

NOTA BENE

Vol. 23 No. 1

Academic Year 2017–18

NEWS FROM THE HARVARD DEPARTMENT OF THE CLASSICS

Notes from the Chair

by Mark Schiefsky

As the 2017–18 academic year draws to a close, I am delighted to report that the study of Classics continues to thrive at Harvard. Our concentrator numbers remain strong (thanks in no small measure to the efforts of our Director of Undergraduate Studies, Naomi Weiss), and last fall we welcomed a sizable new cohort of graduate students into our various PhD programs. As always, the calendar was packed with invited lectures, workshops, and conferences on all manner of topics connected with the ancient Greco-Roman world. The last academic event of the year, a discussion of democracies ancient and modern with Paul Cartledge of the University of Cambridge, took place just two days ago. It was a highlight of the year and a demonstration of the continuing relevance of Classics to the modern world. I invite you to read much more about all the department's activities in the pages that follow.

Let me first acknowledge the contributions of several colleagues who will soon be moving on to new opportunities. This year the department was fortunate to have the services of two outstanding Lecturers, Nathan Pilkington and Julia Scarborough, in the fields of ancient history and Latin literature, respectively. They made crucial contributions to our curriculum in a year in which a large number of faculty were away on sabbatical leave, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors. In a transition of a different kind, Richard Tarrant, Pope Professor of Latin Language and Literature, is retiring at the end of 2017–18 after some thirty-five years on the faculty. We look forward to his continued presence in the broader Classics community, and in particular to a conference in his honor that will be held this fall, featuring many of his former students and colleagues from around the world. For the moment, we thank him for his tireless contributions to the study of Latin literature and to the department, as a researcher, teacher, and colleague over more than three decades.

Now to the graduates. Our ten seniors have spent four years immersing themselves in the intricacies of Greek and Latin verbs and the mysteries of ancient Greek and Roman culture. The diversity of their thesis topics is matched only by the range of their future plans, proving that a Classics degree is ideal preparation for all walks of life. We also have six candidates for the PhD, who have dedicated themselves (for a bit more than four years!) to furthering our understanding of the ancient Greeks and Romans, whose struggles, compromises, failings, and triumphs are more relevant than ever to contemporary life. To all those who are moving on in 2018: you take with you the good wishes and gratitude of the entire department, and we hope you will come back and visit us often in Boylston Hall. Valete!

Finally, on a personal note, this is my last time writing these "Notes," after seven years in what can sometimes be a rather hot seat. I have been honored to serve the department as Chair. But it is time to pass the baton, and I am delighted that Kathleen Coleman is willing to take on the challenge of leading the department in the next phase of its history. Looking ahead, I am more optimistic than ever about the future of Harvard Classics, as long as we continue to look beyond the confines of Boylston Hall to engage vigorously not only with other departments, programs, and fields, but also with the world beyond the academy.

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SENIOR CONCENTRATORS



Theodore Delwiche



Thomas Dumbach



Phoebe Lakin



Victor Mezacapa



Gregory Scalise



Matthew DeShaw



Sean Fahey



Jake Levene



Jiha Min



Charles Webb

SENIOR HONORS THESES

Theodore Delwiche	<i>“In silvis Academia surgit: Latin Learning in Seventeenth-Century New England”</i> Advisor: Ann Blair (History); Asst. Advisor: Massimo Cè (G5)
Matthew DeShaw	<i>“Consuetudinis magna vis est: Change, Continuity, and Creating Community in Republican Morgantina, 211 – ca. 35 BCE”</i> Advisor: Emma Dench; Asst. Advisor: Anthony Shannon (G7)
Thomas Dumbach	<i>“Initium Turbandi Omnia a Femina Ortum Est: Gendered Transgression in Livy and Tacitus”</i> Advisor: Richard Thomas; Asst. Advisor: Christopher Cochran (G3)
Phoebe Lakin	<i>“Garden Paths: Text, Context, and Intertext in Columella’s De Cultu Hortorum”</i> Advisor: Richard Thomas; Asst. Advisor: James Taylor (G5)
Victor Mezacapa	<i>“On the Most Famous Book You’ve Never Heard Of, Or, The Life and Times of Cicero’s De Officiis”</i> Advisor: Mark Schiefsky; Asst. Advisor: Marco Romani Mistretta (G6)
Jiha Min	<i>“Are You Mad or Are You Bad? The Pathology of Evil in Ciceronian Invective”</i> Advisor: Emma Dench; Asst. Advisor: James Zainaldin (G4)
Gregory Scalise	<i>“Can I Hit My Computer? Actions Towards Objects in Virtue Ethics”</i> Advisors: Mark Schiefsky and Jacob Rosen (Philosophy)

SENIOR PRIZES

ARTHUR DELORAINE COREY FELLOWSHIPS FOR GRADUATE STUDY	Theodore Delwiche Thomas Dumbach Phoebe Lakin
LOUIS CURTIS PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN LATIN	Phoebe Lakin
WILLIAM KING RICHARDSON SCHOLARSHIP FOR DISTINCTION IN BOTH GREEK AND LATIN	Victor Mezacapa
DEPARTMENT PRIZES	Matthew DeShaw Thomas Dumbach Jake Levene Victor Mezacapa Jiha Min
SMYTH THESIS PRIZE FOR A THESIS ON GREEK	Gregory Scalise
PEASE THESIS PRIZE FOR A THESIS ON LATIN	Theodore Delwiche Phoebe Lakin
HOOPES PRIZE FOR AN OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE THESIS	Theodore Delwiche

SENIORS’ FUTURE PLANS

THEODORE DELWICHE plans to continue his study of early modern European Latin education through participation in a history research master’s program at the University of Groningen, with the great generosity of the Corey and Booth Fellowships.

MATTHEW DESHAW will be working as an Area Manager for Amazon in Gouldsboro, PA.

THOMAS DUMBACH has accepted a place in Oxford’s MSt program (or “programme,” as he’ll have to start writing) in Greek and/or Latin Languages and Literature, thanks to the generous support of the Corey Fellowship.

SEAN FAHEY will be staying in Boston, working at AEW Capital Management, a real estate investment management services group.

PHOEBE LAKIN will pursue an MPhil in Classics at the University of Cambridge next year, thanks to the generous support of the Corey Fellowship.

JAKE LEVENE will be working for a New York-based real estate development firm called The Related Companies.

VICTOR MEZACAPA will return home to Cleveland after graduation to work for three years as a Business Analyst with McKinsey & Company.

Jiha MIN will be working as a Corporate Paralegal in New York City come June.

GREGORY SCALISE will be pursuing an MFA in poetry at Johns Hopkins University.

CHARLES WEBB will be working at the Folger Library and Dumbarton Oaks on a Humanities Fellowship.

SENIOR REFLECTIONS

My sincere thanks to the Department of the Classics—professors, administrators, fellow-concentrators, and friendly canines—for a magnificent four years in what is surely one of the most welcoming and supportive communities on campus.

Here, my appetite for ancient literature and material culture has been amply sated, both in class and through the generosity of a Segal Grant and a Corey Fellowship, which have given me astonishing opportunities for study and adventure in Rome and, next year, at Cambridge University. Literal sustenance has been no less plentiful, in the form of the legendary departmental banana pudding!

I could not possibly name all to whom heartfelt gratitude is due, but a notable few are Alyson Lynch and Teresa Wu, for smoothly and calmly navigating problems large and small; and James Taylor and Professor Richard Thomas, for providing enthusiastic and insightful thesis advising.

As I arrive at the *umbilicus* of this Harvardian papyrus scroll and reach eagerly for the next, I will keep in my mind all that I have learned here, and in my heart fond memories of this place and its incomparable people.

Phoebe Lakin ’18

I cannot imagine a better department to have been a part of during my four years at Harvard. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to interact with and learn from my brilliant peers and professors and TFs in the Classics, from four-person seminars to a week-long trip in Sicily. I would like to extend a special thank you to Professor Dench for serving as not only my thesis advisor but also life mentor and guide, to Professor Coleman and Professor Weiss for advising me through my undergraduate academics and beyond, to James Zainaldin for serving as my assistant thesis advisor, and to Teresa for welcoming me into the Department. I am extremely fortunate to have the Classics Department as a home away from home at Harvard, and I am excited to tackle the next opportunity beyond college with the same passion and enthusiasm that I found through my time with the Department.

Jiha Min ’18

SENIOR REFLECTIONS

By age sixteen, I was quite confident that I’d go on to study Classics in college. I had been studying Latin for several years and was fresh off a school trip to Southern Italy, where spots like Rome and Herculaneum had brought to life the texts I was reading. Yet the Harvard Classics Department added even more dimensions to my passion for language, literature, and cultural history. The faculty here have helped me see vitality and room for growth in this discipline; moving well beyond my love for the enduring words and ideas of ancient authors, I have come to realize how continually relevant our field is.

I look back to a few moments from the past four years, and perhaps even longer ago. As a high school junior touring colleges, I met with Professor Coleman during her office hours to talk about my potential future here. I brought with me a small notepad, half to take notes and half to suggest how studious and eager I was, but was amazed to discover that Professor Coleman was the one filling up her large yellow notepad with details about my interests, authors I’d read, what I did beyond the classroom. Her excitement in meeting a young classicist made me feel valued and important, particularly as an unknown teenager who hadn’t even applied to Harvard yet. I’ve encountered this same excitement over and over here in the faces and words of faculty and students alike, and I especially love seeing it when I speak to curious freshmen at our lunches, open houses, and class discussions.

I think about a few courses that remain special for me, too. Sophomore year in particular deepened my love for Classics. That fall, I had my second class with Richard Thomas—on the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*—and understood how fun and rewarding it could be just to talk about texts: their beauty, their richness, their references and reverence. I always had been and remain a lover of textual analysis, and I am indebted to Professor Thomas for helping me center it within my studies then as well as again this past year when he advised my thesis. *Ille mi par esse deo videtur*. I am similarly indebted to Professor Weiss, whose Greek civilization class introduced me to many of the questions I continue to probe. She showed me that modern questions of politics and identity, especially the role of literature and art in both, are equally relevant to ancient history. I am by no means a Hellenist, but contemplating how the Greeks portrayed gender, foreignness, and power dramatically influenced my approach to Latin literature going forward. Finally, to Chris Cochran, I wish and expect the very best. I’m not sure he realizes that he kept me sane at times, but I couldn’t have made it through this past year without his guidance.

