RES CLASSICAE

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FROM THE CHAIR

David Rosenbloom

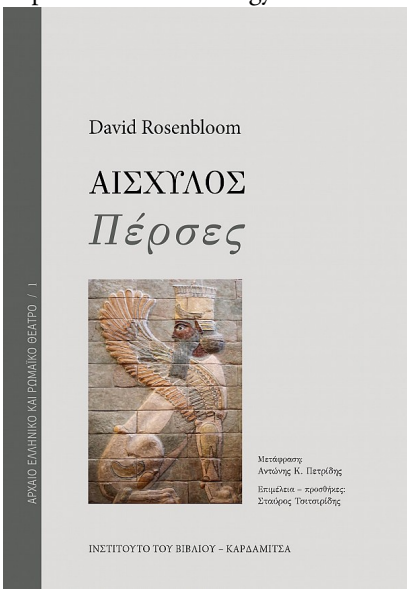


Lydia DeRidder

It is a pleasure to welcome Ms. Lydia DeRidder to the department as our Academic Program Specialist. Lydia is a 2020 graduate of Wheaton College in Sociology and Women's Studies and has proved to be a cheerful and keen learner of what is acknowledged to be a difficult job to master.

We would also like to welcome two new adjunct faculty members to the department: Dr. Juan Dopico, a 2023 Ph.D. recipient from Johns Hopkins University, whose dissertation examined the reception of Marcus Iunius Brutus in Roman imperial literature, and Dr. Avichai Kapach, who received his Ph.D. from Brown University in 2021 and wrote a dissertation on contradiction and truth in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, *Helen*, and *Orestes.* The department is also delighted to welcome back Prof. Erika Bucciantini, who is teaching LATN 101 and 102, while also reading Ovid with our advanced Latin students, and Dr. Adam Fracchia, who is teaching a course on Bioarchaeology/Osteoarchaeology online.

The department extends its congratulations to David Bullman, a 2022 ANCS graduate, who was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to teach English in North Macedonia in 2023-2024, joining other recent ANCS graduates in winning this coveted award. We also congratulate our 2022-2023 Honors and Awards recipients: Julia Labuda (Outstanding Senior), Tara Donovan (Sherwin Family Award), Mare Chavez (Robert and Jane Shedd Award), Michael Fischer (William and Martha Christopher Award), and Robert Barry (Diane Zdenek Award). We thank the generous donors who fund these awards. Kudos also to Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis, winner of a 2023-2024 Hrabowski Innovation Grant of $3,500 to develop a course on Experiential Archaeology in the ancient and medieval worlds with Dr. Lindsay Johnson in the Music department.



The Kardamitsa Book Institute has published Antonis Petrides' translation of my book on Aeschylus' *Persians* into modern Greek. The book has been augmented by Theodoros Stephanopoulou's rendering of the *Persians* into modern Greek and Stavros Tsitsiridis' iconographical supplement, expanded coverage of modern reperformances, and updated bibliography. The volume is the first in a new Greek series on Ancient Greek and Roman Theater. It is exciting for me to see my work appear in translation!

This is an event-filled semester for the department. Ancient Studies Week took place Oct. 16-20. On Tuesday, Oct. 17 from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm, we conducted our annual marathon reading of an epic poem at the *Forum* in front of the Performing Arts & Humanities Building. This year we read the *Iliad*. On Wednesday, Oct. 18 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, we did a dramatic student/faculty reading of Aristophanes' *Frogs*. On Thursday, October 19 at 4:00 pm in the A. O. Kuhn Library Gallery, Dr. Joseph Howley, 2006 ANCS graduate and Associate Professor of Classics at Columbia University, delivered this year's Ancient Studies Week Keynote Lecture, "Thinking Tools, Artificial Intelligence, and the Enslaved Readers of Ancient Rome."

This year the department is undergoing its seven-year review. External reviewers will be on campus Oct. 30 and 31. We are also searching for a new colleague who specializes in an Asian civilization in the context of the ancient Mediterranean. Our new colleague will

contribute to the Asian Studies Program as one of a cluster of new hires in Ancient Studies, History, Philosophy, and Political Science. During spring break 2024, department faculty will be taking 30 travelers to Greece.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Res Classicae*. It features Dr. Melissa Kutner and Dr. Molly Jones Lewis' travelogue of last spring's trip to Rome and environs and to the region around Naples (Paestum, Pompeii/Herculaneum), via Sperlonga and Cumae (on the way back). Dr. Michael Lane reflects on how one teaches the archaeological habit, focusing on the wide-ranging role the senses play in making archaeological judgments. Prof. Esther Read offers a fascinating account of her excavation of Swann House last spring and summer, uncovering the extraordinary life (for Maryland from 1809 to 1871) of James Swann "a free man of color" (according to the deed to his house), who lived and owned a house from which he operated a restaurant in Port Tobacco, Maryland from the 1840s and was also a member of the Piscataway tribe. Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis spins a spell-binding tale of her adventures in experimental archaeology: she was determined to process wool as it was done in antiquity. You will need read her account to find out whether she succeeded.

