The undergraduate magazine for the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Pennsylvania

Editors-in-Chief
Carson Woodbury and Laura Santander

Research Editor
James Levy

News Editor
Alethea Roe

Faculty Advisor
James Ker

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FROM THE EDITORS

The idea for *Discentes* sprung from melancholy tidings. In the spring of 2012, we learned of the passing of Penn graduate and former classics major Kojo Minta. As a junior, Kojo started a classical studies journal specifically for undergraduates. He called it *Polymatheia*.

Kojo aspired for the journal to “turn a critical and introspective eye to the Classics.” The first and only issue is a marvel of student scholarship—stimulating and thought-provoking. Reading it last spring, we were captivated by Kojo’s vision. First, we mused about reviving *Polymatheia*. Then, we set out to expand on the journal format to create a magazine for the Department of Classical Studies at Penn. We resolved to preserve the essence of *Polymatheia* while broadening the scope of the publication.

*Discentes* is the result. Our goal is to create a forum for the classical studies community at Penn built on undergraduate scholarship and engagement. *Discentes* means “the ones learning” and this magazine is written for that group. *Discentes* is for the learners— anyone and everyone with a passion for learning about the world. The magazine allows students to publish original research, read about classics-related events, and explore the field’s relationship with the greater academic community.

This issue presents five research papers authored by Penn undergraduates. In “Reconciling Physical Mortality With Literary Immortality,” Charlotte Edelson explores Sappho’s and Horace’s lyric perspectives on old age. Laura Santander investigates the motivations for the re-use of Homeric papyri in “Recycling Homer in Greco-Roman Egypt.” Madeleine Brown discusses the influence of Demosthenes on a young James Madison in “The Making of a Statesman.” In “The Survival of Winged Victory in Christian Late Antiquity,” Jesse DuBois seeks to explain why
early Christians retained winged Victory iconography while other pagan images were rejected. Finally, in “Xenia Perverted,” Noreen Sit addresses Apuleius’ subversion of proper guest friendship in the *Metamorphoses*.

This semester, Penn has been the setting for a number of extraordinary events. The Museum hosted the Underground Shakespeare Company’s performance of a modern adaptation of *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Department partnered with the University of St. Andrews to organize “Hip Sublime: Beat Writers and the Classical Tradition,” and the Undergraduate Advisory Board staged its third dramatic reading, selecting Euripides’ *Trojan Women* as the fall tragedy.

We are incredibly grateful for Professor James Ker’s extraordinary support and advice. Renée Campbell was a great help in ironing out the logistics of publication. We would also like to thank Professor Jeremy McInerney for generously volunteering his time to speak with us about his work and his perspective on classical studies as a discipline and Darien Perez who took time to answer our questions about her experience as a post-baccalaureate student.

Classical studies is thriving at Penn. The rich calendar of events inspired by the classics and the strong undergraduate scholarship exemplified in the five papers published here demonstrate as much. We hope that *Discentes* will be an outlet for this intellectual energy.

“Sometimes I write them because I’ve fallen in love.
Sometimes I write them just for the fun of it.”

-Horace, *Odes* 1.6

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Carson Woodbury  
Laura Santander

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NEWS

The semester was packed with local Classics-related events—on campus, in Philadelphia, and further afield.

The Metropolitan Opera

The ancient world seems to have taken New York’s Metropolitan Opera by storm. No fewer than three operas with classical settings are featuring prominently in the company’s acclaimed Live in HD series which broadcasts live performances at the opera house to movie theaters around the world, including The Rave on 40th and Walnut, making this splendid cultural resource readily accessible to the Penn community. Broadcasts take place Saturday afternoons at 12:55 PM, with encore broadcasts Wednesday evenings at 6:30 in the evening.

