

NEWS FROM THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF THE CLASSICS

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VOLUME 29, NO. 2: COMMENCEMENT 2024

Notes from the Chair

by David Elmer

As my term as department chair comes to a close, I'm grateful for this opportunity to reflect briefly on everything our Classics community, individually and collectively, has accomplished over the past year. The pages that follow offer snapshots of exciting research projects completed by this year's graduates, new books published by faculty members, and new courses that have enriched our curriculum: all signs of the vibrant intellectual culture that flourishes in Boylston Hall. You will also read about a major scholarly event that took place this spring: the fiftieth-anniversary meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, co-organized by Professors Emma Dench and Paul Kosmin. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our expert staff—Alyson Lynch, Ryan Pasco, and Teresa Wu deserve special thanks—and of many students and colleagues, over one hundred scholars were able to gather at Harvard, where the Association was founded in 1974, to celebrate the anniversary. Together with our various workshops and seminars, the meeting made for a very busy spring!

Our community was immeasurably enriched this spring by the presence of a distinguished visitor, Professor Rachana Kamtekar, an expert in ancient philosophy from Cornell University. Professor Kamtekar offered courses for undergraduates and graduate students, provided valuable mentoring for PhD candidates in classical philosophy, and treated the department to a delectable taste of her current research with a talk on "Commensuration and Currency in Plato's *Phaedo*." As Professor Kamtekar returns to Cornell, we are grateful to count her as part of the Harvard Classics family.

We must also bid farewell this spring to Dr. Rachel Philbrick, who will be taking up an appointment as Assistant Professor at

Cover: Boylston Hall. Rose Lincoln/Harvard University.

Next page: Naomi Weiss toasts the class of 2024 at the departmental Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR (CONT.)

the University of British Columbia this fall. For the past three years, Dr. Philbrick has offered a rich array of courses on Latin literature, and has contributed to the life of the department in countless other ways. She will be dearly missed, but it is comforting to know that the Harvard Classics family extends not only to the gorges of Ithaca but even to the green isle of Vancouver!

The next edition of these Notes from the Chair will be penned by Professor Naomi Weiss, ἥς πέρι μὲν πρόφρων κραδίη καὶ θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ / ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοισι, φιλεῖ δέ ἐ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη (“whose heart is surpassingly diligent and spirit exceedingly courageous in the face of every trial; and Pallas Athena loves her,” *Iliad* 10.244-45). I am delighted to be handing the helm over to such a wise and generous colleague. Let me conclude this edition simply by saying that it has been an honor to serve the department as chair for these past three years.

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Class of 2024



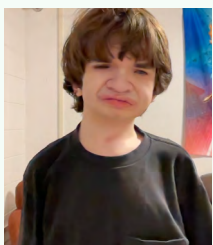
SAGE BARNES



TAIA CHENG



RYAN DURANDO



BEN ELWY



BENJAMIN
GROSS-LOH



ETHAN HALEY



JUSTIN HAN



IRENE JU



BLAKE ALEXANDER
LOPEZ



VIVI LU



DANTE MINUTILLO



JULIA TELLIDES



DAVID VEGA



JACK WELDON

Seniors: Some Future Plans

Sage Barnes will be a Post-Baccalaureate Byzantine Curation Fellow at Dumbarton Oaks next year.

Taia Cheng will be returning to the Los Angeles sunshine and continuing her role as Chief of Staff to portrait photographer David Suh. She would like to thank the Classics Department for its support over the years.

Ryan Durando will be moving to New York City to pursue art criticism.

Benjamin Gross-Loh will be pursuing an MPhil in Political Thought and Intellectual History at the University of Cambridge as a Herchel Smith Fellow.

Ethan Haley will be working in museum collections management and considering grad school in the near future.

Justin Han will be working as an analyst for Goldman Sachs in New York.

Irene Ju will work as an Educational Consultant before advancing to graduate school.

Blake Alexander Lopez will be pursuing a Master's in Greek and Latin Languages and Literatures at the University of Oxford this fall.

Vivi Lu will be pursuing a Master's in Greek and Latin Languages and Literatures at the University of Oxford this fall.

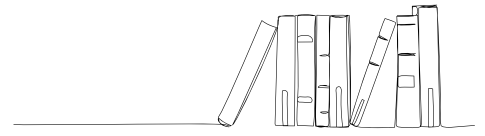
Dante Minutillo will begin a PhD at Princeton University's Department of Classics in September.

Julia Tellides will be working as an English language teacher at a kindergarten in Athens, Greece.

David Vega will be working as a venture capital associate while also representing emerging defense and financial technology companies in New York and Washington.

Jack Weldon will be starting a position as a Private Equity Analyst at Audax Group.

Senior Honors Theses



Ryan Durando

History of Art and Architecture (HAA);
Classical Languages and Literatures

“Monumental Expressions of Classicized
Identity in Contemporary Art: Jean-Michel
Basquiat’s Visualized Counter-Classicism”

Advisors: Seth Estrin (HAA), Emily
Greenwood

Ben Elwy

Linguistics; Classical Languages and
Literatures

“Computational Analysis of Initial Digamma
Loss in Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*”

Advisors: Jeremy Rau, Kevin Ryan
(Linguistics)

Benjamin Gross-Loh

Social Studies; Classical Languages and
Literatures

“‘Prophet of Epicurean Gods’: Nature as
Norm in the Works of Friedrich Nietzsche
and Max Horkheimer”

Advisors: Peter Gordon (History), Irene
Peirano Garrison

Justin Han

Classical Languages and Literatures;
Mathematics

“Cube Ex Machina: The ‘Impossible’ Problem
of Cube Duplication in Ancient Greek
Mathematics”

Advisors: Paul Bamberg (Mathematics), Mark
Schiefsky; Asst. Advisor: Nate Herter

Blake Alexander Lopez

Classical Languages and Literatures;
Linguistics

“*Tempus Fuget?* The Phonetic Realization
of the Latin Short *I* and Its Outcomes in
Sardinian”

Advisors: Jay Jasanoff (Linguistics), Jan
Ziolkowski

Vivi Lu

Classical Languages and Literatures

“*Meritas Celebrare Puellas*: Examining Sex
Labor in Latin Love Elegy”

Advisor: Irene Peirano Garrison;
Asst. Advisor: Luby Kiriakidi

Dante Minutillo

Classical Languages and Literatures

“‘All the Cosmos’s Decrees’: Universalization
and Cyclicity in Nonnus’s *Dionysiaca*”

Advisor: David Elmer; Asst. Advisor: Davide
Napoli

Julia Tellides

History; Classical Civilizations

“Defending ‘the Jerusalem of the Balkans’:
Resilience and Disempowerment in Interwar
Jewish Thessaloniki”

Advisors: Paul Kosmin, Derek Penslar
(History)

David Vega

Classical Languages and Literatures;
Philosophy

“Christian Natural Slavery, or, How to
Manage Inequality”

Advisors: Jeffrey McDonough (Philosophy),
Mark Schiefsky

Jack Weldon

Classical Languages and Literatures;
Computer Science

“Digitally Caring for the Dead at the Harvard
Art Museums: The Development of an
Augmented Reality Experience for the
Ancient Mediterranean Exhibit’s Funerary
Artifacts”

Advisor: Ivy Livingston



Left: Vivi Lu ('24) chatting during our 2024 Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Right: Dante Minutillo ('24) listens intently during the announcement of graduates at our 2024 Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Departmental Senior Awards

Corey Fellowship

for graduates pursuing further study of Classics in Europe

Blake Alexander Lopez and Vivi Lu

Department Prizes

for academic achievement and contributions to the Classics community

Ben Elwy, Benjamin Gross-Loh, Justin Han, Blake Alexander Lopez, Vivi Lu, Dante Minutillo, and Jack Weldon

Louis Curtis Prize

for excellence in Latin

Ethan Haley and Irene Ju

William King Richardson Scholarship

for distinction in Greek and Latin

Vivi Lu and Dante Minutillo



Left: Julia Tellides ('24) poses with her thesis on the steps of Widener.

Right: Benjamin Gross-Loh ('24) addresses prospective concentrators at a departmental event. Photo by Tejas Vadali.