This issue features three students' accounts of their experiences abroad in 2023. ANCS and CMSC 2020 graduate Matthew Haworth, who waited three years to travel to Italy with the department in March 2023, contemplates the tendency of mental and verbal shorthand such as "antiquity," "dead language," and "ruin" to obscure the realities of the time and its continuity. ANCS majors James Barry and Mare Chavez likewise reflect thoughtfully on the human connections they made while participating in excavations at Aghia Marina Purgos, living in the village of Kokkino, and traveling in Greece in the summer of 2023.

In closing, I want to express the gratitude we all feel in the Ancient Studies Department for your generous donations. They truly make a difference in the educational experience we offer to our students. They are an indispensable part of what makes the Ancient Studies Department at UMBC unique and exciting.

All Roads Lead to Rome (Eventually)

Molly Jones-Lewis and Melissa Kutner

Finally! Our long postponed 2020 study trip to Rome and southern Italy took place in the spring of 2023 and went forward with only the most routine sorts of issues: delayed luggage, cramped airplane seating, a mediocre meal here and there, and a few cases of traveler's indigestion. The pandemic has made us grateful for such annoyances, in an odd way, as we began to recover a sense of normalcy from the ashes of the last few years.



The Ancient Studies group in front of the Ara Pacis

This trip was special for its comforting sense of restored freedom, and it was also a much-anticipated reunion of our pandemic majors, many of whom had graduated in the isolation of Covid-19 without the usual warm send-off the Ancient Studies family prefers to give in person. It was also a time to meet new friends and enrich our community. Parents, alumni, and folks embarking on their first Ancient Studies event were all part of the group this time around, and our shared joy in learning, discovering, and seeing with our own eyes was a joy we appreciated with renewed gratitude.

In our enthusiasm, we might have overdone it a bit, admittedly. Fitbits were astounded by the number of steps taken as we tramped up and down Rome's seven hills and got to as much Bay of Naples content as possible. Our poor guides were frequently heard to exclaim, "Mama mia!" as they looked at our itineraries. It didn't help that crowds have increased since the pandemic (even considering that spring is always a busy travel time in Italy). Everyone seemed eager to travel again, and school groups flooded even more typically-deserted sites, such as Cumae. But Ancient Studies knows how to get the most out of a spring break.

Tivoli, site of Hadrian's villa, then Ostia Antica, were our first targets, truly a juxtaposition of opulence and working-class practicality. Hadrian's imperial bath-palace provided a solid introduction on the finer points of Roman engineering and displayed virtuoso uses of concrete to jet-lagged observers on their first morning in Italy. Next, Ostia gave us insights into the quotidian ingenuity of Roman port city life, with apartments, *tabernae*, and mosaics of shipping and grain-measurers. (Dr. Jones-Lewis is pleased to report that Ostia has very pettable site-cats, very soft and friendly — strongly recommended.)

On the next day, we warmed up with a visit to the Capitoline Museums, which were a highlight not only for the unparalleled view of the foundations of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, but also for the rich collection of inscriptions. The Capitoline Museums could potentially take a whole day, but we were just getting started: in the afternoon, we went to the Vatican. Some of you know that one must buckle up for Vatican day, and indeed we did. Vatican policy now requires every visitor to be part of a guided group. If the hope was to ease crowding, the effect is the opposite: groups bunched everywhere, blocking routes of movement and any close view of paintings or ancient objects. The experience is not contemplative, but it does give one a visceral sense of a crowded pilgrimage, which has its own long historical tradition, of course. Led by our heroic guides, we shouldered our way into the Vatican for a first-hand look at ancient sculptures, the Sistine Chapel, and the Renaissance opulence of the former Papal apartments, a process requiring considerable fortitude. We didn't lose anyone for long, we are happy to report.



Molly Jones-Lewis, Timothy Phin, and Melissa Kutner in the Pantheon

After the Sistine crush, the Ara Pacis and Pantheon held no terror for us seasoned veterans. Well, not too much terror, at least. We gave Augustus and his monumental staircase to *pietas* our regards, admiring the beauty of the artwork and puzzling our way through the Julio-Claudians posing for our benefit. Thence to Agrippa's Pantheon reworked by Hadrian, a truly amazing space to inhabit, even with the company of hundreds of our fellow humans. For those who had never experienced the Pantheon, including some faculty, feeling the space first-hand was a marvelous revelation of loftiness and light. The sun was bright enough to illuminate the oculus into a strong beam of dancing light arcing gracefully around the niches of the colored stone walls. For all Hadrian's anger management issues, he does know how to design a space that arrests the eye.