I’ll always think fondly of the time I’ve spent with my peers and instructors, in the classroom and beyond. The second floor of Boylston feels in many ways like a home for me, and I’ll miss the nights when I was the last one to leave Smyth, turning out the lights before I wandered down to the back door of Widener. Thank you to a department whose members have been so brilliant and challenging, so thoroughly welcoming and generous to me. It is indeed difficult to say goodbye, but I know that things are in excellent hands here.

Thomas Dumbach ’18

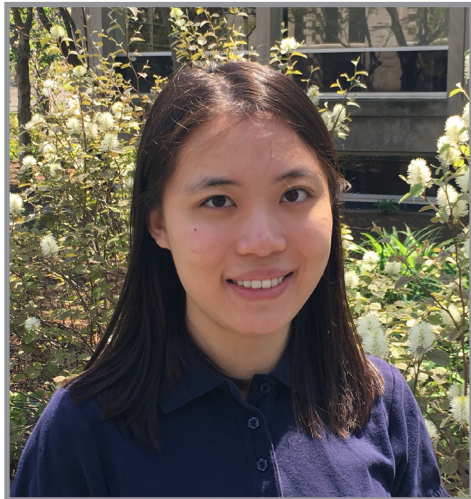
Every third Monday or so of the month, I receive a set of messages from a few of my non-Classics friends. Theirs is a clockwork on par with cicadas. They do not receive the department e-mails, but nonetheless have an ingrained ability to sniff out when the next Classics lunch will be—and then promptly have me promise to take them. Undoubtedly, there is a certain allure to caramel and banana bread pudding. But I have always found my friends to have an appetite for something else: that opportunity to witness firsthand the exceptional community forged in the Classics Department.

Commencement platitudes notwithstanding, I have found the people here in the Department all incomparable, all diverse in their backgrounds, but united in their shared interests. In a very tangible way, the Classics lunch reifies the tight bonds that are formed outside of the classroom. To be sure, there is still plenty of academic talk around the table. Still, I have found professors equally willing to talk about the complexities of Homeric verse or matters a bit more personal, like their families. Even everyday fads, like the fluctuations in the cryptocurrency market (don’t get me started on that one) are fair game for a Classics lunch.

I will miss these lunches. I will miss all my fellow undergrads, the graduate students, the lecturers and professors. I will miss the tight ship that Teresa and Alyson run year after year with such great grace. Innumerable thanks to the patience, instruction, and opportunity afforded to me by this department. I hope to be able to do justice to all of it in the years to come.

Theodore Delwiche ’18

New Graduate Students



Xiaoxiao Chen was born and grew up in Beijing, China, where she received her BA in Philosophy from Peking University. It is also at Peking that she got exposed to Platonic dialogues and developed an interest in Plato’s psychology. Since then she has been interested in exploring how the ancients understand their inner self, including the application of medical analogy, the Neoplatonic notion of the internal and external cosmos, and the animal metaphor of both the tripartite soul and the soul as a whole, both bitten and biting.



Rebecca Deitsch graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Dallas in 2017 with a double major in Greek and Latin Classical Philology and a concentration in Spanish. Her senior thesis on the reception of Athenian tragedy in Latin epic was entitled “Resolver of Strife and Mother of War: Jocasta in Euripides and Statius.” At Harvard she will continue studying the evolution of myth in epic and tragedy, with an emphasis on women’s agency, and she plans to broaden her scope to include Near Eastern mythological traditions and material culture. She is also fascinated by linguistics and modern languages, especially Polish and Russian, and during her time at Harvard she hopes to explore Slavic reception of Classics.

Sarah Eisen received her BA in Archaeology and Classical Studies from Dickinson College in 2015 and her MA in Art History and Archaeology from Columbia University in 2017. Her MA thesis, entitled “*When you look me in the eyes... Abduction, Seduction, and the Power of the Gaze in Ancient Greek*



Vase Painting,” explores the iconography, variations, and exhortative value of mythological erotic pursuit and abduction scenes in late Archaic and Classical Greek vase painting. She is now a doctoral candidate in Classical Archaeology here at Harvard. Her research interests include Greek vase painting and ceramic workshops, the iconography and interplay of mythology and ritual, and the relationship between image, object, and text. She has participated in archaeological excavations in Binchester, England; Mycenae, Greece; and, most recently, Columbia University’s Onchestos excavation project in Boeotia, Greece. She is also particularly interested in the collaboration between academic institutions and museums, and has worked at several museums, including the American Museum of Natural History (NYC) and the Archaeological Museum of Mycenae (Greece), and she has been a docent at the Onassis Cultural Center New York.



Nate Herter grew up in Ellington, Connecticut, a sleepy farming community with more cows than people. He completed a BA in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies with Honors at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, along with a senior thesis on Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*, in 2014. In 2016 he completed an MA in Comparative Literature, also at UConn, with concentrations in Homeric epic, Vergil, and psychoanalytic theory. After taking a year off to teach high school Latin and special education, he has returned to academia to begin a PhD in Classical Philology here at Harvard. Nate’s main academic interests include theoretical approaches to the Classics, Homeric epic, and the ancient novel; as an educator, he is a strong proponent of active, comprehensible-input pedagogy. Outside of Classics he enjoys cooking, video games, reading and writing poetry, and music (especially David Bowie).

Alexander Vega was born in Boston and grew up in southern California and in the Philadelphia area. He received a BA in Classics and Mathematics from Amherst College, where he wrote a senior thesis on Cicero’s Academic Skepticism. He is excited to study the intriguing and profound ideas of classical philosophers at Harvard. He is particularly interested in pursuing research on Plato and Cicero, and he would be curious to consider how his research in classical philosophy could be informed by ideas from his prior studies in mathematics and philosophy of law. In his free time, he enjoys running and creative writing.



Jorge Alejandro Wong II Medina completed a BA in Classics and Linguistics at The University of Texas at Austin and an MA in Greek at the University of California, Berkeley. He works primarily on Greek epic and historical linguistics. His life quest is to produce crystal clear ice and to make tortellini in the manner of soup dumplings.

Noteworthy

Graduate Student News

- In May of 2018, **Chris Cochran** (G3) completed his Special Examinations on Herodotus, Petronius, and the Ancient Novel.
- In May of 2018, **Julia Judge** (G3) completed her Special Examinations on Greek Sanctuaries in the Roman Period; Christian Interactions with Pagan Art, Architecture, and Sacred Spaces in Late Antiquity; and Romanization.
- In May of 2018, **Keating McKeon** (G6) completed his prospectus entitled “No Going Back: Attic Tragedy and the Autocratic Return.”
- In May of 2018, **Suzanne Paszkowski** (G3) completed her Special Examinations on Plato, Cicero, and Ancient Greek Music.
- In October of 2017, **Anne Remillard** (G4) completed her Special Examinations on Euripides, Lucretius, and Greek Religion.
- In January of 2018, **Alexandra Schultz** (G4) completed her prospectus entitled “Imagined Histories: Hellenistic Libraries and the Idea of Greece.”
- In September of 2017, **James Taylor** (G5) completed his prospectus entitled “Changing Places: Geological Change and the Shaping of Landscapes in Classical Thought and Imagination.”
- In February of 2018, **James Zainaldin** (G4) completed his prospectus entitled “Philosophy, Rhetoric, Science: The Formation of Specialized Knowledge at Rome, 100 BCE–200 CE.”
- During the previous academic year (2016–2017), **Anthony (Tony) Shannon** was a Gastwissenschaftler (Guest Researcher) affiliated with the Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Andreas Grüner. In the winter of 2017, Tony was also in residence as the Jacobi Graduate Student Scholar at the German Archaeological Institute’s Commission for Epigraphy and Ancient History in Munich.
- In March of 2018, **Alexandra Schultz** (G4) and **James Zainaldin** (G4) co-organized the Harvard Graduate Student Conference, “Local and Global: the Literary Landscape and the Politics of Place in the Hellenistic World.”

Fellowships and Other Awards

Graduate Student Awards

- The Bowdoin Prize for Graduate Composition in Greek was awarded to **Greg Mellen** (G7).
- The Bowdoin Prize for Graduate Composition in Latin was awarded to **Alexander Schwennicke** (G2).
- **Eliza Gettel** (G5) and **James Zainaldin** (G4) each received a Merit/Graduate Society Term-time Research Fellowship from the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences for the 2018–19 academic year. This fellowship allows students to take a semester off from teaching to focus on their research.
- **Michael Konieczny** (G6) received a GSAS Dissertation Completion Fellowship for 2018–19.
- Charles P. Segal Student Travel and Research Fellowships were awarded to the following graduate students: **Rebecca Deitsch** (G1), **Sarah Eisen** (G1), **Nathaniel Herter** (G1), **Miriam Kamil** (G3), **Suzanne Paszkowski** (G3), **Alexander Schwennicke** (G2), and **Anthony Shannon** (G7).
- **Keating McKeon** (G7) had several of his photographs exhibited in April 2018 at the Harvard Student Art Collective’s annual show under the heading of “familiar space subtle strange.”

Undergraduate Awards

- The Bowdoin Prize for Greek translation was awarded to **Alejandro Quintana** (’20).
- The Bowdoin Prize for Latin translation was awarded to **Ned Sanger** (’19).
- The George Emerson Lowell Scholarship Prize for the best performance in an examination on Latin was awarded to **Caroline Engelmayer** (’20) and **Ned Sanger** (’19).
- The John Osborne Sargent Prize for English translation of an ode of Horace was awarded to **Victor Mezacapa** (’18).
- The David Taggart Clark Prize for the Undergraduate Latin Commencement Oration was awarded to **Phoebe Lakin** (’18).
- The John H. Finley Jr. Fund for the Greek Classics for summer travel was awarded to **Benjamin Roy** (’19).

