



RES CLASSICAE

THE UMBC ANCIENT STUDIES DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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FALL 2019

Editor: Melissa Bailey Kutner

Executive Editor: David Rosenbloom

FROM THE CHAIR

David Rosenbloom

In December 2019, the Ancient Studies Department welcomed a new Administrative Assistant, Emily Hubbard, to the team. Emily majored in ancient Greek and History at Colgate University before earning her M.A. at UMBC in Public History. We feel fortunate to have Emily in the Department and look forward to working with her for many years to come. At the same time, we wish Domonique Pitts, who was the Ancient Studies Administrative Assistant from 2013-2019, all the best in her new role in the Provost's Office.

Building upon our summer excursion to the Shakespeare Theatre's production of Ellen McLaughlin's *Oresteia* at the Harman Center for the Arts, the Fall semester was packed with events in the department. This year's Ancient Studies Week (Oct. 7-11) was well attended and of high quality. The week began with a lecture by Dr. Evi Margaritis, Assistant Professor at the Cyprus Institute and Junior Fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies, "Arboriculture in the Bronze-Age Aegean," a wide-ranging introduction to the archaeobotanical study of the bronze-age Aegean. The following day, we read Vergil's *Aeneid* in front of the Performing Arts and Humanities Building in unseasonably cool (but dry) conditions. On the evening of Wednesday, October 9, we performed another side-splitting reading of an Aristophanic comedy, this time of the *Wasps*. The following afternoon, Dr. Jennifer Trimble of Stanford University delivered the Ancient Studies Week Keynote Lecture on "The Visual Workings of Roman Slave Sales," an accessible and rigorous analysis of the evidence for slave sales in Roman culture. Finally, the Department displayed artifacts from the Spiro Collection on Main Street in the Commons on Friday, October 11. The Council of Majors under the presidency of Matthew Haworth organized three events in the Fall 2019 semester: "*Voces Magicae*," a lecture and demonstration of Ancient Magic by Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis, a movie night featuring *Gladiator* with an introduction by Dr. Melissa Bailey Kutner, and a games night, *alea iacta est*, with an ancient theme: role-playing based upon Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.



Chris Zale Reads from the Aeneid

As always, I offer a special note of thanks to those who donated to the Department in 2019. Your generosity has enabled us to cap the cost of this year's spring-break trip to Italy at \$3,000 and to offer scholarships to qualified students that pay for most of the students' travel costs and for the tuition and fees of the associated Winter course. In the summer of 2019, we sent students to Dhiban, Jordan and to Kokkino, Greece. You can read about their experiences along with those of their mentors, Dr. Michael Lane and Dr. Melissa Bailey Kutner, in this issue.

I wish everyone in the Ancient Studies community a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2020.

BACK TO JORDAN

Melissa Bailey Kutner



Students and a few supervisors on a tour of Madaba

During the summer of 2019, I returned to Dhiban, Jordan, with three UMBC students (Judy Hoffman, Connor Cataldo, and Luke Bieber), two colleagues, and about 20 other undergraduates and graduate student supervisors from the United States and England to excavate a Byzantine village. The project included my co-directors Dr. Bruce Routledge of the University of Liverpool and Dr. Katherine Adelsberger of Knox College.

As readers of the Fall 2017 *Res Classicae* may remember, the Dhiban Excavation and Development Project (DEDP) is an ongoing investigation of long-term use of the site, a *tell* (hill built up of layers of archaeological occupation) in north-central Jordan with strata dating from the Iron Age (7th century BCE) through the Mamluk period (15th century CE). Dhiban is on a dry plateau in a marginal, semi-desert region, and

over the millennia habitation of the *tell* waxed and waned depending on a variety of pressures both political and environmental. This summer, my colleague Dr. Routledge excavated a series of Mamluk houses to provide information about daily life and the structure of the local economy in the medieval period. In several areas, levels below the floors of the houses were reached, and occupation levels dating to earlier periods likely lie further down. I continued to excavate a large building that burned and collapsed in the late Byzantine period (at the very end of the 6th century CE), thus preserving rich botanical remains, numerous small finds, and hundreds of storage jars, jugs, cups, and other ceramics smashed in situ (and occasionally preserved whole).