At this point, Dr. Kutner took us on an unscheduled jaunt to the Torre Argentina cat sanctuary. If you aren't familiar with this Roman urban treasure, it manages the feline population of Rome's archaeological sites and you can drop in to cuddle with some of the residents. If you have just spent a day braving the most crowded sites in the city, you will benefit from kitty cuddles. They have an adopt-at-a-distance program, and Dr. Jones-Lewis' adoptee Zeyu is doing a little better with the veterinary care from donations.

But you're here for the archaeology. Next was the Palazzo Massimo, where we saw the beautiful collections of statues (such as the famous bronze boxer), frescos, including Livia's fruit garden, and some striking mosaics.

As you can imagine, we were grateful for the rest on the bus trip that took us to Paestum via Sperlonga, Tiberius' ominous party grotto where partygoers were treated to an immersive experience centered around menacing episodes in Homer's *Odyssey*. Diners would "enjoy" their meal on a faux island while looking at larger-than-life sculptures of Scylla devouring mariners and Polyphemus getting the world's most inconvenient splinter. Of course, Tiberius was the cave's most famous victim, nearly succumbing to a falling bit of grotto roof. There is likely a lesson in that somewhere.



Polyphemus being blinded by Odysseus

Paestum was a trip highlight and is a must-see gem should you ever plan your own trip to Italy. If you like both Greece and Rome and would rather not choose between the two, Paestum has you covered. The magnificent temples are a crowd pleaser, but we found great enjoyment at the site Asklepieion. As fluffy white clouds floated above, we spent a moment incubating in the abaton and meditating on the value of healing gods with excellent bedside manners. The museum had a stunning collection of Hellenistic armor and art from the chamber tombs, including some beautifully preserved paintings.

Next came Pompeii and Herculaneum. We did both on the same day, and thus had sufficient time for neither, but did see newly opened buildings such as the House of the Vettii at Pompeii. Our guides for these sites were also particularly impressive, taking us to new discoveries or somewhat-hidden wonders (exceptionally preserved wooden furniture at Herculaneum, for example) we would likely have missed otherwise.



Nero's Domus Aurea

On the way back to Rome, we stopped briefly at Cumae to marvel at spectacular views and at the cave optimistically associated with the famous Sibyl by Amedeo Maiuri. Our last day in Rome was taken up mostly by the crushing monumentality of Roman emperors. We toured the Domus Aurea, Nero's palace that was systematically buried by his successors. Now underground (and only recently reopened), it has a dim, shadowy, chilly grandeur that is not to be missed. The tour also included a surprisingly well-done 3D experience that plunges you briefly into the sunlight and dazzling colors of Nero's palace as it was. We next braved the Colosseum, where the floods of crowds were again overwhelming and the guide's relish for violent anecdotes a bit much. We ended with a brief walk through the Roman Forum, freer of crowds if only because its ruins, a bewildering palimpsest, remain challenging even for experts to navigate. It was a fitting and rather poignant place to end the trip.

In future years, we may scale back a couple of sites on the trip to give people more space to rest, catch their breath, and see some things on their own. But the advantage of the whirlwind pace was, of course, seeing so much, from Greek temples in Paestum to Roman imperial ruins to the intimacy of daily life in Pompeii and Herculaneum. And best of all was seeing each other once again, and being able to show new community members the places and objects we so love to study and share.

Stones and Bones in the Greek Summer Heat

Michael Lane

I've been digging holes in the name of archaeology for so long that I've forgotten how much it is an art as a science. It's a habit. It's muscle memory. It's multisensory bordering on synesthetic. Someone must have shown me once for the first time how it was done. Someone must have tried to explain. How did I learn? How did it become habit? I think that I do it well now. It is my craft, an expression of my humanness. What does that mean? How do I show others how it's done?



India Kelly (HIST) and Damian Koropeckyj (GLBL, 2016) prepare to screen sediment. Robert Barry (ANCS, VART) is in the background.

Day after day of layer upon layer of brown dirt full of small broken stones and potsherds only a little redder than the soil, their surfaces corroded and decorated only with ash and black mildew — the students on my archaeological team in central Greece might be forgiven for believing they could have spared themselves the expense and stayed home to dig a more interesting hole in their yard. "Trust me," I tell them, "You'll know the real archaeology when you see it." I'm using the word "real" loosely. Technically speaking, it's archaeology all the way down. On the other hand, if the reality we're trying to explore here is the human existence whose traces we discern in the patterns of discoveries in the earth, then the word is apt. But will they recognize their own sort of agency reflected in the hard-baked earth?