Department News

Faculty News

- Starting in July of 2018, **Professor Emma Dench** will take on the role of Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, following a year as Interim Dean.
- Departmental Officers: For the academic year 2018–19, the departmental officers will be as follows:
 - Chair: **Professor Kathleen Coleman**
 - Director of Graduate Studies: **Professor Jeremy Rau**
 - Director of Undergraduate Studies: **Professor David Elmer**
- In spring 2018, **Professor David Elmer** delivered the annual Helen North Lecture at Swarthmore College.
- In 2018, **Dr. Ivy Livingston** received a grant from the Barajas Dean’s Innovation Fund for Digital Arts and Humanities and a Foreign Language Advisory Group Curricular Innovation Grant for “Hedera: A Personalized Vocabulary Database and Readability Gauge.”
- In 2017, **Professor Gregory Nagy** was elected a Corresponding Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- In 2017, the Panteion University of Social and Political Science conferred an honorary degree on **Professor Panagiotis Roilos**.
- **Professor Naomi Weiss** has received a Loeb Classical Library Foundation Fellowship for 2018–19. She will be a Beaufort Visiting Fellow at St John’s College, University of Cambridge.

Faculty Books

- **Christopher Jones**—Loeb Classical Library 534: Apuleius: *Apologia, Florida, De Deo Socratis* (HUP, 2017)
- **Richard F. Thomas**—*Why Bob Dylan Matters* (Dey Street Books, 2017)
- **Naomi Weiss**—*The Music of Tragedy: Performance and Imagination in Euripidean Theater* (UC Press, 2018)
- **Julian Yolles** and Jessica Weiss—*Medieval Latin Lives of Muhammad* (HUP, 2018)

- Charles P. Segal Student Travel and Research Fellowships were awarded to the following undergraduate students: **Jennifer Lowell** (’19), **Sheridan Marsh** (’20), and **Ned Sanger** (’19).

Teaching Awards

- The Harvard Certificate of Distinction in Teaching is awarded by the Bok Center to outstanding teaching fellows, teaching assistants, and course assistants. Recipients from Classics for the Spring and Fall Semesters of 2017 follow (G-year listed is for the academic year 2017–2018).
 - **Nadav Asraf** (G3): Greek 1
 - **Massimo Cè** (G5): Latin 112b
 - **Christopher Cochran** (G3): Latin 2x
 - **Stephen Hughes** (G5): Latin 1, Latin 1x, Latin 3
 - **Julia Judge** (G3): Cls-Stdy 97a
 - **Miriam Kamil** (G3): Cultr&Blf 22
 - **Keating McKeon** (G6): Cls-Stdy 141, Cultr&Blf 35, Latin Ax
 - **Rebecca Miller** (TA): Latin 1
 - **Sergios Paschalis** (TA): Greek 3
 - **Suzanne Paszkowski** (G3): Latin 112a, Latin 3
 - **Marco Romani Mistretta** (G6): Cls-Stdy 97b, Greek K
 - **Alexandra Schultz** (G4): Cls-Stdy 152, Greek 10
 - **Ariane Schwartz** (TA): Latin 2, Latin 108
 - **Stephen Shennan** (G3): Latin 1
 - **James Townshend** (G9): Latin H, Latin 10
 - **James Zainaldin** (G4): Greek 112b, Latin 2
- The Harvard Certificate of Teaching Excellence goes to outstanding Lecturers, College Fellows, and Preceptors. Recipients from Classics for the Spring and Fall Semesters of 2017 follow.
 - **Carmen Arnold-Biucchi**: ClasArch 183
 - **Brigitte Libby**: Cls-Stdy 141, Cultr&Blf 35
 - **Julia Scarborough**: Latin 112a
 - **Yvona Trnka-Amrhein**: Greek 104
 - **Julian Yolles**: MedLatin 106

Harvard Summer School and the Finley Fellowship

by Joseph Valente ('19)

It is not every day one has the opportunity to see a production of Euripides' *Alcestitis* in perhaps the most famous Greek theatre in the world, the Theatre of Epidaurus. And yet this kind of truly breathtaking experience was an almost daily occurrence during the Harvard Summer School Program in Greece—every day we took in myriad sites spanning all eras of Greek history. From the Athenian *akropolis* to the manor houses of revolutionaries on Spetses, my fellow students and I had the unparalleled experience of studying Greek history and culture experientially, with site tours from world-renowned experts such as Harvard Classics' own Professor Nagy and Professor Dench.

One of the most exciting aspects of the program was having the chance to learn side by side with Greek students. Listening to their perspectives, both on modern Greek politics and on the impact of the Classical world on Greece, was always fascinating. And it was not only the people, but also the location that made this experience so remarkable—one merely had to walk one block to see the tangible impact of the cross-cultural contact that we had discussed in class. Seeing the remains of a Roman palace, Byzantine cathedrals, and Ottoman mosques overlapping and developing from one another was an experience truly unique to a city such as Thessaloniki, and really reinforced our class discussions and readings.

My time in Greece not only was an opportunity to see the remnants of the ancient world, but it also provided a chance to see how the study of the Classics can be useful in the modern world. During the last week of the program, we had the unique opportunity of participating in a panel discussion with the US Ambassador to Greece, Geoffrey Pyatt. His remarks focused in large part on how crucial it is to understand the impact of Greece's cultural capital and the role of Greek history in shaping the modern Greek state. This opportunity to study in Greece, interact with Greek students, and learn so much about the country's history and culture inspired me to return this coming summer, where I will seek to utilize this knowledge working for the United States Department of State at the Embassy in Athens. My summer in Greece was truly the experience of a lifetime and I am immensely grateful to the Finley Fellowship and the Harvard Classics Department for this wonderful experience.



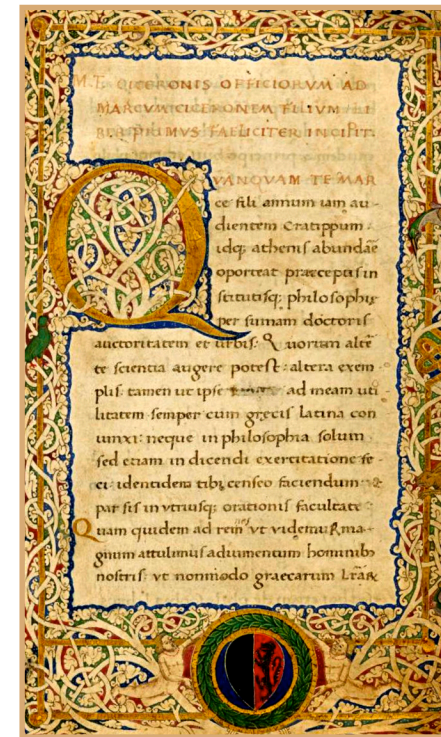
A view of the Bourtzi in Nafplio, Greece.



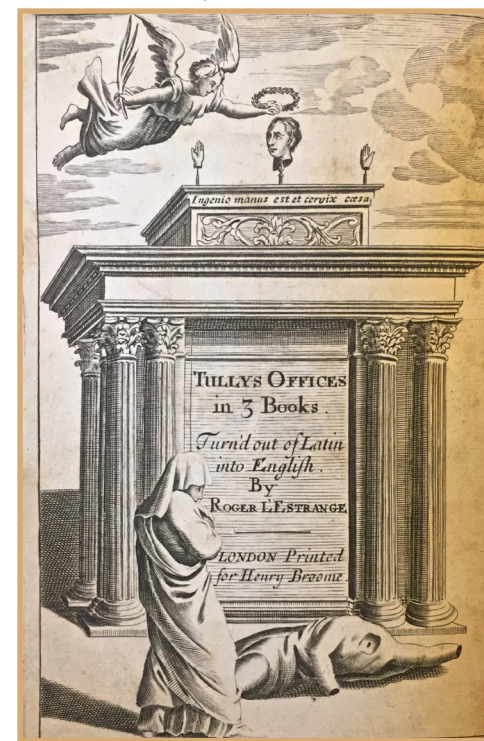
Offshore of Spetses, Greece.

Cicero at Houghton Library

by Victor Mezacapa ('18)



The illuminated first page of Houghton MS Lat 177, a manuscript of *De Officiis* from the library of Charles Sumner, Class of 1830.



An engraving from Houghton AC85.A191.Zz681c, Amos Bronson Alcott's copy of the *De Officiis*, portraying Cicero's severed head and hands posted in the Forum above an epitaph from Juvenal's *Satires*

A Segal Grant enabled me to travel much more locally—just across the Yard, in fact—than across the world, where it has taken many other students, but to a place well worth visiting and that every Harvard student ought to know: Houghton Library, which houses almost all of Harvard's rare books and special collections. (Even in other libraries: the Houghton staff, for instance, not the Widener staff, keeps up Harry Elkins Widener's books in the heart of Widener Library.) Using the funds to make possible an early return to Cambridge in August, I began to examine some of Houghton's most prized editions of Cicero's *De Officiis*, the beginning phase of the larger undertaking of characterizing all the library's nearly-one-hundred editions of the book for a thesis chapter on the reception of Cicero's treatise through the ages.

Working with the Houghton staff is a pleasure as well as a privilege, especially for someone like me, who had worked in the stacks at the library before transitioning to the role of researcher in the reading room. With the help of the librarians, I was able to find quite a few interesting copies of the book, and uncover no mean collection of Cicero and even of the *De Officiis* in the library. Besides having editions of Cicero's *Opera* owned by great Americans from Thomas Hollis to Edith Wharton (many of which contain the *De Officiis*), the library also owns copies of the individual treatise written or printed in five centuries (not including our own; the latest edition comes from London in 1821, one copy of which came to Houghton via the Roosevelt Memorial Association from the library of Robert B. Roosevelt, T.R.'s uncle and a Congressman from New York, whose signature the little pocket-sized hardback bears) and in eight languages: Latin, French, English, Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Perhaps the most interesting edition sets the commentary of Desiderius Erasmus, the great humanist and Catholic priest, alongside that of Philip Melancthon, the Lutheran reformer, and includes commentary from at least five great Renaissance men, as well as a critical essay at the back by Celio Calcagnini, the polymath's polymath. (What has the Harvard University Press published recently to match that?!) Perhaps most fun to discover, however, were the many copies and editions with Harvard connections. One of the first that I found was a fifteenth-century Italian humanist manuscript given to Harvard by Charles Sumner (AB 1830; LLD '33); another, an *incunabulum* given by Charles Franklin Dunbar (AB 1851; LLD '91); and, of the 1681 translation of the *De Officiis* into English by Robert L'Estrange, a copy that belonged to Amos Bronson Alcott, whose hand drew a gravely approving manicule to point at the section, "The Business of Age Is Wisdom."