Departmental Thesis Prizes

Classical Reception Thesis Prize

for a thesis on classical reception

Ryan Durando and Benjamin Gross-Loh

History Thesis Prize

for a Classics thesis on history

Julia Tellides

Pease Thesis Prize

for a thesis on Latin

Blake Alexander Lopez

Smyth Thesis Prize

for a thesis on Greek

Dante Minutillo

Other Thesis Prizes

Alexis de Tocqueville Prize

for the best thesis in Social Studies

Benjamin Gross-Loh

Harry and Cecile Starr Prize in Jewish Studies

for a thesis in Jewish and Hebrew Studies

Julia Tellides

Hoopes Prize

for an outstanding undergraduate thesis

Benjamin Gross-Loh, Dante Minutillo, and Julia Tellides



Above: Blake Alexander Lopez ('24) presents at the Rotunda in Thessaloniki during the spring 2023 "Regional Study" course trip to northern Greece. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Below: Jack Weldon ('24) speaks to prospective concentrators at a departmental event. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Senior Reflections

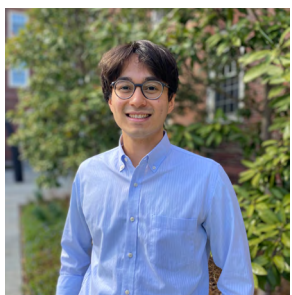
Read farewell messages from some of our graduating seniors.



Sage Barnes

I am so grateful to the department for everything it has done for me in the past four years. I started out solely studying the Greek language before discovering my love for the

concentration as a whole and realizing that I want to spend the rest of my life exploring the Classics. I have taken so many wonderful classes with incredible professors and teaching fellows. I am so thankful to them for their kindness, passion, and impact on my life. It is due to the love and support of the department that I graduate with not only a Classics degree but also a fellowship studying Byzantine curation at Dumbarton Oaks. Thank you so much to the Classics Department and all the friends I have made here over the years. You have all changed my life for the better.



Benjamin Gross-Loh

Because I grew up in Japan as a child, I was fairly sure I would study Japanese language and history in college. It's difficult to pin down what first sparked my interest in the Classics

once I arrived. Perhaps it was that my first-year roommate, Connor Chung, eagerly shared etymologies he was learning in his Latin class. Or perhaps it was Professor Elmer's Humanities 10 seminar and the relevance he brought to study of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This taste of the classical world is likely why, on a whim midway through a year-long leave after my freshman year, I decided to open Sheldene's *Introduction to Latin*. I soon became obsessed with the beauty of the grammar and

history of the language, and my love broadened into an interest in classical literature and thought. After studying intensively for a half year, I met with then-DUS Professor Hudson, who warmly guided me through the course offerings and showed me a path to becoming a concentrator. When I came back to Harvard in my sophomore year, I took two classes with Professor Peirano Garrison, Latin 175 and Latin 112b—wide-ranging courses that introduced me to the broad terrain of Latin literature and its legacy in colonial America.

At the same time as my forays into Latin, I was also forming interests in German philosophy. After developing a special interest in the linkage between these traditions, I decided to pursue a joint concentration in Social Studies and Classics oriented around this topic. I am very grateful to Professor Weiss, who was a supportive advocate for me when I proposed this to the Program in Social Studies.

I had a thrilling time writing my thesis on Friedrich Nietzsche's classical ideal and the influence of his philosophy on Frankfurt School theorist Max Horkheimer. Professor Peirano Garrison and Professor Peter Gordon served as the Sibyls to my Aeneas, deft and knowledgeable guides as I waded through radically different bodies of scholarship and philosophy, from disciplinary histories of Classics in nineteenth-century Germany to intellectual histories of the Frankfurt School. I am deeply grateful to them for helping me grow as a scholar.

Finally, I would also like to express my gratitude to others in the Classics Department who have taught and supported me over the years—including Malcolm Nelson, Harry Morgan, Professor Jan Ziolkowski, Julia Judge Mulhall, Emily Mitchell, Professor Adrian Stähli, Rebecca Deitsch, Ben Porteous, Teresa Wu, and Ryan Pasco.

SENIOR REFLECTIONS (CONT.)



Justin Han

When I came to Harvard, I thought I had put Classics behind me. I had decided to start with Economics, as many freshmen do, but found it dull. I switched to Statistics, thinking it would be more challenging. It was, but was also too quantitative for my liking. Next was Government—I enjoyed learning about the different societies in the world but missed the rigor of previous classes. And so I returned to Classics, which possessed all the qualities I desired. Here was an endless font of fascinating subjects in a variety of media, from letters to poetry. Each class was different from the last, yet for all their differences they were similar in their appeal to me. I loved studying the civilizations of ancient Greece, Rome, and beyond—their history, culture, technology, poetry, philosophy, attitudes, their rise to greatness, and their fall. I am grateful to the Classics Department for giving me the opportunity to study a little bit of everything.



Blake Alexander Lopez

Four years ago, if you had asked me *whom* our discipline was about, I would have answered, “dead people.” Specifically, the long, long dead people whose notable works in states long fallen into collapse and whose eloquent words in tongues long fallen silent we can appreciate, provided we interrogate them. In part, my thinking was correct, but in class, I would have lost quite a few points on this answer for omitting the most important part. And now, I think I know what that is.

In by far the most important sense, our discipline is about us, the living, breathing people. The professors I caught in the hallway, who took the time to listen to my half-jumbled, half-remembered, half-original

thoughts with full excitement. The companions I scaled footpaths and then hilltops with in Greece, eventually peeking our heads over and losing our minds at seeing a shrine mentioned by Homer. The future peers I met at our frosh and prefrosh events, whose enthusiasm at naming the many, many things they wanted to do reminded me that I was once so entirely thrilled to live my life here, and that I still could be, too. The friends in all my classes on the ancient world who I chattered idly with about how truth is much, much stranger than fiction.

This is the lesson that I will take away from my time here, what drives me to continue in our discipline and what assures me that my choice is correct. I owe my learning it to each and every one of you, and I cannot thank you all enough for it.



Vivi Lu

I came to Harvard with several years of Latin under my belt, thinking I might concentrate in Classics but unsure if I’d like it. Four years later, I’m happy to say I loved it, and I’m deeply

grateful for all the people I’ve come to know in Boylston Hall. My first courses in the Classics were Professor Richard Thomas’s course on Catullus and Professor Rachel Love’s freshman seminar “What Is a Classic?” Although they were taken online over Zoom, I couldn’t have asked for a better introduction to the department. Thanks to the incredible professors and teaching fellows in my courses, I have had the chance to do things I’d never imagined, including learning ancient Greek, spending a summer at Dumbarton Oaks, taking a class trip to northern Greece, and—after my time here ends—moving on to a Master’s degree to pursue further studies in Latin literature.

My time as a Classics concentrator has been shaped by all the incredible people I’ve met in this department. Since the spring of my freshman year, I’ve had the great privilege

SENIOR REFLECTIONS (CONT.)

of working as a research assistant and taking three Latin courses with Professor Irene Peirano Garrison, whose enthusiasm, support, and mentorship have been invaluable for my growth as a scholar and as a person. My senior thesis on women and sex labor in Latin elegiac poetry wouldn't have happened without Professor Peirano Garrison and Luby Kiriakidi's advice and encouragement.

To Professor Richard Thomas, whose courses on Catullus and Virgil led to my fascination with Latin poetry, thank you for making Latin so much fun. To Professor Naomi Weiss, Ryan, Alyson, and Teresa, thank you for being such friendly faces to all of us students and for making our aspirations possible with your generous advising and funding (and food!). To the graduate students who have taught or advised me, especially Sarah Gonzalez, Luby Kiriakidi, Emily Mitchell, and Alexander Vega, thank you for all the care you put into helping me learn and grow.

Studying the Classics has made every part of my life at Harvard, both in and out of Boylston Hall, more memorable. Thank you to the Harvard Classics Department and everyone in it for making the past four years so special.



Dante Minutillo

I came to Harvard knowing I wanted to do Classics but not without a few worries: Knowing the languages was one thing, but would I be able to do good original research? Was the

department big enough to offer the variety of classes I would want? Would I get bored of Classics? All these fears were quickly dispelled. I have had incredible opportunities to grow as a writer and thinker in classes ranging from the most archaic Greek inscriptions to medieval Latin epic, and I love the Classics more than ever. My senior thesis, advised by David Elmer, was an especially satisfying culmination of my experiences in the depart-

ment. Writing so many other research papers of various lengths had allowed me to gradually build up the sophistication of both my original thought and my engagement with past scholarship, and it was great to be able to build on that framework while developing an argument over a much longer timeframe about a text that is criminally underread and undertaught. It's also been a pleasure to organize Harvard Certamen these past several years, which has given me and many other volunteer writers and moderators from within and outside our department an opportunity to share our love for the Classics with students from across the country. I'd like to thank Jared Hudson and Naomi Weiss, the two DUSes during my time here, as well as Ryan Pasco and Teresa Wu for their wonderful administrative work; Irene Peirano Garrison, Alexander Riehle, and Jan Ziolkowski for stimulating summer research opportunities; David Elmer and Davide Napoli for wonderful thesis advising; and all the fellow concentrators and grad students that I've had the pleasure of sharing classes with in this department. *Semper haec meminisse iuvabit.*



Julia Tellides

I'm so lucky to have found this department during my time at Harvard. Entering college, I had no idea what I wanted to study or what I hoped to gain from my education. Yet,

through Classics, I found a subject I'm genuinely passionate about and a concentration that has profoundly influenced my academic, personal, and career aspirations. My journey with Classics began with the Modern Greek language classes I took during my sophomore year. I'm immensely grateful to the Classics Department for accommodating my interest in Hellenic Studies and allowing me to study both ancient and modern Greek history through my classes. My thesis on Thessaloniki's modern Jewish history has been the most rewarding academic project

SENIOR REFLECTIONS (CONT.)