"Keep troweling back and forth carefully, moving backward, as if sweeping each new accretion away thoroughly, the stain of every successive present moment," I advise. Then a ghost emerges. One quarter of the bottom of our four-meter square trench seems suddenly whiter, the white bleeding on its edges, like watercolor, into the underlying yellowish brown. "There's fallen lime plaster below," I say with the certainty of prior experience. "We need to remove this first. Define its edges and start to peel it away." I recognize that this directive is right now practically meaningless to the student crew in the trench. "I'll show you," I assure them. "Scrape lightly, parallel to the place one color seems to blend into the other, holding the trowel so its edge is perpendicular to the ground. Do you see? But move decisively, because the soil dries out quickly, and it's hard to keep dust

from blowing into the trench and obscuring features. Do you see the clearer division between the colors?" I change my grip on the trowel to hold it like a pencil. "Take the tip and test the angle at which one layer sits on the other and how deep it goes — first one way and then the other, to make sure you are not overcutting or undercutting either one," I add. "You'll *feel* it as much as see it. Even with all the water that has percolated and evaporated through these sediments, the two layers are not tightly bonded. Stand up occasionally and look at it from different angles and distances. Examine the overall composition like a painter — except that you are *un*-painting." Or, in another sense, we are overwriting it, I note to myself, as it has been overwritten before.

We peel the fallen wall plaster away. We notice the bases of several pots similar in size and shape to one another, all encrusted with lime, protruding through the debris. Now they are exposed on a solid, uneven, reddish-brown surface, one after the other, bottoms up, in a line. One student asserts, "It looks like they fell from a shelf through a door or window as the wall came down." "Yes, good!" I think, "That's it. Imagination precedes theory. Theory is imagination tested." Farther down, we find two alignments of stones, stumps of walls, intersecting at a right angle. Our expectation that we had reached the level of a discrete building—the "real archaeology" in a certain parlance—was, however, disappointed. There is another whitish patch with distinct edges, fitted approximately into the corner between the walls. Thus archaeology always: imagination and the best laid plans cannot account for all that we find. What I tell my students when they're confronting the translation and interpretation of an ancient Greek text applies here too: It is what it is, not necessarily what we want it to be. The world as it is tests us.



The first three-week session's team at Mrs. Makis's for dinner

The students find the edges more expertly now, everyone with their own twist on what I had shown them, each approach fitted to their body size, shape, dexterity, and way of looking at things. The edge drops sharply away. It is the fill of a pit, a crude and eroded rectangle in plan, filled with plaster, ash, chunks of mud brick of various sizes, and a few bones of small mammals. "See whether you can find the tool marks where they dug," I urge. The fill falls away at the trowel's edge. The scratches and divots of the ancient excavation reveal themselves. "The pit respects the walls but doesn't cleave to them," I point out. "They had to be exact yet expedient, pitching whatever burnt rubble and detritus they could find into the hole, perhaps to shore up the walls to consolidate a surface." Like us, I think. We have our methods, and they had theirs: digging from the bottom of the heap so the mass falls onto the shovel blade, forming bucket lines, bearing weight efficiently on one's head or hugged to one's chest.

As I am contemplating what the Bronze Age equivalent was of the large tire-rubber, two-handled bucket–basket called *zembili* in Modern Greek, another student interrupts my reverie, asking "Is this stone or bone?" I respond," Bone has a certain … mouthfeel. Want to try?" The student looks startled, amused, and curious. "Put it to your tongue and draw your breath in." I wait. "Did it stick?" I ask. "Yes" is the reply. "Then it's not stone. It's bone." "Crazy!" exclaims the student. "Maybe," I think, "but now you know."



Headed up the hill to AMP at 5 a.m. to avoid July's terrible heat

The weather was hot and sticky, making the site a haze of dust and pollen. The campaign got under way late in the season, and so, by consensus, we rose early, and worked until we couldn't. Around the common dinner table late in the season — deep in the evening, when the broiling sun was down — I commend the students on their efforts. The summer has been physically, mentally, and emotionally difficult at times. However, it has also been full of the exultant thrill of discoveries, the elation of finding that not everything is already known. We talk about the ways in which they are therefore "making history." The patterned things we find in the earth, whether sought-after or not, have lain forgotten until now. Some of them have never been recorded, even in the broadest outlines. They are real as a slap in the face. If we are honest and courageous and don't shrink from the challenge of explanation and interpretation, then both the danger and the beauty are unsettling the past as we understand it. In this way, the future becomes one of new possibilities, our imaginations put to the test, not more of the same with different names and more sophisticated technologies, some that are supposed to think better than we do. The descendants of those who get through our critical times may one day, amid our stones and bones, one day retrace our archaeological steps, gestures, scraping, building, commemorating, and all our practices of cracking open the present through the past. Their future is uncertain and yet undetermined. It subsists in part on the wisdom of our ways, which are sometimes silent and

unremarked, written and erased and written again, and which, even so, despite our best efforts, may escape our intentions.