Researching in the library's collection with the help of the Segal Grant made it easier to appreciate the place at which I am fortunate enough to work during the year, and made my first semester of thesis research entirely more productive that it would have been without the time before classes had begun to get the lay of the land of Houghton's many editions of Cicero. I greatly appreciate the Department's support, which allowed me to stay so close yet so far.

Campo de' Fiori

by Suzanne Paszkowski (G3)

Last summer, I had the pleasure of beginning to learn Italian and, thanks to Segal funding, I was able to visit Italy in August. I flew in and out of Rome, but I decided on Naples as a home base from which I could visit sites all around the Bay of Naples (and beyond: Paestum!). Though warned about the peculiarities of the Neapolitan dialect, I didn't have great difficulty communicating. In fact, I found myself among Italians from all over who, apparently, also flock to the Bay of Naples for vacation in August. Much to my delight, each person whom I asked for help understanding a word or phrase I was struggling with in, first, Jhumpa Lahiri's *In altre parole*, and then, Elena Ferrante's *L'amica geniale*, responded gladly, not with an English translation but an explanation in Italian—*fantastico*! Extra Italian practice just by asking a simple question to a fellow passenger on a train or ferry! For someone who has spent an extraordinary amount of time looking words up in dictionaries (okay, I'm addressing Classicists, so we all have), it was so nice to be able to ask a native speaker for a quick explanation, and then carry on reading. I was so happy with being able to do this that it surprised me to read in Lahiri's book about her own practice of carrying around a pocket Italian dictionary to look up words, even when she was living in Italy.

But of course asking strangers for help is not an obvious thing to do, especially (?) when one is a single woman traveling in a country where the language spoken is not your own. Indeed, sometimes my requests for help with a word turned into slightly uncomfortable exchanges if I "mistakenly" asked a man who thought it would be nice to admire my hair/smile/beauty in general, and/or invite me for a drink or to a party... Oops. Perhaps I'm more aware of it as I grow older and when I am traveling, and certainly everyone has become more attuned to sexual harassment over the past year with the widely publicized #MeToo movement, but



Capri on Capri



Gender violence in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli

I was shocked by the amount of small instances of harassment I experienced while in Italy. The most uncomfortable incident happened when I was strolling through the Campo de' Fiori in Rome one afternoon, eating a gelato, and one of the restaurant greeters grabbed and held my wrist and taunted me in Italian (to the effect of, "Can I have a lick?"). I realize that this is nowhere near as grave as the sexual violence that others have experienced, and I am certainly not a victim looking for pity. Nonetheless, I think that this is worth sharing because, though my trip to Italy was overall very positive, I saw and learned a lot, and I'm very grateful to have received funding for the experience, it is important to communicate the wearying small acts of violence that women in our field face on even something as benign as a summer trip to practice Italian.



Sex + coca cola + Pompeii/Ad seen in Pompeii

MA in Italian Studies at Middlebury College

by Gregory Mellen (G7)



Mills College, Oakland, CA. <https://flickr.com/photos/cronncc/3546127796/>

In July and August of 2017, a Segal Travel and Research Award allowed me to go to Oakland, California, where I completed an MA in Italian Studies with Middlebury College.

In this last summer of coursework, I took three seminars in Middlebury's Italian School. The first seminar was dedicated to the Italian novel in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and was taught by Gino Tellini, Professor Emeritus of Italian Literature at the University of Florence. For this course my research focused on the language of the novels written by Italo Svevo. Svevo is now considered one of Italy's most important modernist writers, but he had a weak command of Italian, since he lived in Trieste, where the main spoken language was the local dialect and he was educated in German (Trieste at the time was the main port of the Austro-Hungarian Empire). I explored the interference of Triestine and German on Svevo's Italian and his awkward handling of register, marked by highly literary language plucked from his reading alongside phrases that sound like intermediate-student translationese. It was exciting to hone my philological skills on a new author, especially one who presents the odd problem of a canonical figure with a shaky command of the language in which he wrote. As I wrote my seminar paper I kept thinking of Pollio's quip about Livy's Patavinitas.

The second seminar was dedicated to the life and works of Giuseppe Verdi and was taught by Cosimo Colazzo, Professor of Composition at the Conservatory of Trento. I'm by no means an opera fanatic, but it was thrilling to study Verdi in depth, especially for the analogies he presents for the study of Greek tragedy. We examined his dramatic art, his formal innovations, his relationship to the politics of

his time, and even such details as the way his melodic lines evoke (or avoid) the natural melodic inflections of speech—an issue central to the performance and interpretation of Euripides' choral odes, for instance. During the summer, we had the chance to see Rigoletto at the San Francisco Opera, and I discovered that one of Verdi's most intolerably schmaltzy and (now) cliché arias (*La donna è mobile*) acquires a deeply moving dramatic irony when staged correctly. I left the course with a greater appreciation for Italian opera and a reinvigorated desire to return to Greek tragedy with closer attention to issues of music, staging, and performance.

The third seminar was dedicated to Italian Dialectology and was taught by the instructor Emilio Ceruti. The course examined the history of the Italian dialects, the structures of several specific dialects, and the relationship between the dialects and standard Italian in modern Italy. My research focused on *veneziano*, the dialect of Venice and the surrounding mainland. In this area the dialect is still strongly present (over two-thirds of the population speaks mainly dialect at home) and it has a rich tradition of use in the theater and in lyric poetry. Studying the Italian dialects continually presents parallels that are "good to think with" when considering ancient Greek literature and sociolinguistics, especially for those, like me, who grew up safely sealed in the bubble of Standard English.

With these three courses, I completed my Italian MA. I am already starting to put the degree to use by working on scholarly translations and poetic translations for publication. I am extremely grateful to the Department for providing financial support for this opportunity, which has enriched my life and my scholarship.

Summer Travels in Italy

by Stephen Shennan (G3)



Forum at Pompeii

I was fortunate to receive a Charles P. Segal Summer Travel and Research Award last summer to support my trip to study in Rome. My research interests require a working knowledge of Italian, and one of my goals was to acquire a firm grounding in the language; Rome is a perfect setting in which to learn language alongside culture. My second purpose was historical: to become more familiar with the Roman environs (ancient and modern), as well as take the opportunity to explore the many sights in and around the city that are significant historic, political, and/or archaeological remnants of ancient Rome.

I began the trip by flying to England, where I stayed with family and spent some time visiting London and its museums. The British Museum is a great resource, and the Elgin Marbles did not disappoint. Their size and scope are stunning. Setting aside questions about the propriety of their location, the Museum maintains a beautifully evocative display, and the wealth of antiquities from across the Mediterranean made it a stimulating and memorable visit.

After a quick flight to Rome, I began exploring the city and taking language classes. Getting up to speed relatively

quickly in Italian was made easier by my surroundings, and I measured daily success by how far I could make it in conversations before the person I was speaking with switched over to English. I can't claim perfect fluency, but I certainly picked up enough to make my way in Italy and read academic articles, and improving my Italian is an ongoing project.

Particularly fun and useful was a day trip to Naples and Pompeii to wander through the ruins and wear out my companions with unrelenting enthusiasm at every turn. On a separate day trip I followed the Tiber out to the ruins of Rome's harbor town, Ostia Antica, which was a fascinating way to pass an afternoon (Pompeii without the crowds!).

The sizeable Harvard contingent which was in Rome at the same time included Miriam Kamil (G3) and Chris Cochran (G3); they provided companionship and a very friendly backdrop for the trip. I was able to close my trip with a short visit to Florence to turn my gaze to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which brought a breath of fresh air, the only rain of my month-long trip, and the incredible art and architecture for which the city is justly famous. I then returned home.



Detail from a floor mosaic at the Baths of Neptune at Ostia Antica



Sculpture from the West pediment of the Parthenon

Summer in Testaccio

by Miriam Kamil (G3)



Lago di Nemi

In the summer of 2017, I spent a spectacular five weeks in Rome, where I studied Italian, visited museums, and explored local landmarks. My Italian tutor, Sabina Fusaro (recommended to me by the great Chris Cochran, G3), brought my Italian up from non-existent to conversational in a mere month. Living just outside the city center, I had plenty of opportunities to practice my language skills at the cafe and farmers' market outside my apartment. I ordered many espressos and fresh vegetables in flawless Englitalian.

Over the summer, I came to know the commercial parts of Rome (bought some cute souvenirs!) and the quieter outskirts, meeting many friendly locals and fellow travelers along the way. In the city, I walked up and down the Tiber and blended in with tourists at the Colosseum and Forum Romanum. A bit further out, about a ten-minute walk from my Airbnb, was the Parco della Caffarella, which became one of my favorite haunts. There I spent many lovely hours wandering through sunburnt fields and past babbling streams. At its center, the park had its own spooky ruins and an active farm. I made good friends with the resident dogs; there was also a friendly horse and some very unfriendly sheep (have you ever been stared down by a sheep?).