I've undertaken, and it could not have been completed without the support and guidance of the department. Looking ahead, I'm so excited to work in Greece next year, a prospect I would never have considered before studying Classics at Harvard.

There are so many things I've enjoyed about the Classics concentration. Being part of a smaller department has allowed me to form close relationships with professors, graduate students, and fellow concentrators. This sense of community has made attending a large university feel much more connected and friendly. Some of my favorite classes at Harvard were taken within the Classics Department, including Greg Nagy's Ancient Greek Hero, Paul Kosmin and Emma Dench's Regional Study: Macedonia, and Emily Mitchell's Memory and Commemoration in Ancient Greece and Rome, to name a few. Lastly, the department has provided me with incredible opportunities to explore Greece, through both class trips and thesis research.

I'm so grateful for the memories I have both on campus and across the world through my studies of Classics. I will miss walking onto the second floor of Boylston and seeing Naomi, Ryan, and so many other familiar faces. I will miss taking seminars with some of the most extraordinary Classics scholars in the world. Most of all, I'll miss the banana pudding with caramel sauce at the student-faculty lunches.



Jack Weldon

As I reflect on my time in the department, I find nothing but gratitude for the individuals and community that shaped my academic journey at Harvard. The mentorship

and guidance I have received from professors and peers have been among the most significant aspects of my time as a student at the College. There are too many to name, but I would like to express my appreciation to Dr.

Livingston, my thesis advisor, whose support of my project at every step of the process was instrumental to the finished product. The thesis itself, an augmented reality application for the Harvard Art Museums that blended both halves of my Computer Science and Classics joint concentration, was the perfect way to conclude my studies. I would not have been able to complete this project were it not for the support and flexibility of both Dr. Livingston and the department for accommodating this unique undertaking!

I'd also like to thank Professor Coleman, whose class in Latin Epigraphy challenged me to become a more precise translator and classicist. She created an atmosphere where curiosity was encouraged and rewarded, with linguistic rigor as the foundation of the experience. If I'm ever asked by family or friends to translate a Latin inscription, I'll be ready! Finally, I would like to thank Professor Weiss and Ryan for their work both as my advisors and overseeing the department. They have created a truly special academic environment that acts as a home for a diverse set of students and have supported me in every step of my journey.

Beyond being simply an academic or professional field, the Classics have served as a source of intellectual and personal growth for me throughout my undergraduate experience. The professors and peers that I have worked with, and the texts and histories I have studied, have been fundamental to my development as a person during my time here. When balancing the demands of rowing for the heavyweight team became tough, the field and the department provided solace in intellectual engagement and introspective exploration.

I will be forever grateful for my time here—thank you, everyone! *Valete!*





Left: Sage Barnes ('24) after a lecture at the city of Olynthus, on the spring 2024 "Regional Study" course trip to northern Greece. Photo by Evan Katsarelis.

Below: From left, Katie Burstein ('25), Julia Tellides ('24), and Vivi Lu ('25) chat at info session for prospective concentrators. Photo by Tejas Vadali.



Dissertation Writers Workshop

by Sarah Alison Eisen

This year, the Classics Department hosted the inaugural “Dissertation Writers’ Workshop,” led by graduate students Sarah Eisen and Alexander Vega, with faculty advisors Irene Peirano Garrison and Jan Ziolkowski. The workshop aimed to give dissertation writers a safe and productive space to share their work in progress, gain feedback outside of their dissertation committee, and build a support system for writing. Every other week, we met hybrid style, allowing traveling members of our department to Zoom in, which (hopefully) helped cohorts scattered across the globe feel more connected to each other. Each dissertation writer presented a pre-circulated chapter—both rough and polished work were welcome. Presenters received feedback, asked questions, talked through the struggles they were encountering, and solicited advice. A few meetings were also dedicated to “best practices,” including sessions on writing abstracts and developing a good writing schedule. We also hosted sessions on turning a dissertation into a book and seeking a publisher.

Since writing a dissertation can be a difficult and very lonely task, the workshop aimed to build a sense of community amongst peers. Many students told us that they enjoyed the opportunity to see their friends’ and colleagues’ work and learn about other projects. I was personally very warmed by the participants’ commitment not only to attending each session—a real aid in fostering a welcoming and stable environment—but also to bringing positive and respectful energy every time. Everyone offered feedback that was critical yet kind, productive, and thought-provoking. While the first iteration of an endeavor will never be perfect, I hope that the participants had a positive experience with this workshop, and we are excited that it will run again next year. Congratulations to all the writers who are graduating this year, and best of luck to those remaining!

PhD Dissertations

Sarah Alison Eisen

PhD in Classical Archaeology

“Recreating Olympus on Earth: A Synaesthetic Approach to Ancient Greek Animal Sacrifice”

Advisors: Kimberley Patton and Adrian Stähli

Marina Haworth

PhD in Classical Archaeology

“Desiring Athletes: The Meaning of Athletic Imagery on Red-Figure Athenian Symposium Pottery”

Advisor: Susanne Ebbinghaus

Justin Miller

PhD in Classical Philology

“Shapeshifting Tongues: Linguistic Consciousness in the Hellenistic World”

Advisor: Paul Kosmin

Davide Napoli

PhD in Classical Philology

“A Grammar of Democracy: Antilogy, Politics, and Literature in Classical Greece”

Advisors: Emily Greenwood and Adriaan Lanni

Malcolm Nelson

PhD in Ancient History

“Regulating Empathy in Ancient Greece”

Advisors: Paul Kosmin and Adriaan Lanni

Stephen Shennan

PhD in Ancient History

“Making Roman Monarchy: Tiberius, Second King of Rome”

Advisor: Emma Dench

Susannah Wright

PhD in Classical Philology

“*Sunt Lacrimae Rerum*: Decorum and Grief in Ancient and Medieval Latin Epic”

Advisor: Kathleen Coleman



Left: Irene Peirano Garrison, the Director of Graduate Studies, addresses this year's PhD recipients at the departmental Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Below: Our 2024 PhD recipients. From left, Malcolm Nelson, Davide Napoli, Marina Haworth, Justin Miller, Susannah Wright, Sarah Alison Eisen, and Stephen Shennan.



Graduate Student Reflections

Read farewell messages from some of this year's PhD recipients.



Sarah Alison Eisen

It's hard to believe that seven years have passed since I came to Cambridge for the first time. It seems like only yesterday I was wandering through the Yard, trying to find Boylston Hall or realizing—much to my dismay—that it does in fact snow in April in Boston. I am so thankful for the many opportunities I had for growth, learning, and reflection even beyond the classroom, especially at the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning and at the Harvard Art Museums. Moreover, I feel extremely grateful for all the friends and mentors I gained on my journey. Despite the few years of uncertainty that the pandemic threw

at us, I was able to travel all over the world and have truly unforgettable experiences. From excavating the dusty slopes at Sardis to climbing what seemed like every acropolis and mountain range in Greece, I will cherish all the memories I made during my doctoral studies. I am incredibly thrilled to announce that this fall I will be joining the faculty at Northwestern University as an Assistant Professor! I would really like to thank everyone who helped me reach this point—I am especially grateful to my dissertation committee, my cohort, and my family, all of whom supported me every step of the way and made sure that I never walked the path of my PhD alone.



Marina Haworth

I am very happy to be among the 2024 PhD recipients. Congratulations everyone! It is certainly an *agôn*—in my case also a long and meandering odyssey with plenty of shipwrecks. But Tyche was with me in the end. I cannot thank everyone in the Classics Department enough, especially as I needed extra support in finishing remotely from Minneapolis. Everyone went above and beyond in every possible way. My committee was particularly heroic, working intensely with me in often punishing circumstances. I learned so much and have been so fortunate to have worked with Susanne Ebbinghaus. There are no words

to express my admiration for her knowledge, creativity, meticulousness, and generosity. I am also honored to have been able to work with Adrian Stähli and Naomi Weiss—so many intellectual doors and windows opened up under their guidance. I am forever a disciple of this magnanimous department and everyone in it.