A Summer at Swann House

Esther Doyle Read

In the summer of 1843, James Swann entered into an agreement with the Sheriburn family to buy a house in the town of Port Tobacco, Maryland. He had probably been living in the house for a few years before the purchase. Three years later the Graham family, who also owned part of the lot, sold him the rest of it. On its face, this is a fairly mundane occurrence: a family buys a house in a town. Yet it's the second deed that makes it clear what a remarkable purchase this was. The antebellum deed is made out to "James Swann, a free man of color."

We (my volunteer crew and I) spent the spring and summer excavating James Swann's home and the restaurant he ran there. When our journey began last April, we had access to historic document research done in 2009. The researchers then had concluded that Swann (who is described in other documents as "Mulatto") was an African American of mixed heritage. The census from 1850 up through 1900 had three ways of identifying people – as white, black, or mulatto. The latter group included individuals who were Indian, as well as people of mixed heritage. Their ancestors were often a mixture of various peoples — European, African and/or Indian. After 1900, the census stopped using the term "Mulatto" and used the term "Negro" instead. This effectively erased the visibility of people of multiple heritages from the official record. And, except in the far western United States where a separate Indian census was enumerated on the reservations, it completely erased all record of Indians living off the reservations.



The Swann House

Tracing Swann's heritage has been difficult. I still don't know who his parents were. He was born in about 1809, at a time when the census only listed the head of household and then only as free white, other free person of color, or enslaved. The names of all members of a household don't appear until 1850. However, I now know that Swann was a Piscataway Indian. Several members of the tribe and others in the community have reached out to me and told me that he is a distant cousin. One tribal member told me that he grew up hearing his father's stories about James Swann and his oyster house, a business that was his family's business.

While Swann's house is no longer standing, the stone foundation is still there. It was a mid-sized house, measuring 18 by 32 feet. A description of it in a document dated 1784 describes it as two stories with two rooms downstairs and upstairs and a central hall or passage between the rooms on both floors. There were two end chimneys, meaning all the rooms were heated. Unlike many Chesapeake Region houses, the kitchen was not in another building; it was located in the cellar. There was also a stable, a bake house, a necessary (i.e., an outhouse), and a brick spring house, none of which is still standing.



Alana Parker (INDS) and Ben Helmick (HIST, 2022) excavating



Decorated Ceramics

The archaeological record associated with the Swann family includes fragments of floral transfer printed dinner wares, tea ware painted with tiny flowers or sponge decorated in multiple colors. There are also fragments of blue- and green-edged plates used for everyday meals. These all date to the period 1830 through 1860. The Swanns bought into the world of middle-class consumer goods and set the table in their home and restaurant with decorated ceramics. The restaurant was run out of the house, and according to Swann's obituary, was very successful. The obituary was published

in the white-owned *Port Tobacco Times*, which praised his culinary aplomb. It is clear from the context that his clientele included the white citizens of Charles County. However, all of this came at a price. When James Swann died in early 1871, he was in debt. His second wife Sallie was unable to keep the business running and she lost the house. Her stepdaughter Martha bought the property at a court-ordered auction and saved the family home. Artifacts from the period 1871 through 1911 (when Sallie died) include heavy undecorated white hotel tableware, suggesting that Sallie may have tried to update the look of the restaurant when she was struggling to keep the business afloat during the 1870s. Artifacts from about 1880 through 1910 are few and far between.

The Swann house must have been in terrible shape when Sallie died, as it was razed by 1920. When it was razed, the chimneys were collapsed into the cellar, which made excavation difficult. However, before the chimneys were collapsed, a number of pre-prohibition alcohol bottles were dumped into the basement. Their presence under the chimney rubble has enabled us to place the time period that the house was razed between 1911 (when Sallie died) and 1920 when it was purchased by a former enslaved man named Henry Bush. Bush and later his daughter Margaret, her husband Harris Jamieson, and their 16 children raised tobacco in the field where the house once stood until the state bought out the tobacco farmers in 2000. For many years after that the site was an open field.

Indians in Southern Maryland during James Swann's lifetime lived in a cultural limbo, caught between two worlds. As an Indian, Swann was never the equal of his white counterparts. Nor was he viewed in the same light as his African American neighbors. Indians were often labeled as free people of color, thus erasing their cultural identity in the records. We hope through our work to celebrate Swann's cultural heritage and to highlight the achievements of this remarkable man.

Pecunia non olet: Adventures in Roman Wool-Working

Molly Jones-Lewis

If you're a ANCS alum, you know that ancient Greeks and Romans cleaned wool with human urine. But I've always wondered how that actually would work, so this summer I risked my apartment lease — for research! Here's what happened.