Outside of my Italian lessons, I was free to wander around



Dogs in Parco della Caffarella



Ostia Antica

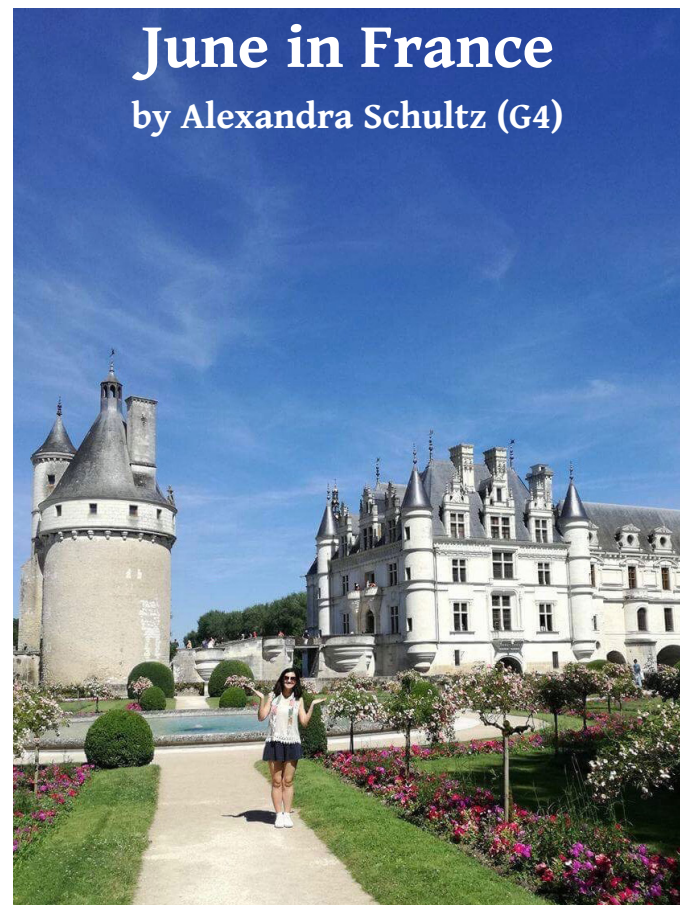
Italy. I made day trips to Pompeii (with Steve Shennan, G3!) and Lago di Nemi, which is the prettiest lake inside a crater I've yet seen. I explored the labyrinthine ruins of Ostia Antica and watched the sunset over the Tyrrhenian Sea at Ostia Lido. Another day trip brought me to Orvieto, with its stunning cathedral, underground ruins, aerial views, and cobblestone roads.

Meanwhile, back in Rome, I glimpsed some of the finest art of all time at the Villa Borghese and the Vatican Museum. I got to see some of my favorite pieces in person: Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne* and *Rape of Persephone*; Caravaggio's *Boy with a Basket of Fruit*. I have since used some of my photos of these pieces while teaching! And seeing the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, despite the hectic crowd, was unforgettable.

This trip exposed me to parts of Italy I'd never before had the chance to explore. At the same time, the plentiful alone time allowed me to read and prepare for my Special Exams, along the way refining my interests in antiquity. The introduction to Italian has proven crucial for my studies this year, particularly those on textual transmission through the Medieval and Renaissance periods. It was a very enjoyable and productive trip and I'm grateful for the experience!



Orvieto



Chenonceau!

I was sitting on a train to Nantes, savoring the lingering taste of a terrible airport pain au chocolat and succumbing to exhaustion after my red-eye to Paris, when I found out that I was in the wrong seat. In the ensuing confusion, my intermediate level of French was not so much to blame as my beginner level of train layouts. Eventually the kind fellow sitting next to me helped me sort out the confusion and the even kinder fellow whose seat I had purloined went off to find mine. I then spent the rest of the three-hour train ride blundering through something resembling a conversation in French with my seatmate, who had the patience of a saint and wrote down for me all the words and phrases I didn't understand.

Confusion, kindness, and a lot of hand gestures. So began the month I spent in France last summer with the help of funding from a Segal award. Before the trip I had worked through part of a French for reading textbook and had taken an intermediate level class at Harvard—enough to pass my French language exam, but not enough to read an article or monograph with ease. My mission for the summer: to improve my fluency and reading speed for dissertation research.

Nantes was an odd blend of old and new that I came to appreciate by the end of the four days I spent there. At the center of the old city, a brand-new trolley ran around the thirteenth-century castle, and in the evenings young people reveled in the grass beneath the former home of the ducs de



Alex Boleyn? (Château de Beauregard)

Bretagne. An island in the city offered a “steampunk wonderland” complete with a giant mechanized elephant. It trundled slowly through streets filled with children shrieking in delight as the robotic creature trumpeted and sprayed water from its trunk. During my stay I also made a day trip to Le Croisic, a pretty seaside town on a peninsula located on the western coast. There I picnicked on a pier, read some Xenophon, and fell asleep on the beach. After I woke up to the tide nipping at my toes, I wandered around some more and stumbled upon a snail farm. I was the only tourist around and I believe the farm was closed that day, but the kindly owner offered me an escargot-tasting that was only 6 euros (!) and gave me a tour of the farm.

I spent the next two weeks in Tours, where I had enrolled in a French program at L'Institut de Touraine. The classes were excellent (“FORMIDABLE!!” is written here and there in my journal) and the school also hosted a number of wonderful events. On the first day of classes an art historian gave us a tour of the city and taught us to detect which buildings had once been churches by looking for the tell-tale palimpsest of filled-in lancet windows. Outside of school, I planned as much as I could fit into daylight hours: tours of wine caves, museum visits, and of course trips to castles, including the magnificent Château de Chenonceau. The evenings were somewhat less enjoyable. I had requested to stay with a host family in the hopes that dinner would give me an hour or two of extra conversation practice per



Tours book festival

day. Alas, after a few minutes of small talk my Marine Le Pen-loving host parents turned on the TV, and the other host student and I attempted to converse quietly so as not to disturb the French nationalist chatter.

On my full last day in Tours I made a day trip to Azay-le-Rideau to visit Château de L'Islette, the site of the stormy love affair between Rodin and Camille Claudel. Picnicking on a tiny island in the middle of a stream in the castle grounds, feeling sleepy and sunny, is one of my happiest memories. An out-of-date train schedule meant the idyllic day ended in near-disaster, but I eventually made it back to Tours. In the morning I abandoned a few cheap paperbacks in my room, finally managed to wrestle my small suitcase shut, and left for a four-day stay in Blois.

Blois, a very yucky-sounding word, was a very charming city. The best decision I made in Blois was to rent a bicycle for a day, despite my fear of cycling. I made my wobbly way to Château de Beauregard, famous for its portrait gallery, and then spent the rest of the day cycling up and down the Loire under a light, refreshing rain. I also went to a cheesy and thoroughly enjoyable magic show at La Maison de la Magie, and was pleasantly surprised when I discovered that their temporary exhibition was on the history of paper and paper crafts.

To end the trip, a week in Paris. My chic little Airbnb in the 10th was sunny and homey and I woke up every morning feeling as though I really lived there. I people-watched in



Atelier Brancusi

the Marais, ate the best rose marshmallows of my life, and read my awful French detective novel in gardens and cafes. I visited some old favorites (Higuma, Tuileries, Grand Palais) and discovered new places too (Atelier Brancusi, La Coulée Verte, Creperie Gigi). Throughout the trip, but especially in that last week, I shamelessly spoke French to everyone and anyone who would listen—friends old and new, waiters, shopkeepers, ticket vendors, museum guards, couples at wine tastings, an elderly lady from Normandy who made the mistake of sitting near me at lunch one day. Sometimes the conversations lasted only seconds, sometimes hours. To my surprise, nearly everyone—even waiters in Paris (!)—was kind to me.

I started my dissertation this past year and have been delighted to find how much my reading speed and fluency improved. I'm immensely grateful to the Segal Fund and the department for funding my trip and helping me acquire an invaluable research tool, but also for giving me some of the happiest memories of my life. When I look back at the little notebook I carried around with me during the trip, I find hundreds of words, phrases, and tips I picked up over those weeks, mostly in my own handwriting but occasionally in the writing of others. The stark simplicity of my friend Augustin's movie recommendations. My teacher's elegant cursive correcting some bungled spelling. The slanted scribbles of seatmates on trains who helped a student stumbling over her words.

On the Trail of Tigranes the Great: Travels in Armenia and Georgia

by Elizabeth Mitchell (G8)



Looking over the border onto Ararat

For sixth-century BCE Greeks, the Caucasus lay at the ends of the earth, the destination of the Argo and the homeland of Medea and the golden fleece: a land of alluring danger and immense potential wealth. Having resisted assimilation by the major powers of the Greek and Roman worlds, it has preserved this marginal status in classical scholarship—the Medea myth may well be the one point at which the eastern Black Sea coastline makes it onto university syllabuses. And for an inhabitant of Colchis, Iberia, or Armenia, Athens and Rome must have seemed equally far away. Nearer neighbors were the Achaemenids and the Parthians, both of whom exerted political and cultural influence on the comparatively small Caucasian kingdoms and at times took them over entirely.

It was in an attempt to understand something more about the place of this region, both in its relation to the wider ancient world and in its own right, that in June 2017 Paul Kosmin, Supratik Baralay (G2), Chris Moore (of Penn State), and I undertook a high-speed car chase through Armenia and Georgia, trying to visit as many sites and sample as many walnut-based delicacies as humanly possible within an eight-day period. Over the course of our trip, we traveled through several millennia of Caucasian history and material culture, going from the hilltop Urartu citadels of Erebuni and Metsamor to the Artaxiad sites of the Ararat Plain, and up into the mountains to a handful of the ninth- to thirteenth-century monasteries around which most of Armenia’s modern tourist industry is focused. We debated the claims of Erebuni’s central hall to the status of proto-Apadana, looked for Parthian architectural features in the city of Uplistsikhe, which is carved entirely out of a sandstone massif on the edge of the Mtkvari river in modern Georgia, and argued the toss for the Artaxiad reappropriation of Urartu monumental building language at Artashat. At Artashat, a fortification looking over the Ararat plain in which seven hills are joined together by a spider’s web of stone and mudbrick walls, we were especially grateful for the hospitality of Professor



An Artaxiad mud-brick wall at Artashat

“Mickey” Zardarian and Haik Gyulamiryan, who guided us expertly around the site and invited us back to their excavation house to look at plans and artifacts from a Parthian-period riverside palace currently being excavated in the contested border zone between Armenia and Turkey.