Davide Napoli

One of the most important things that grad school teaches is—let us admit it—how to do things in a rush. This goodbye is no exception. If a verdict on one's experience is expected from a Valeté entry (is it?), let me get it immediately out of the way: I am so happy to have been part of the Harvard community for the last several years. It has been inspiring to live through a time of important changes for the Classics Department and see that, at the end of it, the future looks even brighter than it did six years ago (including quite a raise for those who will be able to enjoy it next year!). Everyone in this community has

prompted me to pose questions and pursue answers that I could not have imagined elsewhere. I am grateful for all the friendships that have made Cambridge feel like home, even though they now make it difficult to leave. On a brighter note, I look forward to starting this fall as a Klarman Fellow at Cornell University, where I will continue trying to bridge Greek antiquity and political theory (this time, however, from the Government side of things). Truth be told, I never thought that I would miss Boston's winter, but here I am. I hope to be back in Cambridge to see all of you again soon!



Stephen Shennan

My time at Harvard has been a pleasure. As it ends, I have been reflecting on the various stages and events in which I have spent that time: general exams, specials, foreign languages, travel, prospectus, dissertation, and all the smaller pieces that make up graduate school. Long after I have forgotten that list of academic milestones—some of which are fuzzy even now—I will carry with me the friends, colleagues, happy hours, parties, conversations, complaints, mentors, mentees, and the vibrant community that has been the greatest reward of my time here. To spend my days surrounded by such personally and

intellectually generous people while studying what I find compelling about the ancient world has been a special privilege. I'm very grateful to everyone with whom I've shared a portion or all of this time: thank you. Even as a move and a growing family have reduced my daily presence in the Harvard community for the last few years, the Classics Department has been home. I will miss it, and all of you—but on to what comes next, prepared in ways large and small by a thousand conversations, lessons, and kindnesses. *Valete!*



Susannah Wright

My six years at Harvard have been nothing short of magical. I have learned and grown more than I could ever have imagined, from deepening my knowledge of Greco-Roman literature and culture to becoming adept at navigating the labyrinthine stacks of Widener and weathering New England winters. But one task remains for which I doubt I could ever be prepared: saying farewell to this unbelievably special place. I know that I will always cherish my memories of the past years, from day-to-day conversations with wonderful colleagues to long hours in Smyth and countless trips to Burdick's. Although there were

also challenges to be surmounted along the way, I can now safely say that there is more than a little truth to *forsan et haec olim meminisse iuuabit!* Through it all, this community has been a steady source of inspiration and encouragement, and I continue to feel a profound sense of wonder and gratitude that I have been able to be a part of it. I especially want to thank my amazing advisor and committee; my mentors, colleagues, students, and friends, within the department and beyond it; and Alyson, Teresa, and Ryan, without whom none of this would have been possible. As I begin an exciting new chapter as an Assistant Professor at Rice University (my alma mater!), the Department of the Classics will never be far from my thoughts. I hope to return to Boylston soon and often—but until then, and from the heart, my deepest thanks.

Faculty News



Kathleen Coleman

In teaching Latin Epigraphy in the fall and Introduction to the Ancient Roman World in the spring, I benefitted from my experience (and photographic archive) acquired

during my year at the Centro in 2021-22. In the fall I also taught my Gen Ed course on Loss, in which two of the three excursions to Mount Auburn Cemetery on successive Saturdays in October were so wet that one of them had to be abandoned halfway through. So much for “Golden October”! In my scholarly endeavors, I spoke at a retirement Fest for Richard Rutherford at Christ Church in Oxford in September. (My room under the eaves in the elegant Peckwater Quad was quintessential Oxford.) The resulting volume, “Clio’s Elder Sisters,” examines the influence of epic and tragedy on historiography. It will be published next year by OUP. I was also one of two so-called “keynote” speakers bookending a workshop in Ghent in December that was billed under the title “Overwhelmed.” The brief was to examine themes of spectacle in imperial and late antique Latin poetry through the lens of intermediality, either ancient or modern; a volume is anticipated. Ghent, its beer, and its chocolate come highly recommended!



David Elmer

As I complete a three-year term as department chair, I am preparing to move this summer into Eliot House, where my wife, Bonnie Talbert, and I will serve as the

new Faculty Deans. I am also hoping to find time to return to a long-delayed research project on the *Iliad*.



Greg Nagy

I had the best time teaching a middle-group course on Homer in the spring. The students were stellar.



Irene Peirano Garrison

This year, I was fortunate to embark on two very rewarding adventures. With Sarah Eisen, Alex Vega, and Jan Ziolkowski, I was an organizer of the Dissertation Writers Workshop

and enjoyed reading and discussing the work of a dazzling group of dissertating students. With Jared Hudson, I had the privilege to teach a small but highly motivated group of students in a class on Classical Antiquity and the Legacy of Slavery at Harvard. We owe a special thanks to our colleagues Peter Accardo, Kristine Greive, and Sara Powell at Houghton and Sarah Martin at University Archives for their generous guidance and warm welcome. A small exhibit based on our class work will open at Houghton later this year. On the research front, my chapter on Canon was published in the *Cambridge Critical Guide to Latin Studies* (R. Gibson and C. Whitton, eds.) and I have continued to serve as the co-editor of *TAPA* together with Joshua Billings. This year, I have had the pleasure of sharing work in progress from my book project on the history of Latin pedagogy at the Ethical Reading seminar series in Oxford (on Latin grammar in Friedrich August Wolf), at the SCS annual meeting, and at Princeton for a workshop on philology and pedagogy. I also presented new work on Ovid and Greek *pseudepigrapha* at a fabulous conference on “Crafting A Lie. Forgeries in the Classical Tradition” at La Sapienza University in Rome in May.



Irene Soto Marín

I officially started teaching at Harvard last fall with the graduate seminar “Roman Numismatics.” It was a great chance to engage more with Harvard’s numismatic collection, as several class sessions were held in the Art Study Center at the Harvard Art Museums (HAM) where we handled Roman coins. Also at HAM, this spring I curated a display case for my First Year Seminar “Fashion in the Ancient Mediterranean World,” which featured textiles, vases, and cosmetic implements that we studied during the semester. Another spring highlight was teaching “Ancient Global Economies,” during which I got to know Harvard undergraduates from various concentrations while we explored other wonderful campus resources, like the Museum of the Ancient Near East, as part of our study of trade in ancient economies.

On the research side, I presented several projects, including my monograph work, in invited lectures and conferences such as Columbia University’s “In Search of Economic Growth in Ancient Eurasian Societies,” Yale’s Economic History Workshop Series, and here at Harvard in the Mahindra Humanities Center’s New Faculty Lunch seminar series. I ended the year with a special occasion: my very first keynote lecture, at Boston University’s Emerging Scholars Symposium “The Archaeology of Identity in ‘Peripheries’ of the Roman World.” I stayed busy as a Director-at-Large for the American Society of Papyrologists and most recently as a new Book Reviews Editor for the *Journal of Late Antiquity*. Most surprisingly, I still managed to sneak in a season of fieldwork in Egypt during the January break, during which I analyzed two coin hoards from the site of Ain es-Sabil in the Dakhleh Oasis.



Naomi Weiss

This semester, I revamped my Gen Ed course, “Tragedy Today,” and was delighted by the large enrollment and high level of student engagement. I have just finished writing a chapter on my pedagogy in the course for a volume entitled *The Art and Artistry of Luis Alfaro: Reimagining Classics in the Classroom and Community*, edited by Young Richard Kim. Along with Sarah Olsen (Williams College), I have secured a contract for a new commentary on Euripides’ *Orestes* for the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series and look forward to launching myself into that this summer. Other ongoing projects include articles on Aristotle’s *History of Animals* and Lucian’s *Dialogues of the Courtesans*, respectively.



Jan Ziolkowski

Much of this year went to the joy and fright of new courses. In the fall I taught a first-year seminar, “The Greatest Love Story of All Time? Heloise and Abelard.” Students were required to write letters in different voices, responding to the medieval lovers or later treatments of them, down through the twenty-first century.

In the spring the novelty was “Romanness after Rome.” Ancient Rome comes up constantly. The phenomenon is nothing new. Rome and Romans have held fascination for thousands of years. The course explored what the city and people have signified, from the early first millennium BCE on.

Outside Harvard I delivered three plenaries. The first, “The Devil in the Details: Titivillus and the Multiplicity of Medieval Reading,”

investigated a demon. In the Middle Ages he was thought to gather mistakes made by priests during worship. Later he collected gossip by parishioners. Nowadays he is jokingly imagined to cause typos. The second lecture traced the rise of fiction in the twelfth century. The third is “The Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages: Pasts and Futures.”

In publishing, I have helped edit *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*. A slim book of my own has just appeared in Switzerland.

Faculty Awards

Naomi Weiss has been named one of this year’s Walter Channing Cabot Fellows! This award, made by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, recognizes “achievements and scholarly eminence in the fields of literature, history, or art.”