The overall focus of the Byzantine building's investigation remains the local economy, especially how it responded to imperial demands and related to the network of nearby towns and pilgrimage sites (Mount Nebo, the traditional site of Moses's death and a popular pilgrimage site both in the Byzantine period and today, is relatively close). Analysis of botanical remains so far has revealed a heavy concentration on grapes (both whole and processed into wine), wheat, and peas, but a surprising absence of olives. Numerous finds of pottery, coins, and small artifacts such as jewelry and tools will add to this picture, and the analysis of such material will dominate the next few years.

The building itself continues to reveal a complicated stratigraphy. The main phase of collapse was followed by at least two phases of reuse, which contain distinctive types of pottery. Small excavations conducted this year to clarify the collapse itself may have revealed an earlier phase of the building, predating the collapse period. Despite this complexity and some remaining questions, we did reach the floor of the main building this year, and so we have a good grasp of this main phase and subsequent rebuilding.

Students learned a wide range of skills. Some of these, from the more expected (excavation and documenting of finds) to the less so (swiftly killing scorpions), are detailed by Judy Hoffman in this issue of *Res Classicae*. Students proved to be eager, quick learners, as well as kind roommates to each other, supportive and adaptable in the face of setbacks (for



Dig kitten: a montage



Obligatory Petra Treasury Shot

example, a leak that deprived one house of bathing—though not drinking—water for a couple of days). Daily life in Madaba was enlivened for a while by a kitten, which was found crying and dying of thirst and starvation outside one of our windows. We rescued the kitten and, upon discovering that it was not feral, tried to think of a long-term solution. I ended up driving it to one of the few animal refuges/shelters in Jordan, located outside Amman. Hopefully, it has found a home by now!

Our team once again stayed in the nearby city of Madaba, which in addition to its own ancient sites (including several Byzantine churches with extraordinary mosaics) had restaurants, coffee houses, and souvenir shops. On the weekends, we took field trips to sites around Jordan such as Petra, the Roman sites of Gerasa and Macherus (the site of a palace of Herod the Great), the early Islamic desert castles, medieval castles Kerak and Ajlun, and the Wadi Dana Nature Preserve. Students hiked from early morning to late afternoon at Petra and gazed at the stars at Wadi Dana. They were also startled by the nighttime roving of a jackal, which stole two pairs of shoes (found later at some distance from the tents).

Given the enormous amount of material that has emerged from the Byzantine building, and the relatively good stopping place we have reached, the next few years will likely focus on study seasons (trips to Jordan to process artifacts, rather than to excavate) and preliminary publications. UMBC students can still be involved, especially if they would like to study artifacts as part of an undergraduate research project, and I hope some of them will!

PROOF OF CONCEPT: UMBC ARCHAEOLOGY IN GREECE, SUMMER 2019

Michael Lane

Once again, an eager team of UMBC undergraduates and I returned to Greece in the summer of 2019 to finish analyses in the laboratories of the Archaeological Museum of Thebes and to accomplish some further fieldwork, including drone photography and regional soil survey. We were winding down the second phase of research into the Mycenaean drainage and irrigation system in the Kopaic Basin of central mainland Greece (ca. 1700–1200 BCE), the Mycenaean Northeast Kopais (MYNEKO) project, before I apply a permit to expand excavations for several more years. Despite equipment failures, together we proved a number of different things this summer, although not all were quite what we had expected.

Connor and Chris proved that they are stronger than steel and that steel is nothing to the Greek countryside. They returned one hot afternoon sunburnt and scratched, covered in dirt and ash, bearing the soil auger, bent and twisted by determined effort and lacerated by Pleistocene gravels. The representatives of the company that made it—based in rugged country on the Snake River in Power County, Idaho—remain incredulous. Only carefully played persuasion rendered grudging replacement of parts. Idaho, apparently, has nothing on Greece when it comes to an environment hostile to tools.