There are particular rules about how to be a tourist in Armenia and Georgia, and by local standards we were laughable amateurs. This was brought home to us most clearly when we stopped, at about ten o’clock one morning, at Orbelian’s caravanserai, a fourteenth-century fortified staging-post for travelers at the highpoint of the Vardenyats mountain pass. The views from the pass stretch south over grassy slopes and into the green, mountainous valleys of Vayots Dzor, sparsely populated wine country, and we weren’t the only people to have chosen this spot for a scenic breakfast. A small stall was being set up, selling almond pastries and home-made alcohol; we went for the pastries, sagely avoiding the Coca-Cola bottles full of local red. A mini-bus had stopped at the same time as us, however, and it wasn’t long before we were invited to share a far superior breakfast: bread, sujukh, tomatoes, homemade yoghurt, herbs by the handful. Our immensely generous hosts were a party of schoolteachers from the other side of the mountain, on tour round the local monasteries, and they were starting as they meant to go on. They soon began plying us with the contents of their own Coca-Cola bottles, and with glasses of homemade vodka. Prudish outsiders that we were, and ten o’clock as it was, we gawped. Paul busied himself with a flurry of compliments on the yoghurt. Chris just about got off on the excuse of being our driver. Supratik and I were less effective in our excuses: I escaped after a glass of wine and one of vodka, while Supratik, male and thus with more to prove, was poured glass after glass, only about half of which, in a gross violation of all the rules of hospitality, he managed to upend unnoticed into the grass. All in all, a memorable lesson in tourism Armenian-style: immensely hospitable, immensely laid-back, and liberally doused through with

extremely potent moonshine. Perhaps no coincidence that we found ourselves driving off-road through a field of flowers later that afternoon, in search of a road through the mountains which never quite materialized.

Not all of our endeavours ended in success; at Armavir we searched in vain for hours for the well-known Greek inscriptions carved onto the rock-face, which include a hexameter verse referring to Hesiod and his brother Perses and a pastiche of iambic poetry which quotes several lines from Euripides—important evidence for the presence of Hellenic literary culture outside the sphere of direct Greek rule. It was only some weeks after we returned home that we realised that there are two archaeological sites called Armavir and we had been at the wrong one; as we discovered on several occasions, Google Maps is somewhat lacking in local knowledge when it comes to the Caucasus. But trackless wandering also led to unexpected delights: cherry orchards and wild flower pastures, wallowing water buffalo, fields of khachkars (medieval funerary markers), on one occasion what appeared to be a small cannabis plantation, and modern graveyards where vivid photos of the deceased are reproduced at full size on gleaming black granite.

It is impossible to engage with the ancient Caucasus without encountering its more recent history, and the visual reminders of Soviet rule were conspicuous throughout our trip. The elegant concrete modernist excavation house at Artashat had been erected under the Soviets, who were the first to carry out systematic archaeology in the region, while Yerevan is a city on a firm grid plan, where electronically-controlled fountains in the main square send up jets of water to the rhythms of classical music in the evenings. In the centre of the Georgian city of Gori, Stalin’s birthplace, a vast museum of cathedral-like stature, adjoined by a bell-tower, sits at one end of the main square, aligned with a smaller structure, classicising and colonnaded, which houses the small wooden house in which Stalin was born. Inside the museum, following rooms of photos, memorabilia, and gifts from foreign ambassadors, is something like a death cult memorial, centered on Stalin’s death mask. Talking to the owner of our hotel there, we were told that local debate over Stalin’s memory was ongoing, and it was only a few years previously that his imposing statue had been taken down from the town square. But as part of their long history in negotiating the border-zones between super-powers, both



Retaining wall made of cars, Vayots Dzor

of these countries have also developed strong senses of their own identity and exceptionalism. In Yerevan we had far more of a sense that the main direction of view was eastward, with food, architecture, and cultural references looking towards Central Asia, Iran, and the Middle East, and a stark reminder in the museum and memorial to the Armenian Genocide of the remaining deep rifts between the modern state and its nearest neighbors to the west. Georgia, meanwhile, despite Gori’s pocket of (conflicted) Stalin-worship, seems to have a far more conflicted relationship with its Soviet past, with Tbilisi courting the EU even as the northern provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia break away towards Russia.

But however geopolitical boundaries shift in the years to come, it seems likely that the ancient history of these regions will remain crucial terrain for the negotiation of local identity politics. It was a point brought home to us nowhere so well as at the main tourist market in Yerevan, the Vernissage, where the discerning T-shirt connoisseur has a choice between Putin the mega-dude, clad in combat gear, riding on a bear, or the coin portrait of Tigranes the Great, ruler of greater Armenia at its furthest geographic extent, when its territories stretched into modern Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq.



T-shirts from the Vernissage market in Yerevan



Heavily reconstructed first century CE temple at Garni

Exploring Sicily's Material Past: Classical Studies 112

by the Classics Concentrators in the course,
Professor Alex Walthall (visiting from UT Austin), and TF Eliza Gettel (G5)

Over Spring Break, students from CLS-STDY 112 Regional Study: Sicily, an advanced undergraduate seminar in the Department of the Classics, traveled to Sicily for a week-long journey across the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. Along the way, we encountered the material remains of the numerous cultural groups who once occupied Sicily, from the rock-cut chamber tombs of the indigenous Sikel culture to the lavish cathedrals of the Norman kings. Our trip began in Palermo, situated on the island's north coast in the fertile Conca D'Oro, and ended at Syracuse, famed for its prominent Greek temples and theater. Along the way, students gave presentations focusing on historical and archaeological details of each major site. To best capture the excitement and spirit of discovery, here are some of the highlights of the trip, in the words of the students themselves.



Alberto Burri's land art installation in Gibellina, Il Grande Cretto

We want to thank the Department for making this unforgettable experience possible and for allowing us to confirm, as D.H. Lawrence once wrote, that “anyone who has once known this land can never be quite free from the nostalgia for it.” We will always cherish this unique opportunity to experience first-hand Sicily's rich material culture. Thank you also to our trip leaders, Eliza Gettel, Alyson Lynch, Alex Walthall, and Teresa Wu, for being energetic and engaged chaperones.

Days 1 and 2: Palermo by Jennifer Lowell ('19)

In Palermo, I had the privilege of presenting on the Monreale Cathedral, which was built in 1072 CE by the Norman king William II. It was incredible to visit the Cappella Palatina, built by William's grandfather Roger II, on the same day and compare the extraordinary mosaics that cover the walls and ceilings of both buildings. Together, these two cathedrals offer vivid testimony to the reception of Muslim and Byzantine culture and art in the monumental architecture of the Norman kings.

Day 3: Segesta and Motya by Adrian Weickart ('19) and Julie Effron ('20)

At the archaeological site of Segesta, one gets a truly memorable glimpse of cultural interchange in ancient Sicily. Here, I (Adrian) presented on the unfinished Doric temple, constructed sometime in the fifth century BCE, prior to the start of the Athenians' ultimately ruinous Sicilian Expedition. The temple, which is typically “Greek” in form, was built by the indigenous Elymian community at Segesta. Standing before the temple, one hears the eerie howl of the March winds that hasten over the hills from the Tyrrhenian Sea and through the temple's unfluted columns before whipping across the lush vegetation of western Sicily's green slopes. It is an experience for which neither this account nor any book, picture, movie, or classroom could prepare you.

Later that day, we took a small boat to the island of Motya, which lies just off the western coast of Sicily. There, I (Julie) presented on the Phoenician settlement founded around the end of the eighth and beginning of the seventh centuries BCE. The island was developed by the Carthaginians and served as a strategic trading post in the Mediterranean. Although a large portion of the city was destroyed during the attack of Dionysius I in 397 BCE, its remaining ruins provide insight into a colony that witnessed regular cultural and economic exchange between Phoenicians and Greeks.

Day 4: Selinunte and Agrigento by Rufaro Jarati ('19)

Along the south coast, we visited two of the island's largest ancient urban centers, the Greek cities of Selinus and Akragas. Today, Selinunte is an expansive archaeological site, home to the island's most impressive Greek temples, as well as a significant portion of the streets, shops, and fortifications of the ancient city. At Agrigento, we were given a special tour of the recently discovered Hellenistic theater by the archaeologist in charge of the excavations. It was incredible to see such a massive monument only now emerging to see the light of day!

The ancient theater at Taormini, with Mt. Etna

Day 5 and 6: Piazza Armerina and Morgantina by Sheridan Marsh ('20)

Our journey inland brought us to two remarkable sites in the middle of the island. First, we saw the Villa Casale, an expansive Roman villa of the fourth century CE, which boasts some of the most impressive mosaics of the ancient world. The vibrant colors and lively images, like that of a hunt scene filled with wild animals, really brought this ancient household to life! The next day, we visited Morgantina, the archaeological site where Professor Walthall directs excavations. There, we ate panini in the banquet room of a Hellenistic peristyle house and Professor Walthall led us on a walking tour around the site, sharing his knowledge of ancient Morgantina with us.

Days 7 and 8: Syracuse by Joe Valente ('19) and Justin Walthier ('19)

On the approach to our final destination on the trip, we stopped at the Euryalos fortress, which overlooks Syracuse and the Epipolai plateau. From there, we had an excellent vantage point for understanding the amazing innovations in defense and military technology in Hellenistic Sicily. The Euryalos is a rare place where one can see the impact of mathematical theory on military practice, as Archimedes himself oversaw the city's defenses in its final days. Once at Syracuse, we saw the Great Altar and Theater of Hieron, renowned for their size and emblematic of Hieron II's competitive assertion of Hellenistic kingship in the era of Alexander's Successor Kingdoms. The Altar is said to be large enough to host the sacrifice of 450 oxen at one time, though we didn't test that ourselves!





Côte d’Azur
by Paul Johnston (G2)

The amphitheatre at Cimiez (Cemenelum)

The little village of La Turbie is located in the hills directly above Monaco, on the Via Julia Augusta, a Roman road extending through northwest Italy and the south of France, and has two claims to fame: it was the location of Grace Kelly’s fatal car crash in 1982, and two millennia earlier was the site chosen for an imposing monument, the Tropaeum Alpium, commemorating the emperor Augustus’ conquest of the Alpine tribes. Destroyed in the eighteenth century in the course of a war between France and Savoy, and looted for building materials in the years after, the Tropaeum Alpium was extensively, but only partially, rebuilt in the twentieth century with funding from Edward Tuck, an expatriate American. Further along the Via Julia Augusta was a city called Cemenelum, the capital of the Roman province of Alpes Maritimae, now a neighborhood of Nice called Cimiez, in the hills above the city proper. Today the remains of a bath complex and an amphitheater are preserved from antiquity.

Of course, the French Riviera is now much better known for reasons other than its classical heritage: its art museums and associations with some of the great figures of twentieth-century art, architecture, and literature, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Jean Cocteau, Le Corbusier, and Katherine Mansfield; its glamorous seaside towns and cities which attract the yachts of rich and famous, especially to summertime events like the Cannes Film Festival and the Monaco Grand Prix; and its charming hilltop villages with spectacular views out to the sea.