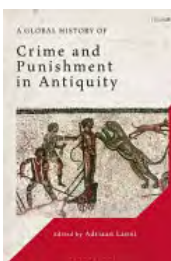
The American Philosophical Society (APS) has named **Jan Ziolkowski** as the 2024 recipient of its Henry Allen Moe Prize in the Humanities! The Moe Prize was established in 1982 by a gift from the widow of Henry Allen Moe to honor the longtime head of the Guggenheim Foundation and president of the American Philosophical Society from 1959 to 1970. The Prize is awarded annually to the author of a paper in the humanities or jurisprudence read at a meeting of the Society. Jan has been recognized for his paper “The Juggler of Notre Dame and the Medievalizing of Modernity,” originally delivered at the spring meeting of the APS in April 2019 and published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Volume 164.

Faculty Bookshelf



Singers and Tales in the Twenty-First Century

Edited by David Elmer and Peter McMurray
Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature, 2024



A Global History of Crime and Punishment in Antiquity

Edited by Adriaan Lanni
Bloomsbury, 2024



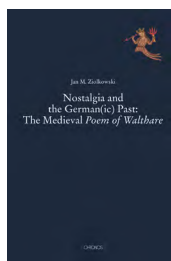
Ancient Greek Heroes, Athletes, Poetry

Gregory Nagy
Classical Continuum Series 1, forthcoming (fall 2024)



Imagining the Hero Ajax in Poetry by Pindar and by Pindar's Homer

Gregory Nagy
ΕΠΟΨ Publishers, forthcoming (winter 2025)



Nostalgia and the German(ic) Past: The Medieval Poem of Walthere

Jan Ziolkowski
Chronos Verlag, 2024



GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

In May 2024, **William Edwards** completed his Special Examinations in late archaic and early classical Greek poetry (Pindar and Aeschylus); Seneca; and determinism, cause, and responsibility in ancient Greco-Roman thought.

In May 2024, **Luby Kiriakidi** completed her Special Examinations in Hellenistic poetry, Ovid, and antiquarianism. She also received a Graduate Society Summer Predissertation Fellowship for 2024.

Phoebe Lakin won this year's Bowdoin Graduate Prize in Latin with an entry titled *An salgamarii nobis sint collegae*. She has also received a Harvard Griffin GSAS Merit/Graduate Society Term-Time Research Fellowship to support research in the 2024-25 academic year. In February of 2024, she also presented her prospectus, entitled "Tending the plot: literary ecology and the reception of Virgil's *Georgics*."

PhD candidate **Emily Mitchell** has been selected as a winner of the 2024-25 Rome Prize! During her residency at the American Academy in Rome, she will work on a project titled *Voices in Stone: Remembering the Enslaved and the Emancipated in Latin Verse Epitaphs*. See the other prize winners in [a press release on the Academy's website](#).

Connor North has been accepted as an Associate Member at the American School for the 2024-25 academic year.

In May 2024, **Alexander Reed** completed his Special Examinations in the economy of Roman Egypt, the late antique and early medieval West, and the historiography of ancient and modern empires.

Sammi Richter received a Gorham Phillips Stevens Fellowship to spend the 2024-25 academic year at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens as an Associate Member.

Alex Vega is one of five winners of the 2024 Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Undergraduates! This award recognizes the most outstanding graduate student instructors from across the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Philip Wilson has received a Fulbright Fellowship to study at the University of Zurich next year. He will be researching manuscripts, including that of the Einsiedeln Eclogues, for his dissertation on magic and Latin pastoral poetry.

Diontay Wolfries-Thomas received a Summer School Tuition Fellowship for language study at the Harvard Summer School.



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Ashley Gong ('25) and **John Rogers** ('26) were awarded George Emerson Lowell Scholarship Prizes for the best performance in an examination on Latin.

Blake Alexander Lopez ('24) has been named this year's Latin orator. You can read the text of his speech on pages 32-33. He has also been awarded a Lucy Allen Paton Prize in the Humanities. This prize is awarded by Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard College to the member of the senior class showing the greatest promise in the humanities or the fine arts.

Blake Alexander Lopez ('24) and **Dante Minutillo** ('24) have been elected to Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Iota of Massachusetts.

Dante Minutillo ('24) was awarded the Bowdoin Prize for translation into Greek. He also graduated *summa cum laude*.

Dante Minutillo ('24) and **John Rogers** ('26) were awarded Bowdoin Prizes for translation in Latin.

The John Osborne Sargent Prize for English translation of an ode of Horace has been

awarded to **Rohit Saralaya** ('26). Read his entry on page 34.

Aidan Scully ('25) is the winner of this year's Medieval Studies undergraduate essay prize for "Church & State: Revelation, the Shepherd of Hermas, & Constantine's Anti-Heretical Mission of Canonization."

Julia Tellides ('24) has won the Selma and Lewis Weinstein Prize in Jewish Studies for her essay entitled "The Failure of Minority Rights in Thessaloniki: Sunday Closing Law of 1924." Her thesis also won Lillian Bell Prize in History "for the best undergraduate paper on the Holocaust or other major twentieth-century event involving human tragedy."

Previous page: Justin Miller (left) and Malcolm Nelson (right) talk to their dissertation advisor, Paul Kosmin (center), at the department's Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Above: From left, David Vega ('24) and Justin Han ('24) at the department's Commencement party. Photo by Tejas Vadali.



Medea: The Musical

by Fiona McFerrin-Clancy ('25)

This spring, the Harvard Classical Club, in conjunction with the Center for Hellenic Studies (CHS), staged *Medea: The Musical* at the Agassiz Theatre on March 21-23. Based on an original translation of the Latin text by Elena K. Lu ('26), the production reimagined the ancient tragedy with a modern twist, blending classical themes with contemporary musical elements. A set of original songs, composed by Paul Palmer ('27) and Chris Ruiz ('27), brought new life to the performance and deepened the audience's intimacy with the narrative by explaining the complex circumstances leading to Medea's infamous actions. The result was a beautiful marriage of talents from many spheres of Harvard. *Medea: The Musical* was attended by over nine hundred audience members from all backgrounds and received rave reviews from *The Crimson*. The Club was able to provide free admission, furthering its quest to make the field of Classics accessible to all, due to the support of all its partners. Blake Lopez and I were honored to produce this show and revivify this tradition, and we thank all our collaborators for their indispensable contributions. The Classical Club would like to express its deepest gratitude to the Classics Department and the CHS for their generous sponsorship and support, and looks forward to future productions!

Above: Medea (center, played by Gunnhildur F. Hallgrímsdóttir) flanked by the people of Corinth, (played by, from left to right, Linnea Dolf, Andra Benson, and Danielle Pribyl). From *Medea: The Musical*. Photo by Wesley Verge.



Above: A despondent Jason (played by Zac Sardi-Santos).
From *Medea: The Musical*. Photo by Wesley Verge.

Below: Medea and the nurse (played by Gemma Dean). From
Medea: The Musical. Photo by Wesley Verge.

HIGHLIGHTED FALL COURSES

Please find a full list of course offerings on [our website](#).



COURSES IN TRANSLATION (FOR UNDERGRADS AND GRADS)

CLASARCH 133

Augustus: An Archaeology of Imperial Power

Adrian Stähli

Visual media, particularly the public monuments erected either by the emperor himself or—more frequently—the honorific dedications made by individuals, corporations, political and religious institutions, or cities, celebrated his achievements, showcased his endeavors, emphasized his adherence to Roman customs, religious and traditional values and duties, or just underscored his prominent and ubiquitous presence in all matters of public and religious interest. By their sheer material presence in the public realm, such monuments demonstrated the continuity of the empire and the well-ordered stability and reliability of its government, and promoted and fostered the acceptance of imperial leadership.

This seminar will introduce the various forms of political monuments and buildings as media of the visual display—and even enforcement—of imperial authority in the Roman Empire from the reign of Augustus to the age of Constantine, with particular focus on triumphal arches, victory monuments, monumental bases and altars, tomb monuments, and portrait statues. The discussion of recent scholarly arguments and debates about the function, meaning, agency, and audience of these monuments—are they instruments of an “imperial propaganda,” promoting an “imperial ideology,” or are they just establishing an “atmosphere of consensus” and “commonly shared values” among different social groups?—will be paramount.

CLS-STDY 166

Bob Dylan the Classic

Richard Thomas

This course examines Bob Dylan, the creative genius and enduring and continuing musical, literary, and general cultural phenomenon, in the context of popular and higher literary culture of the last sixty years; also in the context of those long-lived literary and musical cultures with which he works: the Beats and Moderns of the twentieth and

Romantics of the nineteenth century; Poe, Melville, Whitman, and Americana of the same nineteenth century; Shakespeare and the old ballad traditions; and in more recent songs going back to Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and the western literary canon. The course traces the evolution of Dylan’s songs and lyrics from their early folk, blues, rock, gospel, and protest roots, through the transition from acoustic to electric, in studio and performative contexts, also through the many persona evolutions and reinventions that have characterized and continue to characterize his career in songwriting, performance, literature, film, and painting. In addition to lectures, this course includes listening to, viewing, and discussing a broad representation of Dylan’s output.