Spinning wool on a spindle

But before we get to the pee, let us pause to orient ourselves to the steps of turning sheep fur into clothing:

1. Shear sheep.
2. Remove as much poop and vegetation as possible.
3. Clean lanolin, sweat, and dirt off fleece.
4. Dry fleece.
5. Comb fleece in the arrangement that will work best for the distaff you're using.
6. Put wool on distaff, spin onto spindle. This is where fluff becomes thread.
7. Weave until it's cloth.
8. YOU ARE NOT DONE YET, because you beat the cloth up to make the fibers "bloom" into cloth you can't see through. We call this "fulling." This is the part where urine is definitely involved.
9. Dry cloth on a frame.
10. Profit!

But there was a problem. As of now, I've yet to find an ancient literary passage explicitly suggesting urine at step 3 in this process, even though scholars tend to assume it was involved. This lacuna in the written record came as a shock, and not just because I had already done the awkward work of getting my spouse to pee in a set of mason jars for a week. In later times, urine was one of several go-to options for dissolving the waxy, hard, sticky lanolin off wool. While it is possible to spin without removing lanolin (we call this in-the-grease), it is not easy because the tips of the fleece are stuck together by it, as the image on the following page (right) illustrates.

Today, we use harsh detergents to remove the lanolin; Dawn dish soap is a classic choice. Romans used soapwort for sure, and likely urine too. And I was too curious to give up.

Even my historical spinner friends were horrified that I was going to actually try it. "You're so brave," said all two of them. But I was in too deep, and I had to know if it could be done. Do the breakdown products of human urine turn soapy in the presence of lanolin well enough to clean a fleece? And can I manage to do it on my back porch without getting evicted from my apartment?

Six mason jars of urine sat for a week and developed a truly astonishing odor. It was time. I put the raw wool in a bucket of urine. I was shocked to find that within an hour, the acrid odor of poorly cleaned urinal stalls had dissipated, replaced by a normal aroma of wet sheep. Dirt released from the wool just as quickly as it had when I was using modern detergent, to my shock. My neighbors remained blissfully unaware.

Those brave modern souls who have embarked on this adventure usually boil the urine and wool within 24 hours of the cool soak. However, my spouse said, "No. Not in my kitchen, you don't. I draw the line at pee on my stove." So I let it all sit for three days on the porch.



Wool without lanolin removed



Supplies

At the end of three days, even as the ancients foretold, the urine had done its twin duties: reacting with the waxy, oily lanolin and producing a smell of indescribable pungency.

Let me attempt to describe it. If you aren't interested, your class will ask. It's not the smell of a summer camp outhouse or the urinal of someone with faulty aim, though there are notes of outhouse present. However, the most notable component is ovine, an intense concentrate of the most off-putting elements of wet wool odors deepened with the bite of dung pile. It's intensely agricultural, and doesn't immediately bring on my aversion reflexes. It hasn't the ammoniac quality of cat accidents.

While I can't photograph the smell, I did capture the visual change fairly well! Note the gelled luster and cloudy appearance of the liquid in the tub, and you'll see the important benefit of this whole unpleasant process (images below). The lanolin has left the wool and bound with the urine, and the two have combined to form something promisingly like liquid soap. We are ready to rinse the unpleasantness away and reveal the clean wool beneath.

I replicated the traditional rinse in a stream with 20 minutes in a cold shower, then did an extra cold water soak because my cringe response was beginning to overcome my methodological rigor. There was a worrying waxy residue coating the mesh bags, and the smell was not entirely gone from the fiber. I admit, my resolve was sorely tested, and I eyed the modern detergent on my way back to the porch to put the (hopefully) cleaned wool into the crisp outdoor air for the final step — drying in full sunlight to bleach out the staining and remove the odor.

I was, sadly, underwhelmed with my final results. The lanolin had only partly dissolved, leaving the wool stickier than it had been raw. I could barely comb it. I hated my life. I may have cried a bit at my ruined ounces of wool as I tried to force my combs through it. If I were processing a finished cloth, this would have been perfect! The fibers dried fluffy, soft, and stuck to each other — exactly what you want at the *fulling* stage.



Rinsing: soapy liquid and waxy residue

Ancient sources do definitely mention soapwort, so I also tried that. The soapwort, sold to me by a lady who claimed it would banish curses and ward against evil, arrived in a baggie. I can't speak to the amount of evil on my sheep, but it did a great job at banishing the lanolin overnight. It smelled great. The wool combed out into a glorious floof that flew off my distaff with barely any effort on my part.

So what have we learned?

Don't put pee on your wool unless you can boil it soon afterwards. And just buy the soapwort from the Etsy lady.

Roman Time

Matthew Haworth

It's very easy, distant as we are from the past, to imagine that all of that past happened in the same moment. Rome may be the Eternal City, but at first glance, one could be forgiven for thinking it consists of just two parts: now, the city in use, and then, the city in ruin. But there is so much more to "then" than I can easily make sense. There's roughly three times as much time between the mythic founding of the city and Augustus' emperorship as the United States has existed as a political entity. We can intuitively divide this more recent past into a colonial period, the Civil War, the Gilded Age, the Roaring 20s, but in the popular imagination that distant history sometimes gets compressed entirely into "Ancient Rome."