Students at work in the lab at the Archaeological Museum of Thebes



Chris (R) and Connor (L) with the scarred soil augur

We proved that the tech support agents for the drone's malfunctioning camera were friendly and inquisitive but curiously secretive and covert about their location. One told me he couldn't tell me where he was. Another told me I could ship parts for replacement to an address in the Netherlands, should I need to. A search on the Hungarian version of the company's website, more transparent than the others, suggested they were in Frankfurt am Main, while caller ID indicated they were in Bad Neustadt an der Saale, 100 kilometers east of there. Serious spookiness or just fun and games?

We proved that we could complete a database of 100s of shards of diagnostic pottery—involving over 50 categories of measurement and description and hours of risking premature presbyopia from staring through jeweler's loupes—all the while outlining the songs and playlist for our soon-to-be death metal band. Its name will be Blowtorch Goat's Head. It's a long story.

Above all, we proved we could get serious work in the field and lab done and have fun at the same time. We have provided the Greek Institute of Geology and Mineral Exploration with important data on soil formation on transects between mountain ridges and alluvial valleys in the region, laid out traverses for future flora and fauna surveys, and completed one of the most detailed databases of Mycenaean decorated pottery for an excavation program of any size in the region, soon to be shared on the website <https://myneko.umbc.edu>. Meanwhile, consultants have forwarded results of analyses, confirming not only the unexpected early dates of Bronze Age drainage and settlement of this part of the Basin (ca. 1700 BCE) but also the contemporaneous presence of "large ruminants" (or "cows" to the rest of us). We have cows. Cows mean pasture. Pasture means drainage.

I plan to go back for a month in the summer of 2020, so more students can join in the work and fun of the "we." With planning and a little luck, I'll have a permit for expanded excavations and a multi-institutional field school starting in the summer of 2021. Stand by for details!

DUST AND DREAMS COME TRUE

Judy Hoffman



On the bus to site

I had the opportunity to spend five weeks in Jordan this summer for an archaeological field school. It was a life-changing trip that I will never forget. From bouncing around in a dusty van on our way to the site every day to stargazing in Wadi Dana, the trip was brimful of incredible memories. I had the chance to do a multitude of tasks involved in the excavation process. We were taught how to trowel properly, use a total station, how to draw the site, process pottery, fill out paperwork, and even use a Munsell chart—which was a skill I never thought I'd use outside of ARCH 100.

Along with learning how to excavate came many challenges, such as: the extreme heat, sharing two showers between 16 girls, and the heart-stopping moment when a scorpion just pops out of the ground right in front of you (although this did teach me a new skill as well: how to quickly dispose of a giant, angry scorpion). Yet, despite

the glaring heat and hostile creepy crawlies, I can honestly say that I loved every minute on site. I learned to love the early mornings when we all stumbled around bleary-eyed, trying to be the first one to the tent on site to grab the best dustpans and brushes before the others got to them.

I loved the friendships we formed with one another and all of the inside jokes. For example, we called the prism that was used with the total station the “crystal staff,” and we pushed our luck with the supervisors with our endless “Holes” references. I walked away from this field school with so many new and dear friends, friends that I bonded with during lab sessions where we scrubbed pottery, or during flotation, elbow deep in muddy water.

Aside from the things we learned on site, we also had the chance to go on a plethora of field trips. One of my favorite places, Mukawir—supposedly the location of John the Baptist’s beheading—was also home to a killer view that could only be seen after a killer hike. We also got to spend a night in a Bedouin camp in Wadi Dana. I can honestly say that this place took my breath away. I felt as if I were on a different planet. Of course, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention one of the driving forces for my wanting to attend this field school: Petra. I was given a *National Geographic* magazine with Petra on the cover when I was nine years old; since that day it was my dream to see it in person. When I stepped out of the narrow sandstone canyon and caught my first glimpse of the famed Treasury building, I couldn’t move. I was frozen with an overwhelming feeling of joy. I can honestly say I was moved to tears. Even with our tight schedule, I managed to see most of the sites, and even though I got heat stroke on the walk back out and almost passed out, I would do it again in a heartbeat.