La Clemenza di Tito was one of Mozart’s last works. The libretto, set in imperial Rome, draws loosely (and I do mean loosely) on Suetonius’ Lives of the Caesars. Vitellia (Barbara Frittoli) the daughter of the deposed Emperor Vitellius, is torn between her desire for vengeance against the Flavians who deposed her father (currently represented by the Emperor Titus, sung by tenor Giuseppe Filianoti) and her ambition to become Empress by marrying Titus herself. Elina Garanca, who last seduced audiences as the sultry Gypsy Carmen, here takes on the trouser role of Sesto, Vitellia’s devoted suitor. The original broadcast took place on December 1st, and an encore to be broadcast on the 19th.

Les Troyens (The Trojans) is a 5-hour epic by French composer Hector Berlioz, and will be broadcast January 5th and January 23rd. The opera, considered by many, including Berlioz himself, to be his magnum opus, was born out of his admiration for Virgil’s Aeneid and a healthy dose of encouragement from the Polish noblewoman Princess Carolyn-Sayn Wittgenstein, who, according to Berlioz’s
memoirs, gave the initially reluctant composer a rebuke all classical studies students should take to heart: "If you are shirking the inevitable difficulties of the piece, if you are so weak as to be afraid to brave everything for Dido and Cassandra, never come to see me again for I will not receive you."

April brings us Handel’s baroque delight Giulio Cesare (fully and properly titled *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, as the opera centers on Julius Caesar’s participation in the Alexandrian wars and his notorious liaison with Cleopatra VII.) David Daniels, the world’s leading countertenor, sings Julius Caesar opposite French soprano Natalie Dessay’s Cleopatra. Promotional shots of Daniels accompanied by a legion of redcoats suggest David McVickars’ production is heavily informed by the legacy of the British as well as the Roman Empire. Broadcasts will occur on April 27th and May 15th. Those desiring a more traditional vision of ancient Egypt can look out for a time-honored production of Giuseppe Verdi’s spectacular-as-ever *Aida*, which also comes to theaters December 15th and January 16th.

**Theater at Penn**

This semester proved, however, that we needn’t look to New York to see classics on stage. Penn itself had an impressive variety of theatrical events centered on or set in the ancient world.

This fall brought us a reworking of the Shakespearean saga *Antony and Cleopatra* penned by local playwright J. Michael DeAngelis, and performed by the Underground Shakespeare Company. The play was staged in the Penn Museum’s Lower Egyptian Gallery with audience members surrounded by towering stone pillars and facing the Museum’s twelve-ton sphinx. The adaptation, entitled *Antony and Cleopatra: Infinite Lives*, took full advantage of the unique setting. The play tells the story of two Egyptians: a brother involved in the 2011 Tahrir Square protests and his
sister, assistant director for a new Philadelphia production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Scenes from the original Shakespeare form the backdrop for a modern tale of love and intrigue that unfolds into an exploration of Egyptian identity.

Continuing the classical theme, the University of Pennsylvania Theater Arts Program presented an adaptation of Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and on November 26th, the Classics Undergraduate Advisory Board assembled in College Hall 200 for a staged reading of Euripides’ *Trojan Women*, premiering a translation by Penn’s own Professor Emily Wilson. Following last year’s performances of *Medea* and *Lysistrata*, the play was the third installment of a relatively new but already much-loved tradition of students and faculty coming together to bring ancient drama to life with the aid of a few props, some improvised blocking, and affecting performances from the cast members.

This time around, the group transformed College Hall into the battlements of Troy. Euripides’s tragedy describes the horrors faced by Troy’s women in the aftermath of the Trojan War. Professor Wilson assumed the role of Athena opposite Professor Murnaghan’s Poseidon. Darien Perez gave a marathon performance as the bereaved Trojan queen Hecuba. Laura Santander did double duty as her daughter-in-law Andromache and Menelaus. Molly Hutt took on the role of Helen. Alethea Roe was the crazed priestess Cassandra, and Carson Woodbury played the sympathetic but unyielding Greek herald Talthybius. Hannah Rich and Lydia Spielberg wowed the audience as the Chorus, even delivering some of their lines in the original Greek. Professor Wilson, on top of supplying the translation, also provided the courageous doll who braved the role of the infant Astyanax and his fatal plunge from the Trojan battlements. The performance was topped off with a lively discussion over pizza in the Classics Lounge.
If you’re interested in participating in next semester’s play or otherwise getting involved with the UAB, contact our chair, Laura Santander, at santander.laura@gmail.com.