This compression of time hides two things. The first, of course, is the vastness of that time. The second is the continuity of it all. When the last Emperor of the West was deposed in AD 476, Italy didn't cease to exist. Italians didn't vanish in an instant until Dante invented the Italian language centuries later and with it birthed a new Italy from nothing. No, people continued to live there under new rulership, and when the government changed again, they continued still. That's what it means for Rome to be the Eternal City: its population has fluctuated wildly, from hamlet to metropolis and back again, several times over, but it contains over 2500 years of people, going to work, begging in the street, eating rich, starving, living their lives in such familiar ways that it's as if it never really changed at all.



Matthew Haworth at the Colosseum

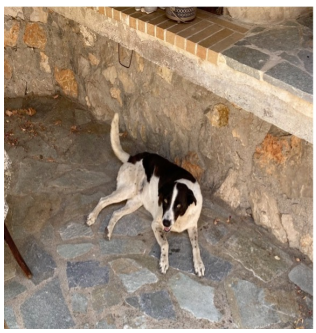
I'll confess a somewhat irrational annoyance whenever Latin is referred to as a "dead language." I know what people mean when they say it, but I feel it fundamentally misunderstands what a language is, what it would mean for a language to really die. Languages are not static. They grow, they change, they evolve, they transform over centuries into something almost unrecognizable. Classical Latin becomes Vulgar Latin, which becomes Italian (and other Romance languages), and we draw lines between them because those lines are useful. But the lines are artificial and in places, arbitrary. Much like biological evolution, there's no moment where you can point to someone speaking Latin and say their children are speaking Italian. Latin is very much alive in all of its descendants.

The City of Rome is the same. Standing in the ancient Roman Forum, surrounded by so many buildings, still standing, separated even from each other by centuries, puts into focus just how extensive history is. And walking to the Pantheon, seeing it still intact and in use emphasizes that all those people, real human beings, who designed it, constructed it, prayed in it, are still much alive in every person who lives there now. All those ruins aren't really ruins. They're just things that the people living around them stopped finding use for. As governments, as nations, have come and gone, the people living and working there have stuck around. There was a dream that was Rome, and it's one people have never given up.

Finding More than Artifacts

Robert Barry

This summer I had the opportunity to spend seven weeks in Greece as part of Dr. Michael Lane's KOCECOLA project. I had never been on an archaeological dig before, so I had no idea what I was getting myself into! After the ultimate test of patience, a nine-hour international flight, I and several others landed at Athens airport and met up with Dr. Lane, who drove us to Kokkino, a village in northern Boeotia, where we would be staying for the duration of the excavation. My first impression of the village was that it was peaceful, especially with all the cute stray dogs, but I was really amazed by the spectacular view of Mount Parnassus from the laboratory we were working in. That first weekend I also met a lot of amazing people from UMBC and the University of Athens who would make the dig a truly unique experience.



A Cute Stray Dog



Left to right: Robert Barry (ANCS, VART), Mare Chavez (ANCS GLBL), Katie Bjerkaas (ANCS), Abigail Kennedy (ANCS, BIOL 2022), Lauren Oster, India Kelly (HIST), Naomi Glenn, Michael Fischer (ANCS)

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we were not permitted to start digging until after the third week. But we still made the most of our time. The first two weeks I had the pleasure of weed whacking the site alongside Ms. Rowan May and Dr. Kyle Jazwa; their humor uplifted me even under the sweltering sun. Once we cleared the site of vegetation it was only the end of the second week, so Dr. Lane had us survey nearby sites in the Kopaic Basin which were connected to Aghia Marina Pyrghos (AMP).

By the end of the third week, we finally received confirmation to start digging the trenches that we laid out at the top of AMP. I was very excited to start digging after not having found anything during surface surveys, and the first thing I found was a large piece of building material! Over the coming weeks the team made a lot of astonishing finds in the field, but more importantly we formed strong relationships with each other. In particular, I enjoyed working in the trench while listening to music with Dr. Jazwa and India Kelly.

Over the weekends we had even more time to spend with each other during field trips. The first weekend we visited the Argolid and saw the beautiful waters of the Corinth Canal, and several impressive *tholos* tombs — shaped like beehives — at Mycenae (see p.11). One thing I still appreciate even more than visiting the archaeological sites was the weekends we spent with each other. Those days we would all meet at the men's house to watch Netflix, cook, and reminisce about what we missed most about home. Overall, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to make a contribution to Dr. Lane's project while meeting so many wonderful people, and I hope to be able to do so again next summer!