CLS-STDY 173/HDS 1877

Gender in Byzantium

Alexander Riehle

Although the gender order of the Byzantine Empire was largely patriarchal and heteronormative, late antique and Byzantine texts and images regularly reveal complex constructions of gender. Pronounced essentialisms coexisted with beliefs and practices defying simple binaries of male/masculine and female/feminine in often surprising ways. This course zeroes in on the entire spectrum of binary and nonbinary conceptualizations, representations, and performances of gender in Byzantium by exploring textual and visual material alongside recent scholarship on gender and sexuality. Topics for discussion include normative concepts and representations of masculinity and femininity; asceticism and the body; emotions and gender; homosociality; cross-dressing; intersectionality (gender, race, and class); and eunuchs and angels.

CLS-STDY 176

Roman Egypt

Irene Soto Marín

Cleopatra and Mark Antony, the proscriptions, and the rise of Octavian to emperor—these riveting events surrounded the Roman conquest of Egypt in 30 BCE. Beyond the captivating personalities

HIGHLIGHTED FALL COURSES (CONT.)

involved, however, other aspects made Egypt a remarkable province: the cultural nexus of the cosmopolitan metropolis of Alexandria, the enduring legacy of the Greek language intertwined with indigenous Egyptian traditions, the dynamic Indo-Roman trade and commercial relations, and the prolific outputs of the agricultural and textile industries collectively rendered Egypt an unparalleled province in the Roman Imperial tapestry.

CLS-STDY 177

Fashion in the Ancient Mediterranean World

Irene Soto Marín

This seminar explores the manufacture, trade, and social function of objects of fashion in the Ancient Mediterranean World. Clothing, cosmetics, and hair performed significant functions as markers of status and class, as well as social identity. Furthermore, the manufacture of jewelry, perfumes, and makeup in antiquity represented some of the most highly skilled ancient industries, and textiles and garments were the most widely traded and highly valued goods in antiquity. We will encounter how both men and women were subject to fashion in personal adornment.

CLS-STDY/COMPLIT 185/185x

Adapting to the Present: Rewriting Ancient Greek Classics in Contemporary Fiction

Emily Greenwood

“We are still mythical” as Kae Tempest intones in *Brand New Ancients* (2013, p.1). This course will analyze creative rewritings of ancient Greek literature in contemporary Anglophone fiction, spanning the novel, lyric poetry, and drama. We will also read Han Kang’s *Greek Lessons* (in Deborah Smith’s and Emily Yaewon’s translation, 2023) as an innovative counterexample of how to write with and back to ancient Greek literature in contemporary fiction. Broadly, we will consider why and how contemporary authors turn to ancient Greek literature and myth to give form and fresh meaning to contemporary experience, ranging from autofiction to crises of culture, politics, and society. The authors studied in this course come from several different countries and write from diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and LGBTQ backgrounds. In addition to analyzing the dynamics of rewriting works received as classics of world literature, we will also study what happens to the alterity of antiquity in the process of adaptation and rewriting. Above all,

this course is an opportunity to analyze and discuss some stunning contemporary Anglophone fiction. We will study works by Anne Carson, Natalie Diaz, Michael Hughes, Daisy Johnson, Tayari Jones, Han Kang, David Malouf, Alice Oswald, Kamila Shamsie, Kae Tempest, and Ocean Vuong.

ADVANCED LANGUAGE (FOR UNDERGRADS AND GRADS)

GREEK 110

Plato

Mark Schiefsky

We will read and discuss Plato’s *Alcibiades I*, a work which for many centuries was considered the ideal starting point for the study of Plato’s thought. Our principal aim will be to acquire fluency in reading Platonic Greek, but we will devote equal attention to the philosophical content of the dialogue, in particular its intriguing claims about the nature and importance of self-knowledge. We will also discuss the reasons why some scholars have denied that Plato wrote this work, and what difference our answer to that question should make.

GREEK 187 / CLASPHIL 285 / HDS 1878

Greek Palaeography

Alexander Riehle

This course offers an introduction to late antique and medieval Greek book culture and handwriting. Based on selected manuscripts of a wide variety of texts, ranging from classical authors to the Bible and Byzantine writers, we will trace the main lines of development of Greek script from the majuscule of the earliest codices to the minuscule of Byzantine manuscripts and the type of early printed books in Renaissance Italy. Although the focus will be on deciphering, transcribing, identifying, and contextualizing handwriting in various styles, we will also discuss material aspects of the manuscripts, institutions of book culture, and basic elements of transmission and text editing.

LATIN 106B

Virgil’s Aeneid

Richard Thomas

This course comprises reading and discussion of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, with attention to its place in the epic tradition and its status as a work of Augustan literature.

HIGHLIGHTED FALL COURSES (CONT.)

LATIN 146

Ciceronian Invective

Irene Peirano Garrison

The aim of the class is to gain an understanding of political invective through select studies of some of the representatives of the genre, primarily in Cicero. The emphasis throughout will be on Cicero's rhetorical technique and self-fashioning, his use of topoi of abuse, and the social and rhetorical function of personal abuse and invective in politics in antiquity and today. Readings will be drawn from *Philippics 2*, *In Verrem II 1* and *In Pisonem*, and the late antique reception of these texts and themes in Claudian, *In Eutropium*.

GRAD COURSES

CLASARCH 260

Ancient Cities

Margaret Andrews

Cities have been a feature in the landscapes of human settlement for nearly 6000 years. This course will examine the first half of urban history and explore how cities became such a dominant feature of human landscapes in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East, ca. 4000 BCE - 350 CE. Was there an "Urban Revolution," and how did it start? What various physical forms did cities assume, and why did cities physically differ (or not) from each other? What functions did cities have in different cultures of the past, and what cultural value did "urban" life have? How do past perspectives on cities compare with contemporary ones? Working thematically and using theoretical and comparative approaches, this course will address various aspects of ancient urban space and its occupation, with each topic backed up by in-depth analysis of concrete case studies.

CLASPHIL 203

Roman Historiography

Rachel Love

This seminar goes beyond the canonical triad of Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus to read across the surprisingly broad number of expressions that historical discourse could take in Ancient Rome. We will begin with Ennius and the fragmentary Republican historians, examine the formal and theoretical adaptations that historical writing undergoes in the

Late Republic and early Principate, and conclude with an investigation into the legacy of Roman historiography in Late Antiquity and beyond.

COMPLIT 272

Ritual Poetics

Panagiotis Roilos

This course explores the interaction between ritual modes of signification, literature (written as well as traditional oral), and performance. The seminar proposes an interdisciplinary approach to the topic on the basis of anthropological research and literary and cultural theory. Specific literary examples are discussed in transhistorical and comparative contexts, ranging from ancient Greek tragedy to avant-garde literature.

MEDLATIN 208

Folk and Learned Literature: Materials and Methods

Jan Ziolkowski

This course plumbs the vast body of narratives in Latin, both prose and verse, extant from the medieval West. It surveys epics, proto-romances, folktales, legends, fables, and preaching exempla. Genres include heroic poems (on ancient and other themes), Bible poems, saint's lives, and miracles. The class considers the complexities caused by changes in language (multilingualism, diglossia, and global Latinity), education, and religion, as well as investigating passages from oral to written and from manuscript to print. We will touch on techniques for identifying images, especially but not exclusively from the Middle Ages, that relate to the literature, and will examine tools, both digital and print, that help in identifying and analyzing the texts. We will also survey theories and methods that have been developed, from the late nineteenth century to the present day, for interpreting both oral and written tales preserved in Latin.



Fiftieth-Anniversary Meeting of the AAH

by Paul Kosmin

From Thursday, April 18 to Sunday, April 20, 2024, Harvard's Classics Department and Ancient Studies hosted the fiftieth-anniversary meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians (AAH), the main professional organization for historians of antiquity in North America. The AAH was founded at Harvard in 1974, with Ernst Badian at the helm, and this year's big anniversary presented an exciting opportunity to look to the future of the discipline and to think of its onward development. Accordingly, in addition to two open panels, we convened six topic panels:

"God, History, and the Anthropocene" looked at the scale and texture of the questions we ask about antiquity, prompted particularly by "deep history," environmental change, and ancient and modern notions of the role of the divine, fate, and other super-human powers in history.

"Complex Origins: Racial Formations in the Ancient World" turned to the intense recent reappraisals of origins, race, and identity, prompted by advances in DNA studies, renewed urgency of questions about race in ancient societies, and dynamic rethinking of population movements.

