



**The Friends of the ANU Classics Museum
invite you to a Zoom lecture by**

**Dr Peter Londey
5.30 pm Thursday 16 September 2021**

Remembering Xerxes' invasion of Greece



Relief of royal bodyguard, palace of Dareios I at Susa, late 6th/early 5th century (Pergamon Museum, Berlin)

In 2021 we mark 2,500 years since the Persian king Xerxes invaded Greece in 480 BC. That year saw famous battles at Thermopylai, Artemision and Salamis. (For the maths, remember there was no year 0.) In the following year, 479, the Greeks finally defeated the Persian expedition at the battle of Plataiai, and the stage was set for a radical reversal of fortunes in which Athens became the dominant power in the Aegean. These events spur usually sober ancient historians to write books with titles like *Thermopylae: the battle that changed the world* (Cartledge) and *The battle of Salamis: the naval encounter that saved Greece – and western civilisation* (Strauss). This lecture will try, briefly and perhaps more dispassionately, to discuss the war's context and consequences, and explain how the Greeks' own vivid memories of the war may impede our understanding of the actual events.



Lekythos with scene of Greek hoplite and an orientalised soldier, late 6th century (National Museum, Athens)

Dr Peter Londey is a Greek historian who, by virtue of a long period at the Australian War Memorial, has also written extensively about Australian peacekeeping. From 2008 to 2019 he taught in the ANU Centre for Classical Studies; he is now retired and is attached to the School of History. Peter's PhD was on the Delphic Amphiktyony, and he has long had an interest in central Greece. So when a Persian army turns up and marches through central Greece in autumn 480, ravaging the countryside as it goes, that is surely an event worthy of notice. Peter officially retired from the ANU in July 2019, but retains his contact with Classics and the museum, and is a valued supporter of the Friends.

The Committee of the Friends of the ANU Classics Museum would like to thank all Friends for their continuing support of this splendid teaching and learning facility that is open to the entire community.