SUMMER FIELDWORK IN GREECE

Mare Chavez

My time in Greece doing archaeological fieldwork taught me so much and was a valuable experience I will always remember. I learned a lot about hard work—waking up at five in the morning to excavate a site on top of a hill will do that to you — but I also learned a lot about friendship and working as a team. I was not very physically fit when I started out, and this made fieldwork very difficult for me. I felt really down and had little confidence in myself. However, my professors and peers always had my back and I was grateful for that. They encouraged me on our hikes and supported me on my particularly bad days. Eventually, I was able to overcome those physical and mental challenges and grew to really enjoy the work of the dig.



Mare Chavez at Mycenae

Kokkino, where we lived for two months, was lovely, and the people in the village were so kind to us. We got to learn some basic Greek and tried a lot of new foods. My favorite is still the souvlaki, pork skewers, from the local restaurant. We learned something new pretty much every day. Doing archaeological fieldwork reminded me of why I enjoyed ancient history in the first place. I was overjoyed to get to hold little bits of the past in the palm of my hand, getting a glimpse into the daily lives of people who lived centuries before me.

We also went on trips over the weekends to other historical sites! I really enjoyed going to Delphi, but I think our weekend trip to Mycenae was actually the one that stood out to me the most. We got to walk around the ancient site of Mycenae and hike up the hill to see the *tholos* tombs and the palace structures. It was stunning. It's one thing to learn about Mycenae in class, it's another to actually see it in person. We also went stargazing near the Fortress of Gla, which is a close drive from the village. It was so clear and cool that night, we even saw the Milky Way without needing a telescope!

The experience that stood out to me the most was getting to bond over textile history and fiber arts with the older women of the village. I love fiber arts and crafting, and I had been working up the courage to ask them about it. They teased me for being so young and yet interested in what they considered to be a dying art of a bygone time. They gave me fine threads and cotton yarns to

take home as a parting gift and showed off their lace work and weaving for me to admire. It was a very touching moment and I will never forget it.



Dome of a Tholos Tomb at Mycenae ("Treasury of Atreus")

WINTER 2024 COURSE SCHEDULE

Course	Title	Room/Mode	Day(s)/Time	Instructor
ANCS 150	Word Roots from Latin and Greek	Online		Dr. Avichai Kapach
ANCS 201	The Ancient Greeks	Online		Dr. Juan Dopico
ANCS 210/RLST 210	Classical Mythology	Online		Prof. Tim Phin
ANCS 330/HIST 330	Ancient Science and Technology	In person	T/W/Th 5:30-8:40 pm PAHB 107	Prof. Esther Read
ANCS 365	Magic and Witchcraft in the Ancient Mediterranean	Hybrid	M/W 1:00-4:15 pm PAHB 234	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis

SPRING 2024 COURSE SCHEDULE

Course	Title	Room/Mode	Day(s)/Time	Instructor
GREK 102	Elementary Greek II	PAHB 441	MTWTh 10:00-10:50	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis
GREK 381	Xenophon of Ephesus, *Ephesian Tales*	Online Synchronous	T/Th 4:30-5:45	Dr. David Rosenbloom
LATN 102-01	Elementary Latin II	Online Hybrid	T/Th 9:00-9:50	Prof. Erika Bucciantini
LATN 102-02	Elementary Latin II	Online Hybrid	T/Th 10:00-10:50	Prof. Erika Bucciantini
LATN 301	Selections from Roman Historians: Tacitus	PAHB 441	T/Th 2:30-3:45	Dr. Molly Jones Lewis
ANCS 150	Word Roots from Latin and Greek	Hybrid Sherman 003	W 4:00-5:15	Dr. Juan Dopico
ANCS 202	The Roman World	Math and Psych 106	M/W 4:00-5:15	Dr. Avichai Kapach
ANCS 220/JDST 201/ RLST 202	Judaism in the Time of Jesus & Hillel	Online Synchronous	M/W 1:00-2:15	Prof. Karen Bryson
ANCS 320/GWST 330	Gender and Women in the Classical World	Sondheim 109	T/Th 2:30-3:45	Prof. Tim Phin
ANCS 350-01	Topics in Ancient Studies: Greek Myth and Anime	Hybrid Fine Arts 018	W 1:00-2:15	Dr. Juan Dopico
ANCS 375	Ancient Medicine	Sondheim 204	T/Th 1:00-2:15	Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis
ANCS 456/HIST 456	Roman Empire	Fine Arts 011	T/Th 11:30-12:45	Prof. Tim Phin
ARCH 201	Roman Archaeology & Art	Online Synchronous	TBD	*Staff*
ARCH 350-01	Topics in Archaeology: Archaeological Methods and Techniques	PAHB 233	MWF 1:00-2:15	Dr. Michael Lane
ARCH 350-02	Topics in Archaeology: Museum Studies	PAHB 441	T/Th 7:10-8:25	Prof. Esther Read

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