"The Exploited: Questions" built on established scholarly traditions of investigating the "99%" (whether via Marxist frameworks of exploitation, focus on daily life and popular culture, or the intentional recovery of silent groups) to investigate the particular challenges and opportunities offered by newer methodologies.

"Beyond the Mediterranean?" asked how best to expand chronologically and think comparatively as ancient historians seek to move beyond defining our field as "Greek-and-Roman" or even "Mediterranean."

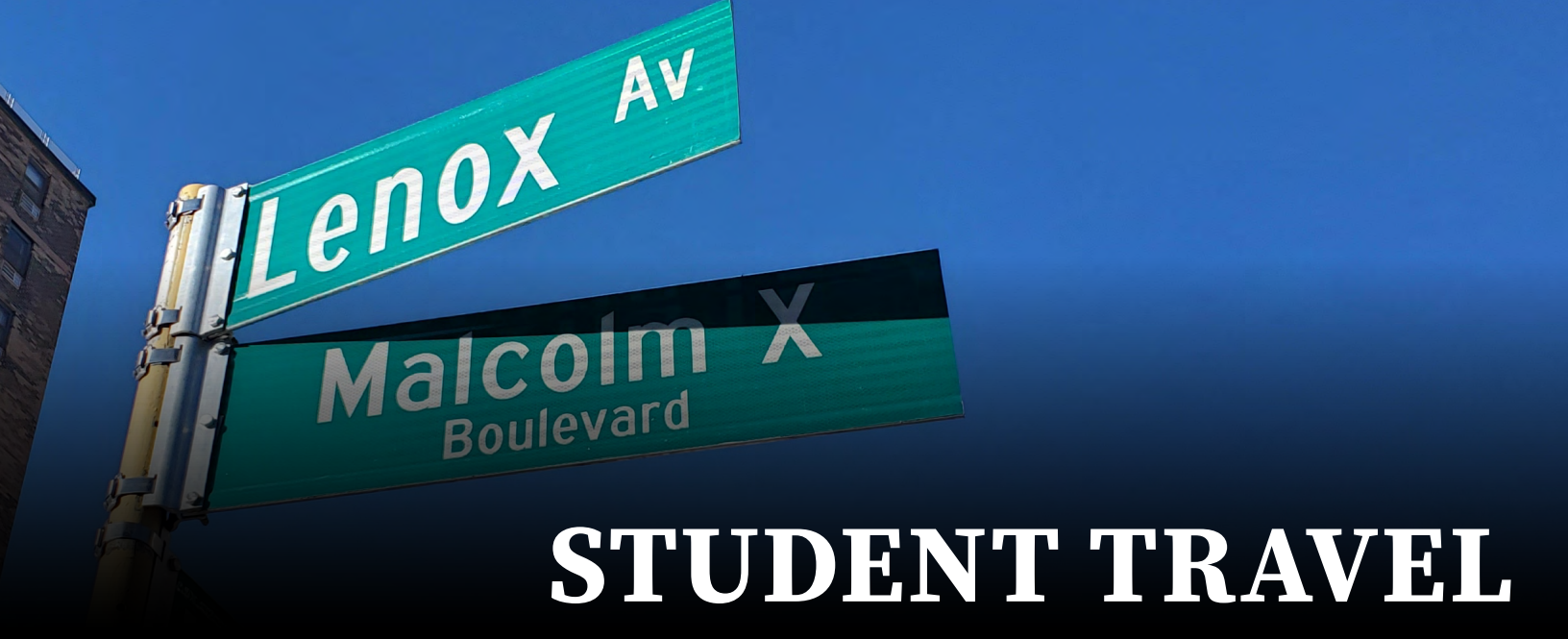
"Focal Points and Blind Spots" interrogated how, why, and where ancient historians' questions cluster, and how best to stimulate and disrupt these processes.



Above: Participants gathered in the Harvard Natural History Museum during the closing banquet.

Finally, "The AAH at Fifty and Looking Forward" considered the history of the organization, the contribution of Ernst Badian, and future directions for the discipline.

The meeting opened with a reception at the Faculty Club and concluded with a banquet among the dinosaurs of the Natural History Museum. Emma Dench and Paul Kosmin, the conference organizers, were delighted by the high quality of the papers and the warm and collegial atmosphere. We would like to thank Holly Hutchison, Alyson Lynch, Ryan Pasco, and Teresa Wu for their support in the planning and running of the conference; our graduate student assistants Eli Aizikowitz, Joe Currie, Phoebe Hyun, Arsen Nisanyan, Alex Reed, Steve Shennan, and Diontay Wolfries-Thomas; Sarah Eisen for offering a tour of the Harvard Art Museums; and our colleagues Giovanni Bazzana, Kathleen Coleman, Emily Greenwood, Adriaan Lanni, Rachel Love, Michael Puett, and Irene Soto Marín for chairing panels or speaking.



STUDENT TRAVEL

A Visit to New York City

by Diontay Wolfries-Thomas, PhD Candidate in Ancient History

As the train pulled into New York's Moynihan Train Hall, two thoughts rushed into my head. The first: "New York, New York," in Frank Sinatra's voice, of course. The second was an excerpt from Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: "[T]he Æthiopians slept near a thousand years, forgetful of the world, by whom they were forgotten." With each passing year, the belief in the inert slumber of the Ethiopians throughout history becomes increasingly difficult to uphold. Research continues to yield information about Aksum, the African world more broadly, and its engagement with regions near and far.

With the support of the Segal Fund, I was able to visit the Africa and Byzantium exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and learn more about these discoveries in January. While I stood before each object for an almost absurd length of time, one display case in particular captured my attention. It contained two bronze objects. One was a lamp crafted sometime after 100 CE and discovered in the Numidian city of Thamugadi (located in modern-day Algeria), and the other was an Egyptian bust from the second to third century CE. Both were pieces of anthropomorphic metalwork, fashioned in the likeness of Black Africans. Vessels such

as these were used throughout the Roman Empire and attest to the diversity of the ancient world and the plurality of interactions within it.

While in New York, I also visited the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and perused Malcolm X's manuscripts as part of an ongoing study of his invocations and Afrocentric reconstructions of ancient history. These manuscripts include early drafts of Malcolm's autobiography, which feature extensive handwritten feedback from his collaborator, Alex Haley. Also present in the collection is a chapter that was ultimately excised from the final, published version of the book entitled "The Negro." Because of its numerous references to antiquity, this chapter was immensely beneficial to my project. But seeing a deleted chapter and the back-and-forth edits between Malcolm and Alex conjured new questions: how exactly did the autobiography come together? Is the finalized version of the text that we know and revere what Malcolm had intended? It was published after his death, after all. As is so often the case, I now have more questions than answers. Many thanks to the Classics Department and the Segal Fund for making this research possible!



Above: The pepper- and tea-growing foothills of Idukki just outside Munnar. Photo by Tejas Vadali.

Previous page, banner: A street outside the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Photo by Diontay Wolfries-Thomas.

Exploring Cross-Cultural Interactions in South India

by Tejas Vadali ('25), Joint Concentrator in Classical Civilizations and Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations

This past winter, I had the immense privilege of journeying to South India, where I lived and worked at the archaeological site of Pattanam, a small village on the Indian Ocean about twenty kilometers outside Kochi, Kerala, for just under a month. The purpose of my visit was to study cross-cultural interactions along the spice-trading route between the Mediterranean and the South Indian coast from 300 BCE to 300 CE—the period known as the Sangam Age in ancient Tamil literature.

For most of my stay in India, I remained exclusively on the site of Pattanam, conducting salvage archaeology and literature reviews. Between 2007 and 2015, the site, identified as the ancient Indo-Roman port of Muziris, saw consistent excavation under the purview of the Archaeological Survey of India and the Kerala Council for Historical Research. However, in recent years, with changes in local government, particularly the election of the Communist Party of India in Kerala, residents of the surrounding village, on whose land much of the previously excavated material lies, have become increasingly wary of the government. As a result, the residents have become extremely hesitant to allow further excavations to proceed on their land, prompting the Archaeological Survey of India to withdraw funding. Now, the research facility at Pattanam, where I lived during my stay, is managed and financed entirely by the PAMA Institute for the Advancement of Transdisciplinary Archaeological Sciences, headed by P. J. Cherian, director of the prior Pattanam excavations. Due to this state of affairs, I was unable to engage in formal excavations, as I had hoped to do, although I was able to excavate on the institute's personal property,

which yielded an assortment of sherds, glass beads, and metal fragments, among other artifacts.

After three weeks of living and working at Pattanam, I made a weeklong journey beginning in the principal spice-growing region of Kerala, and one of the chief spice-producing regions of antiquity, for that matter: the Idukki District. Seeking to further understand how the supply chain of the spice trade—from cultivation to preservation to transportation—facilitated cross-cultural interactions, I surveyed the landscape of the mountainous Western Ghats, spending three nights in the town of Nedumkandam and visiting plantations growing pepper, cardamom, coffee, and sugarcane.

