

Ashley Chhibber

PhD in Classics, University of Nottingham.

Thesis: Communicative failure and characterisation in Latin civil war epics.

Supervisors: Prof. Helen Lovatt (University of Nottingham) and Dr Henriette van der Blom (University of Birmingham).

My doctoral project analyses communicative failures in three lengthy Latin poems: Virgil's *Aeneid* (composed c. 29-19 BCE), Lucan's *Bellum Civile* (c. 62-65 CE), and Statius' *Thebaid* (c. 80-92 CE). In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas escapes from the horrors of the Trojan War only to face another war in Italy as he attempts to found a city for the future Roman people. The *Bellum Civile* describes the historical civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great, particularly the events of 49 to 48 BCE, while the *Thebaid* relates the myth of the war between Polynices and Eteocles, the two sons of Oedipus and Jocasta, for the throne of Thebes. Both of these epics therefore develop the theme of civil war and internal divisions which underlies the second half of the *Aeneid*.

Although classical scholars have catalogued and categorised the speeches in these poems, the issue of communicative failure (and how this creates a paradigm of problematic heroism, and heroes who show a range of weaknesses) has been particularly neglected. My thesis will analyse the interaction between communication and the experience of civil war, to argue that these epics present warfare as both creating and being created by a failure of communication on personal, political and religious levels.

Educational background:

BA (Hons) in Classics (Ancient Greek and Latin *ab initio*) - 1st Class - at King's College, Cambridge.

MSt in Greek & Latin Languages and Literature at Trinity College, Oxford.

Other research interests:

Latin hexameter poetry more broadly; intertextuality; metapoetics; trauma theory; models of masculinity; Stoicism; reception and translation of Virgil; widening access to Classics (especially in terms of racial diversity).

A full list of presentations, outreach activities and training courses attended is available on my CV:

[Ashley Chhibber CV \(VPP\) - June 19.pdf](#)



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