Wadi Dana

This trip exceeded every expectation I had. I learned so much, not just about archaeology, but about myself, Jordanian culture, and so much more. I learned my way around our home base town of Madaba, I conversed with the workers on our site in Dhiban (whom we lovingly termed the Dhiban boys) in my broken Arabic, and them in their broken English. We shared jokes, dreams, and friendships. It was the best five weeks of my life.

A SEASON OF STUDY

Christopher Zale

I spent June of 2019 in Greece as a part of Dr. Michael Lane’s MYNEKO project. We did a combination of field survey and museum work, though we spent more time in the museum than we did in the field. Out in the field, we spent two days traversing the landscape on foot, laying in points for future survey. The first day in the field saw all five of us on traverse, and the second saw three people starting the task of taking soil cores with our augur while Dr. Lane and I went off on the second traverse and laid in the first three points. Connor Cataldo and I then spent a full day out in the field with the augur, taking soil cores at the rest of the points from traverse one. We learned, at similar points of the day, that our augur wasn’t made of the best materials and that the valley we were surveying had a fairly consistent layer of gravel starting .60 m down. Working in the museum, we spent large chunks of time identifying potsherds and inputting them into Dr. Lane’s database, and I learned how to produce technical illustrations of complete and partial artifacts.

On the weekends, all five of us (Luke Bieber, Connor Cataldo, Ashley Williams, Dr. Lane, and me) would go on field trips to various sites around Greece. We spent the first weekend in the Peloponnese, where we visited Mycenae and Tiryns, then spent the rest of the day in Nafplio. I was left “in charge,” as I was the only person in the group besides Dr. Lane who had been to the city before. We went to Delphi the next weekend, which, along with Tiryns, has always been one of my favorite sites. We stopped in Arachova for a while, visiting the folk history museum and climbing the clock tower. We climbed Parnassos on the last weekend that we were together, which took an entire Sunday. The Saturday of that weekend, however, we drove to Euboea to visit Lefkandi, which has been a site on my bucket list since I started at UMBC, as it’s come up in just about every archaeology class I’ve taken. We spent the rest of that Saturday exploring Eretria.

I think there’s something to be said, as a student, about the experience of seeing sites in person after hearing about them in lectures. I thought I was able to imagine the scale of the sites we visited from hearing about them, but stepping on site for the first time proved me wrong—entirely, indisputably wrong. Personally, I felt a sense of reverence and wonder every time I stepped onto a site. Overall, I think this trip was a brilliant point in my undergraduate career, and I wouldn’t

trade the memories and experiences I've had for anything. It also, in a very real way, proved to me that I've made the best possible choice in choosing to pursue a career in archaeology.

FROM THALASSOCRACY TO THEOCRACY ON RHODES, AND WHAT HAPPENED IN-BETWEEN

Connor Cataldo

Rhodes is an island with a storied history: from its famous Colossus of Rhodes—one of the seven wonders of the ancient world—to the long occupation by crusading Frenchman, then the Ottomans, and its final (and odd) seizure by the Italians in the 20th century. But you may notice, as I did, that this history seems to be missing a sizeable chunk of time. A time that happens to be at the heart of our department, the intersection of the Greek and Roman worlds. This question—why was



The Akropolis of Lindos

Roman Rhodes barely mentioned by historians, when the island had played such an important Hellenistic role?—was begging to be answered. I decided that I would try to answer it, and I applied for an Undergraduate Research Award (URA) with the goal of assessing the role of Rhodes in the Roman Empire. My method would be simple: after conducting background research, I would travel to Rhodes and, using the archaeological research skills I have developed, analyze the finds from digs on the island and the artifacts in museums to tell the story of Roman Rhodes. I was armed with all of the tools that I would need, and I was ready to step into the shoes of a budding anthropologist and archaeologist.