Classics On Campus

Off the stage, the Classics Department worked with the Center for Ancient Studies and the School for Classics at the University of St. Andrews to cosponsor “Hip Sublime,” a two-day conference exploring the classical legacy in Beat poetry. With lectures uniting Xenophon and Homer with the likes of Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, the conference testified to the interdisciplinary attitude and broad spectrum of academic inquiry embraced by Penn’s Department of Classical Studies.

Zealous undergraduates do not need to wait for the occasional major conference to get their extracurricular classics fix. The Department holds a weekly colloquium open to the public on Thursdays at 4:30 PM in Cohen 402 or 337. Although the colloquium sometimes features speakers from the department or the university at large, it often brings in speakers from a variety of other academic institutions the world over. The talk is preceded by a coffee hour at 4:00 PM in Cohen 205.

The final colloquium of the fall semester will be on December 6th when Tim Power of Rutgers University will present “Reading the Deliades in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo.” If you are interested in receiving email notices of these and other events from the Department, go to <https://groups.sas.upenn.edu/mailman/listinfo/clst-announcements> to join the listserv.

Interested in archaeology, material culture, or the broader cultural contexts of Greece and Rome? There’s a weekly event for that too. The Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World graduate group hosts a lecturer every Friday at noon in Museum classroom 345, covering a variety of topics within the study of the ancient Mediterranean and
Near East. As if that weren’t enough of a draw, lunch is also provided. A list of upcoming lectures can be found at <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/aamw/>.

The Penn Museum is also playing host to the Great Battles lecture series which is thick with classical topics, including:

- December 5 - “Was there a Trojan War?” (Prof. C. Brian Rose)
- February 6 - “From Actium to an Asp: The Beginning of the End for Cleopatra the Great” (Jennifer Wegner)
- March 6 - “The Siege and Fall of Masada” (Jodi Magness)
- May 1 - “Thermopylae: The Battle for Europe?” (Jeremy McInerney)
- June 5 - “Hannibal’s Secret Weapon in the Second Punic War” (Patrick Hunt)

All lectures are free for students.

**Classics in Philadelphia**

Off-campus, Philadelphia welcomed the exhibition “The Dead Sea Scrolls: Life and Faith in Ancient Times” to the Franklin Institute, where it remained until October 14, when it moved to Discovery Times Square, New York. Judging by the crowds that flocked to the Franklin Institute, local response to the renowned scrolls—one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century—was thoroughly enthusiastic.

A total of twenty scrolls were displayed, encompassing many books of the Jewish Torah and biblical Old Testament. The scrolls were also accompanied by an array of six hundred artifacts—from jewelry to limestone ossuaries—dating from Biblical to Islamic periods and drawn from the collections of the Israel National Treasures. The exhibit included a three-ton section of Jerusalem’s Western Wall (widely known as the Wailing Wall) to which visitors could attach prayers on slips of paper, which will be transported to the Wall in Jerusalem.
In *Odes* III.30, the epilogue to Books I-III, Horace asserts the he “was the first to bring Aeolian measures to Latin” (15). Likewise, he concludes by alluding to the Greek emblem of victory, ordering the Muse Melpomene to “place on my head the garland of Delphic laurel” (18). Confidently, Horace aligns himself with the first-rate Greek lyric poets of the seventh and sixth centuries BCE, namely Sappho, portraying an aristocratic society that fears tyranny and cherishes the gods, young love, and nature. Due to temporal and linguistic differences, Horace adapts the Greek lyric tradition to his contemporary context: first century BCE Augustan Rome. Thus, using an aesthetic rooted in the past, Horace envisions a future of literary immortality (like that of Sappho). After establishing the significance of aging in ancient Greece and Rome, I will examine the similar treatments of old age within the same genre of lyric poetry: Sappho’s Fragment 58 and Horace’s *Odes* II.11. Despite their temporal, geographic and contextual differences, Sappho and Horace advocate the motif of living for today in order to resign themselves to the negative effects—physical and mental—of old age.²