From Idukki, I journeyed east, reaching Puducherry on the eastern coast of South India. Modern Puducherry, formerly French Pondicherry, has facilitated cross-cultural interactions well into the present day, but my focus lay in the archaeological site of Arikamedu, a port site contemporary with Muziris located just outside Puducherry. I explored the site itself and artifacts unearthed therein, many of which are now housed at the Puducherry Museum.

I then returned to Pattanam for my final two days in India, where I conducted literature reviews of the extant scholarship on cross-cultural interactions in the Indian Ocean world from 300 BCE to 300 CE. This experience of not only visiting and studying but living in and experiencing the landscapes of the Indian Ocean littoral was nothing short of life changing, and I want to offer my sincerest gratitude to the Segal Fund for allowing me to explore this aspect of Indo-Mediterranean antiquity.

DISTANTIA PROPINQVIOR

ORATIO SALVTATORIA CANTABRIGIÆ NOV-
ANGLORVM IN COMITIIS ACADEMICIS HABITA
A. D. X. KAL. IVN. ANN. DOM. MMXXIV. REIPVB.
AMERICANÆ CCXLVIII. COLL. HARV. CCCLXXXVIII.

Auete, Praeses Garber, clarissimi decani, sapientes professores, dilectae familiae, amici, hospites, condiscipuli, omnes toto in mundo—auete, sodales!

Hodie mihi est magnus honor huius orationis uobis enuntiandae in lingua tam antiqua, illustri, et erudita, quae uerborum superfluum ut yes et no omnino caret et pluribus uestrum ornamentum pulcherrimum est iuxta interpretationem anglicam quam quidem legitis. Spatium inter has duas textus columnas breuius esse non potest, sed distantia non potest esse maior.

Nos, huius anno MMXXIV ordinis studentes, similem distantiam aduertimus primo in campum aduenientes, itaque primi studentes Haruardiani facti sumus quibus nulla memoria est de uita Haruardiana ante pestilentiam. Nobis in cubiculis singillatim inclusis ut monachi in cellulis suis campus Haruardianus uacuum manebat silentio perturbato modo a susurris festinantibus inter duos uel—eheu!—tres studentes congregantes in scalis Bibliothecae VVidenensis. Quis autem possit obliuisci memorabilia festa habita Zooma cum yauune? In quibus ridiculae scaenae nos repraesentabant et facies nostrae figuras animalium pictorum sumebant. Innumera-biles inter nos textus commutauimus de praeceptis nostris, sed ubi tempus eorum scribendorum adfuerat, solitudo scripturae nostrae comparari poterat cum ea Boethi, Consolationis Philosophiae scriptoris, carnifice imminente in carceris—licet altiorem philosophiam exhiberent nostri tractatus Scripturae Expositoriae, et poenae quae penderent super capitibus nostris multo terribiliores essent. In his multis aliisque modis spatium inter nos breuius esse non poterat, sed distantia non poterat esse maior.

His difficultatibus non obstantibus mirabile uisu quam fortem amicitiam noster ordo habeat. Etiam si nostrae conuersandi artes leuiter sunt nutritae, una cum ceteris lente et inconcinne eas struximus. Etiam si nunquam occasionem habuimus coniungendarum quarundam sodalitatum quae ante pestilentiam erant, nouas nostras condidimus, ementes etiam, ut sodalitates essent domo similes, catulos amabiles. Experientia nobis ostendit plane: contra quascumque improuisas difficultates nos bene instructos esse, mutuo auxilio nitentes, ad inueniendas uias nouas, insolitas, saepius legitimas, atque omnium audacissimas. Totus mundus expectatione maxima uidet quid hinc faciamus; gaudeamus igitur. Auete atque ualete!

A NEARER DISTANCE

A SALUTATORY ORATION DELIVERED IN
CAMBRIDGE OF NEW ENGLAND AT THE
UNIVERSITY'S COMMENCEMENT ON THE 23RD DAY
OF MAY IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2024 OF THE
UNITED STATES THE 248TH AND OF HARVARD
COLLEGE THE 388TH

W elcome, President Garber, eminent deans, wise professors, beloved family, friends, guests, peers, everyone everywhere in the world—welcome, companions!

Today, it is my great honor to deliver you this oration in so ancient, esteemed, and scholarly a tongue, which utterly lacks needless words like “yes” and “no” and serves for most of you as a gorgeous decoration beside the English translation from which you’re actually reading. The space between these two columns of text could not be any shorter, but the distance could not be any greater.

We members of the class of 2024 were faced with a similar distance when we first arrived on campus and are thus the first Harvard class with no knowledge of what Harvard life was like before the pandemic. As each of us was locked individually in our rooms like monks in their cells, Harvard Yard remained eerily empty, the silence broken only by hurried whispers exchanged between two or—oh, woe!—three students gathering on the steps of Widener Library. But who could neglect the unforgettable parties we held Zooma cum yawne? There, creative backgrounds displayed our personalities and our faces took the forms of cartoon animals. We exchanged countless texts regarding upcoming assignments, yet, when the time came to actually write them, the solitude of our writing could be compared to that of Boethius, author of the *Consolation of Philosophy*, as he sat in prison awaiting his execution—although clearly the Expository Writing papers which we drafted were of more philosophical depth, and the consequences which hung over our heads were far more dire. In these and many other ways, the space between us could not have been any shorter, but the distance could not have been any greater.

In spite of these challenges, it is marvelous to see how strong an identity our class shares. Even if our social skills are slightly undeveloped, we have slowly and awkwardly built them up with one another. Even if we never got the chance to join certain student organizations which existed before the pandemic, we’ve created new ones of our own, and to make our orgs feel more like home, we’ve even purchased adorable puppies for them. Our experiences have clearly shown us that in spite of any unforeseen challenges at all, we are well equipped, relying on each other’s help, to find new, creative, usually legal, and, above all, exciting paths forward. The whole world is watching with the greatest anticipation what we do from here, so let’s celebrate. Goodbye, and farewell!

John Osbrne Sargent Prize for a Latin Translation

Every year, the Department of the Classics awards a prize for the best metrical translation of a lyric poem of Horace by a Harvard undergraduate. Rohit Saralaya ('25) won this year's prize with a translation of Horace *Odes* 4.15. In his entry, each stanza begins with two lines of iambic pentameter followed by two lines of iambic tetrameter.

Horace *Odes* 4.15

Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui
victas et urbes increpuit lyra,
ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor
vela darem. Tua, Caesar, aetas

fruges et agris rettulit uberes
et signa nostro restituit lovi
derepta Parthorum superbis
postibus et vacuum duellis

Ianum Quirini clausit et ordinem
rectum evaganti frena licentiae
iniecit emovitque culpas
et veteres revocavit artes

per quas Latinum nomen et Italiae
crevere vires famaue et imperi
porrecta maiestas ad ortus
solis ab Hesperio cubili.

Custode rerum Caesare non furor
civilis aut vis exiget otium,
non ira, quae proculdit enses
et miseras inimicat urbes.

Non qui profundum Danuvium bibunt
edicta rumpent Iulia, non Getae,
non Seres infidique Persae,
non Tanain prope flumen orti.

Nosque et profestis lucibus et sacris
inter iocosi munera Liberi
cum prole matronisque nostris
rite deos prius adprecati,
virtute functos more patrum duces

Lydis remixto carmine tibiis
Troiamque et Anchisen et almae
progeniem Veneris canemus.

Rohit's Translation

I wished to sing of wars and cities conquered,
But Phoebus, lyre clutched, struck a warning chord
That my small boat I should not board
To sail the vast Tyrrhenian waters.

You, Caesar, have returned our torn-down standards
From Parthian posts to Jove; our farms yield grain,
And now the threat of war is vain:
You have shut Janus' doors with candour

And steered our state away from errant crimes
And reined us in towards a proper path
And banished dreadful sin and wrath
And brought old forms to modern times,

Through which the name and might of Rome increased,
Just as the empire's glorious fame is spread,
Sprung from Apollo's western bed,
Extending to the dawn-kissed east.

Now, under Caesar, neither fierce disorder
Nor civil war shall mar our peace and calm,
Nor shall swords forged by anger's palm
Besiege our wretched cities' borders.

Tribes whom the deep Danubian tides have nourished
Shall not of Julian edicts make perversions,
Nor Getae, Seres, faithless Persians,
Or those who by the Don have flourished.

On both the common and religious days,
As Bacchus' gifts run free and wild,
We, followed by both wife and child,
Shall to the gods devoutly pray.

Just as our righteous ancestors have done,
Our verse shall mingle with the Lydian flutes
As we recount our Trojan roots,
Anchises, and sweet Venus' son.