Before my trip to Europe, I looked at published articles and at the history of the trade routes through the area of Rhodes dating back to the Bronze Age, as evidenced by shipwrecks that dot the southern coast of

Turkey. I also examined the oceanographic data to try and understand currents and sailing patterns. Once I began traveling, I took two detours before going to Rhodes: I worked with Dr. Lane on his MYNEKO project, and with Dr. Kutner on her site in Dhiban. But finally, I arrived! I was ready to examine all of the finds in the islands' dozen or so museums.

Then the strangest thing happened. Rhodes City, the center of a major Hellenistic power and the power base for the Knights Hospitaller for over two hundred years, was devoid of anything Roman at all. It was almost as if the Romans were never there. At first, I was convinced that the problem was with me, that I had simply missed something. But the deeper I dug, the more I realized that I was encountering something my classroom education hadn't trained me for. I found myself face to face with an incomplete archeological record and the unpublished data and work of other archeologists. After the initial denial of this fact (I looked through 21 years of dig reports and found no publications on the Roman period, even on sites where there must have been Roman occupation), it made me all the more intent on telling the story of the Roman people on the island of Rhodes. To that end, I have started to research the broader Roman world in an attempt to contextualize Rhodes. I have transitioned away from looking for reports specifically about the Romans on the island to larger works on trade networks, shipping, and similar topics that include Rhodes as part of a greater study. Using these studies, I will be able to form a picture by bringing together information from multiple sources.

This is a story of an island that has been in the spotlight for most of its history, that has a huge dark spot in the story of its people, and with the support of the department I hope to be able to shine a small light on the subject. Or at the very least show just how much there is that we don't know, which is the first step to further discovery. Lux et Veritas, or so the saying goes.

SPRING 2020 COURSE SCHEDULE

Course	Title	Room	Day(s)/Time	Instructor
GREK 102	Elementary Greek II	PAHB 441	MTWTh 10:00-10:50	Dr. David Rosenbloom
GREK 352	Euripides <i>Hippolytos</i>	PAHB 441	TTh 4:00-5:15	Dr. David Rosenbloom
LATN 102-01	Elementary Latin II	ITE 233	MTWTh 9:00-9:50	Prof. Ryan Franklin
LATN 102-02	Elementary Latin II	PAHB 441	MTWTh 11:00-11:50	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis
LATN 383	Roman Epistles	PAHB 441	MW 1:00- 2:15	Dr. Melissa Bailey Kutner
ANCS 150	Word Roots from Greek and Latin (Hybrid)	Sherman 003	W 4:00-5:15	Prof. Emily Erickson
ANCS 202	Roman World	Sherman 145	MW 4:00-5:15	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis
ANCS 220 (JDST 201 RLST 202)	Judaism in the Time of Jesus and Hillel	ITE 237	MW 1:00-2:15	Prof. Noah Crabtree
ANCS 320 GWST 320	Women and Gender in the Ancient World (WI)	PAHB 441	TTh 2:30-3:45	Prof. Tim Phin
ANCS 375	Ancient Medicine	ILS 118	TTh 1:00-2:15	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis
ARCH 201	Roman Archaeology and Art	ITE 102	MW 4:00-5:15	Dr. Melissa Bailey Kutner
ARCH 350-01	Topics in Archaeology: The Archaeology of the Ancient Greek City State	FA 301	MWF 11:00-11:50	Dr. Michael Lane
ARCH 350-02	Topics in Archaeology: Archaeological Methods and Techniques	PAHB 233	MW 1:00-2:15	Dr. Michael Lane
ARCH 350-03	Topics in Archaeology: Museum Studies	PAHB 441	TTh 7:10-8:25	Prof. Esther Read
HIST 453	Greek History	FA 011	TTh 11:30-12:45	Prof. Tim Phin

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