Thanks to the generosity of the Segal Fund, I was lucky enough to spend three weeks last summer in this part of the world. Based in Nice, my mornings were occupied by French lessons, and in the afternoons I was able to take trains and buses all around the region and to practice my French in the real world.



Jean Cocteau’s Chapelle Saint-Pierre in Villefranche-sur-Mer



The Tropaeum Alpeum of Augustus in La Turbie, in its partially reconstructed state

Classics Club Certamen

by Joseph Valente ('19)



Professor Richard Thomas giving the keynote address at the tournament

On March 24, 2018, the Classics Club held the 9th Annual Harvard Certamen. Over four hundred students from schools across the country traveled to Harvard to compete. Twenty-four schools were represented this year, completely filling registration capacity for the second consecutive year. These students—predominantly from high school, though some middle-schoolers joined as well—answered trivia questions that tested knowledge of Roman and Greek history, culture, and language proficiency. Students impressed moderators and peers alike with near simultaneous translations, mastery of tricky grammatical concepts, and quick recall of even the most obscure myths. The keynote address that began the event was kindly given by Professor Richard Thomas, speaking on his new book *Why Bob Dylan Matters* and the classical connections modern musicians and poets like Dylan draw on. Students and faculty members alike loved Professor Thomas’ lecture, with many commenting that such modern connections make the study of the Classics much more exciting for young students.

Following the address, everyone made their way to some thirty classrooms in Sever Hall and took up buzzers to begin the three preliminary rounds. Every team competed against

two different teams during each round. The end of these rounds signaled the beginning of lunch and a well-earned break for all the competitors. Organizers calculated scores during the break and teams returned after lunch to find out whether they had made the semifinals. Nine teams at each level moved on. The top three teams at each level were determined and then advanced to the final rounds in Sever Hall, in front of an eager and lively audience.

Competition in the final rounds was intense, but when all was said and done, the victors were Boston Latin School, Brookfield Academy, and Boston Latin School at the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, respectively. The Classics Club congratulates all the students who participated and extends a warm thanks to all of the volunteers, without whose help the Certamen could not have taken place. In particular, the club is grateful to Professor Richard Thomas, Professor Naomi Weiss (club faculty adviser), Teresa Wu, and Alyson Lynch. The 10th Annual Certamen is on schedule for the end of March 2019, and the Club looks forward to welcoming everyone back to Harvard at that time!

For questions and a list of schools participating, see the Classics Club website: <http://harvardclassicsclub.weebly.com/>.



by Benjamin Roy ('19)

On April 29, 2018, Sophocles' *Antigone* was performed in the Harvard Stadium before roughly 4,500 determined theater-goers as the culminating event of the ARTS FIRST weekend on campus. This performance was the first time in 35 years that any play had been performed in the Harvard Stadium, in addition to being the best-attended event of classical theater at Harvard in over a century. Roughly one year of work culminated in this production, which included a new translation of the ancient drama, composed during the fall and winter of 2017 by members of the Harvard Classics Club, most notably Bliss Perry ('21) and a Classics Concentrator, Alejandro Quintana ('20), collaboration with the Theater Director, Mitchell Polonsky ('19), and the Composer and Music Director, Mateo Lincoln ('19), who composed an original theatrical score for the show and conducted the orchestra and choir during the performance. The effort was spearheaded by Ben Roy ('20), a Classics Concentrator and Vice President of the Harvard Classics Club, who was the project leader, lead translator, and producer for the show.

The Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of the Classics, Professor Naomi Weiss, advised the production from its incipience. In addition to a generous donation from the Department, a significant amount of funding was contributed by the Office for the Arts at Harvard and the ARTS FIRST Festival, the Harvard Undergraduate Council, and the Center for Hellenic Studies, without which this event would not have been possible. In addition, two Harvard alumnae and former Classics Concentrators, Therese Sellers ('83) and Lucy Bell Jarka-Sellers ('86), and a Harvard alumnus, Carl Sprague ('84), who all helped to put on a production of Euripides' *Bacchae* in 1983, provided plentiful support, advice, and publicity for the production, and a huge debt is owed to them for inspiring this most recent foray into Greek theater at the Harvard Stadium. Finally, the many local arts societies, businesses, and community members, especially the Consul General of Greece in Boston, Mr. Stratos Efthymiou, deserve enormous gratitude for their tireless enthusiasm and support, and for spreading their enthusiasm to so many people.

Graduate Student Lectures and Publications

Eliza Gettel (G5)

- “Culture and Classics: Edward Burnett Tylor and Romanization.” *Brill’s Companion to Classics and Early Anthropology*. E. Varto (ed.). Brill (2018).
- “Examples of Roman Self-Presentation.” Review of *Self-Presentation and Identity in the Roman World* edited by A. Gavrielatos. *The Classical Review* 68.1 (2018).
- “Failure of Federalism? The imperial afterlife of the *koinon* in Roman Achaia.” Paper delivered at the ‘Federalism in Antiquity and Today: A continuing story?’ conference at The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom, September 2017.
- “How ‘common’? *Koinon* politics in imperial Achaia.” Paper delivered as part of the “Μέλη Lecture Series,” École Française d’Athènes, Athens, Greece, December 2017.

Paul Johnston (G2)

- “The Women of Thebes as Aeschylean Erinyes: Allusion and Metatheatre in the First Messenger Speech of Euripides’ *Bacchae*.” Paper presented at Greek Drama V, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, July 2017.
- “Rethinking *Medea* and the *Deus ex Machina*.” Forthcoming in *Classical Philology*.

Julia Judge (G3)

- “Ancient Graffiti on Late Roman and Medieval Coins: New Approaches.” Paper presented in a panel sponsored by the Harvard Medieval History Workshop at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2018.

Keating McKeon (G6)

- “‘Reports of My Death...’: Aesch. *Ag.* 926–7 and the Tragic Soundscape.” Paper presented as part of the CorHaLi Conference at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Nafplio, Greece, June 2017.

Gregory Mellen (G7)

- “Isocrates Takes On the Orators: Political Change and the Perils of Long Life.” Invited talk at the Department of Classics, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT, March 2018.
- “Clarity and Force: Persuasive Style in Isocrates and Demosthenes.” Guest lecture at the Department of Classics, University of Vermont, Burlington, MA, March 2018.
- “When Good Men Do Nothing: An Emendation in Tacitus *Historiae* 1.38.” Forthcoming in *Classical Quarterly*.
- “*Num Delenda Est Karthago?* Metrical Wordplay and the Text of Horace *Odes* 4.8.” Forthcoming in *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 111.

Alexandra Schultz (G4)

- “The Alexandrian Mouseion in the Third Century and the Anatomy of an Institution.” Paper presented in a panel entitled “Cultures of Learning” at the Harvard-Princeton Graduate Conference in Early Modern History, Cambridge, MA, February 2018.

Alexander Schwennicke (G2)

- “Teaching without Text: Didaxis and Media in Horace *Serm.* 2.3.” Paper presented in a panel entitled “Creating Audiences in Didactic Poetry” at the Society for Classical Studies, Boston, MA, January 2018.
- “The *Carcer* Roman Declamation: Formation and Function of a Topos.” Forthcoming in *American Journal of Philology* 139.3, September 2018.

Anthony Shannon (G7)

- “Local Memory and Urban Development: A View from the Roman Maghrib.” Paper delivered at the Institut für Geschichtswissenschaften, Humboldt Universität, Berlin, Germany, February 2017.
- “Displaying Local Memory in the Cities of the Roman Maghrib.” Paper delivered at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik, Munich, Germany, March 2017.
- “Sufetes and their Scribbles: Negotiating Global and Local Memory in Roman Lepcis Magna.” Paper delivered at the Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (TRAC) 2018, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom, April 2018.
- “Glory Be To (Insert Name Here): Civic Memory, Political Discourse and Municipal Ruler Cult in Hellenistic Teos.” In E. Mortensen and B. Poulsen, eds. *Cityscapes & Monuments of Western Asia Minor: Identities & Memories*, 29–38. Oxford: Oxbow, 2017.

Katherine van Schaik (G7)

- “Coping with Clinical Uncertainty: Disease Classification Systems from the Greco-Roman World.” Paper delivered at the MD PhD Grand Rounds, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA, April 2018.
- “Dirty Words and Dusty Bones: Rebranding Retrospective Diagnosis.” Paper delivered at the Workshop on Retrospective Diagnosis and the Health of Past Populations, Laval University, Quebec City, Canada, January 2018.
- “Teaching Clinical Judgment: Methodist and Galenic Approaches.” Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Classical Studies, Boston, MA, January 2018.
- “Teaching Medical Decision Making in the Ancient World.” Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the History of Science Society, Toronto, Canada, November 2017.
- “‘Decision is Difficult’ (ἡ δὲ κρίσις χαλεπή): Medical Decision Making in the Hippocratic Corpus.” Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, New York, NY, October 2017.
- “Towards a New(-ish) Taxonomy of Disease.” Paper delivered at the Disease and the Ancient World Symposium, Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, September 2017.
- With R. Eisenberg, J. Bekvalac, and F. Rühli. “Evaluating the Relationship between Lesion Burden and Aging Among the Skeletons of an 18th–19th Century London Cemetery Using Osteological and Radiological Analysis.” *PLoS ONE* 13.4 (2018): e0196448.
- “The Focused History and Physical - circa 100 BC.” *Academic Emergency Medicine* 25 (2018): 474–475.
- With R. Eisenberg, J. Bekvalac, and F. Rühli. “The Radiologist in the Crypt: Past Burden of Disease and its Modern Relevance.” *Academic Radiology* 24 (2017): 1305–131.
- “The Currency of Medicine: Healing Imagery on the Coins of Trikkia, Kos, Epidauros, and Pergamon.” In *Proceedings of the XV International Numismatic Congress*, ed. Maria Caccamo Caltabiano, 535–539. Rome: Arbor Sapientiae, 2017.
- With Arnold-Biucchi, C. “The Meaning of the Crab on Ancient Greek Coins and its Relation to Ancient Medicine: A New Approach.” In *Proceedings of the XV International Numismatic Congress*, ed. Maria Caccamo Caltabiano, 313–318. Rome: Arbor Sapientiae, 2017.

