilson – Flohr 2016, *Urban Craftsmen and Traders*; Flohr – Wilson 2017, *The Economy of Pompeii*; Wilson – Bowman 2017, *Trade, Commerce and the State*.
- ¹⁸ Women’s Classical Committee UK 2018.
- ¹⁹ See for instance Martin 2014; The TAG guideline for session organisers <<https://tagdeva.wordpress.com/guidelines-for-session-organisers/>>; The TRAC speaker policy <<http://trac.org.uk/about/trac-conduct-policy/>>.
- ²⁰ Gloyn 2018.
- ²¹ For instance the CIFA Diversity & Equality Group, British Women Archaeologists, TrowelBlazers.
- ²² Women’s Classical Committee UK, Women’s Classical Caucus, Classics and Social Justice.
- ²³ Leonard 2017.
- ²⁴ Inclusive Archaeology Project: The Inclusive Archaeology Project. 2018. Best Practice Code of Conduct. A Conference Accessibility How-To Guide, <<https://inclusivearchaeology.wordpress.com/best-practice-code-of-conduct/>> (accessed 18/10/2018).

²⁵ Blouin 2018.

²⁶ AIAC 2018.

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Fig. 1–7: by the author.

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