VALETE!



Charles Bartlett

As I think back on my six years at Harvard, I can scarcely believe my good fortune. Since walking into Boylston Hall, I have met with an astonishing number of professional opportunities that have led to challenging and rewarding work, and introduced me to people whom I will never forget. I am truly grateful that I could study questions beyond the traditional purview of the Classics, and what successes I've had are due in very large part to the individuals who encouraged this explorative approach. I have amassed more debts to mentors and friends than I could hope to outline here, but I take comfort in the knowledge that the strength of these relationships will afford years to repay old debts and to run up new ones. During this academic year I have been a postdoctoral fellow in the History Department at Duke University, and I will hold another postdoctoral position in the same department next year. As I embark on these and other edifying endeavors, I'm sure that I will have no trouble finding reasons to keep coming back to Boylston Hall.

Gregory Mellen

Seven years is a long time; seven years of one's twenties is also a very intense time. I leave with less hair on my head than when I came, but a lot more Greek and Latin and projects and plans inside of it, and many grateful memories of lessons learned, conversations shared, and experiences tackled together with so many wonderful friends, colleagues, and teachers. It is hard to imagine a richer or more stimulating place than the Department of the Classics. The future may be uncertain, but I am deeply thankful that I spent part of my life among such great scholars and such good people—I look forward to hearing about all your ongoing projects and seeing you all soon!



Monica Park

These years as part of the Harvard community have been intellectually and personally formative. I've been incredibly fortunate to count such gifted mentors, teachers, and peers as friends—not all debts can be fully repaid. As I say my goodbyes, I remember especially fondly and gratefully the many conversations that included but also ranged far beyond Classics; from these, I've learned so much. What I have learned here has also helped to prepare me for the next phase—an assistant professorship in the Program of Classical and Mediterranean Studies at Vanderbilt. Thank you to all, and if you find yourself in Nashville in the near future, please drop me a line!



PHD RECIPIENTS

Marco Romani Mistretta

There is so much life behind that deceptively simple triplet of letters, PhD. There are days and nights of learning, teaching, and writing. There is an inspiring community of friends and colleagues. There are some of the coldest winters that a Mediterranean-bred wanderer could possibly (fail to) imagine. Much to my own astonishment, there is also a now complete dissertation on the idea of invention and discovery in Greco-Roman antiquity. After graduating, I will be moving to New York City to start working at the Paideia Institute, where my duties will include managing a nationwide outreach program as well as taking part in the administration of student trips to (you guessed it) the Mediterranean. Leaving with advance nostalgia for my time at Harvard Classics and those who made it an unforgettable journey, I will remain immensely grateful to the Department for uncountable years to come.



David Ungvary

Asked to reflect on my seven years as a member of Harvard Classics, I can think only of the people with whom I shared them. I am deeply grateful to my colleagues, who gave selflessly of themselves as loyal comrades; to my teachers and mentors, from whose brilliant guidance I consistently profited; and to Teresa and Alyson, who made the going smooth with their support. I will miss this community very much. Happily, there is much to look forward to. This fall I am off to the Hudson Valley where I will take up a position as Assistant Professor of Classics at Bard College. I hope to make return visits often and soon.



Katherine van Schaik

I've always loved the terms *Doktormutter* and *Doktorvater*, especially in the context of Classics, because they capture the supportive, formative, and enduring power of our teachers. The field is beautifully sensitive to the ongoing dialogue between teacher and student, even and especially when that dialogue happens between someone who lived 2,000 years ago, and students sitting around a table on the second floor of Boylston Hall. Thank you to my *Doktormütter* and *Doktorväter* in the Department, and to all the members of our Boylston family, who have encouraged me to contribute to this dialogue and taught me how to do so. Your commitment, brilliance, and warmth are the model to which I will always aspire. Happily, I won't be far away: I'll be a resident in diagnostic radiology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center here in Boston, continuing to ponder medical decision making in contexts ancient and modern as I work to turn the dissertation into a book.



EXPERIENTIA TRANSFIGURATIVA

Praeses Faust praestantissima, decani dignissimi, professores probissimi, familiae fidis-simae, discipuli doctissimi: salvete omnes. Magno mihi honori est apud vos Tercentenario in Theatro haec verba facere, ut promotionem resque gestas cohortis anni bismillesimi decimi octavi Universitatis Harvardianae concelebremus. De libro quodam vobis hodie loquor, de libro qui multos nostrum admodum adulescentes fascinavit, de libro egregio cuius scriptor, abhinc annos decem, hoc ipso die, hoc eodem in theatro orationem habuit. Loquor profecto de Harrio illo Pottero.

Universitatem Harvardianam enim plerique vestrum sine dubio iam notavisti haud multum distare a Schola Artium Magicarum et Fascinationis, Porciverrucis. Nonne mirati sumus tamquam Harrius cum litteras non ululis vectas sed, mirabile dictu, alis epistulae electronicae acceperemus? Nonne in Aedificio Scientiae, velut in Carceribus, potiones decoquentes ad multam noctem lucubravimus? Nonne in scriniis Anguli Interdicti (id est, Bibliotheca Lamont) usque ad lucem saepissime vigilavimus? Ludum Scopafollem maxima cum alacritate lusimus, et intra muros et, viribus nullo modo deficientibus, in certaminibus acriter pugnatis contra Scholam-Quam-Non-Fas-Est-Nominare.

Multa et mira praeterea didicimus. Discipuli Porciverrucenses se magicis in artibus—incantationibus et devotionibus—exercitati sunt. Nos autem capita complevimus disciplinis artium liberalium et scientiarum—litteris, physica, politica, biologia. Artem quasi magicam quoque didicimus, quo genere magiae utuntur et discipuli et professores Porciverrucenses. Haec est scilicet Transfiguratio, ars aliquid in aliud mutandi. Praeceptis freti recentibus, magicis tamquam virgis, possumus cellulas in textus permutare ac linguam Anglicam in linguam Pythonicam vertere, serpisermocinantes sicut Harrius ipse. Universitatem etiam ipsam mutavimus discipuli, difficillima rogandi amore et industria nostra. Sua sponte quoque aliquando mutata est, velut Scalae Variae apud Porciverrucas: in perpetuum ave atque vale, Taberna Specularis!

Maxime miranda est transfiguratio quae nos affecit. Mutatae sunt formae non solum corporum nostrum sed etiam animorum. Aquilones nos corroboraverunt. Propter vitam scholasticam, mores a pristino statu iam differunt: tantummodo Temporimutatoribus usi somnum, quo caruimus, recipere possimus. Verbis tandem, non virgis, sententias nostras commutaverunt dialogi cum professoribus et sermones cum collegiis. Compertum habent Harrius, Ronaldus, Hermioneque fieri nos posse doctiores tam in Aula Magna—id est, Annenberg—cum amicis colloquendo quam in studiis versando! Ut oraculo—decanum Khurana dico—praedictum est, apud hanc universitatem studere re vera est “Experientia Transformativa.”

Alumni tandem facti sumus. Quamcumque domum Petasus Dilectens Die Domiciliorum nobis constituit, quaecumque animalia in vestibus gerimus—leones, pisces, vel apros—tota Universitas domus nostra fuit et erit. Ubicumque vel scopis vel autoraedis posthac ibimus, portae huius campi semper patebunt. Ut dixit scriptor ipsa, “vos domum advenientes semper accipient Porciverrucaes.” Iam valet, condiscipuli mei, et magiam nostram efficiamus!

Phoebe Lakin '18

A TRANSFIGURATIVE EXPERIENCE

Preeminent President Faust, distinguished deans, peerless professors, faithful families, and sagacious students: greetings to you all. I am honored to address you in Tercentenary Theater, to celebrate the graduation and achievements of the Harvard Class of 2018. Today I speak to you about a book, a book that brought many of us under its spell when we were very young, a most excellent book whose author made a speech in this very theater ten years ago today. I speak, of course, about Harry Potter.

Harvard University, as many of you have no doubt already observed, is not so different from the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Were we not just as astounded as Harry when we received our acceptance letters, delivered not by owl but—incredibly—upon the wings of email? Have we not spent our nights brewing potions in the Science Center, as though in the Dungeons? Did we not often greet the dawn among the bookshelves of the Restricted Section—that is to say, Lamont Library? We have played Quidditch with the greatest zeal, both at Intramurals and, no less valiantly, in fiercely-fought battles against the School-That-Must-Not-Be-Named.

Moreover, we have learned many and wondrous things. The students at Hogwarts honed spells and curses, the magical arts. We too have filled our heads, with the subjects of a liberal arts curriculum: literature, physics, government, biology. We have also learned magic at Harvard, a kind of magic practiced by the students and professors at Hogwarts. This is Transfiguration, the art of turning one thing into something else. Relying on our newfound knowledge, as if upon magic wands, we can transform cells into tissues and translate English into Python, speaking to snakes, as did Harry himself. We have even transfigured Harvard during our time as students here, through our passion for asking difficult questions and our hard work. Sometimes Harvard has also changed of its own accord, like the Shifting Staircases at Hogwarts: hail and farewell, Greenhouse Café!

Most magical is the transfiguration that has been worked upon us. The forms both of our bodies and of our minds have changed. The northeastern winds have toughened us, and the student life we led has altered our customs: only by using Time-Turners could we ever catch up on our lost sleep. Most of all, through the power of words, rather than spells, serious discussions with professors and conversations with peers have transformed our opinions. As Harry, Ron, and Hermione know well, we can learn as much by speaking with our friends in the Great Hall—Annenberg, that is—as by spending hours on our studies! As foretold by the prophecies (I mean, Dean Khurana), it has truly been a Transformative Experience to study at Harvard.

And at last we have transformed into alumni. Whatever house the Sorting Hat assigned to us on Housing Day, whatever animals we sport on our robes—lions, fish, or boars—this University has been, and will be, our home. Wherever we go next, by broomstick or by automobile, the gates of the Yard will always be open for us. As the author herself once said, “Hogwarts will always be there to welcome you home.” Now farewell, my classmates, and let us go and work our magic!

Phoebe Lakin '18



CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Please email any news or announcements to

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or mail them to

Nota Bene

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