² Horace coined the phrase *carpe diem* in *Odes* I.11: “*Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero*” (“seize the day, trusting tomorrow as little as
A fear of old age precipitated the commanding and enduring poetry of Sappho and Horace. In M.I. Finley’s investigative paper, “The Elderly in Classical Antiquity,” he explores the ancient preoccupation with old age, explaining that doctors in ancient Greece and Rome knew very little about aging:

They knew that pulse rates changed with age, for example, that the elderly tended to catarrh, failing sight, and deafness, or that age was a consideration in surgical cases, but beyond that they were absolutely blocked.³

Although the regularity of epidemics and warfare could lead to death at any age, the poets Sappho and Horace feared the ambiguity surrounding old age. Upholding Finley’s characterization of youth in antiquity as “a healthy physique, beauty, and sexual attraction,” Sappho and Horace considered old age problematic, marking the end of a former (and more worthwhile) stage of life.

Additionally, the author Stephen Bertman in his paper “The Ashes and the Flame: Passion and Aging in Classical Poetry” attributes the urgency characteristic of lyric poetry to the poets’ own anxieties about aging:

Betrayed by time, angry at erotic injustice, the poets of Greece and Rome counterattacked with verse both as an act of vital defiance and as an affirmation not only of life but of the human need to love and be loved.

possible”); however, the philosophy undoubtedly predated him. The motif of living for today emerged from the poetry of both Sappho and Horace. Additionally, the 1989 film Dead Poets Society popularized the phrase *carpe diem* when the teacher, Robin Williams, encouraged his students to make their lives extraordinary. Thus, the popular phrase does not wholly apply to this discussion.

Tasting the bitterness of the ashes, they lived as the flame. Sensing the end of life and witnessing the deaths of others (“the bitterness of the ashes”), ancient poets attempted to live uninhibitedly and powerfully in the present (“as the flame”). The poetry of Sappho and Horace agrees with Bertman’s assessment of old age as a betrayal, which incites pity and leads to debility and erotic crises.

Although little is known of Sappho’s life, the *Suda*, a 10th century Byzantine encyclopedia, indicates that the poet was born around 612 BCE (the time of the 42nd Olympiad), daughter of Scamandronymus of Eresus and Clevis of Mytilene in Lesbos. According to the Parian Marble, a Greek chronological table found on Paros, Sappho was exiled to Sicily as a child (sometime between 604 and 594 BCE). Eventually, she returned to Mytilene, marrying an aristocratic man from Andros, Cercylas, with whom she had a child, Cleis. Consistently, scholars question contemporary knowledge of Sappho, calling aspects of her life inventions of later Comic poets. Ironically, given the emphasis she places on old age in her poetry, skepticism surrounds her tragic death. However, Sappho’s oeuvre of seven books written in Lesbian vernacular suggests that she most likely instructed a *thiasos* (a female community), believing in the importance of a religious education. Accordingly, Sappho addressed these close female friends in her poems, a fact that fragment 41—“toward you beautiful girls”—and fragment 160—“And
now I shall sing/these songs, beautifully,/to delight my friends” —communicate clearly.  

Sappho dedicates the entirety of fragment 58 to the subject of her own aging. Beginning with a concrete and negative description of her old age in the first stanza, Sappho shifts to an abstract and positive reflection on human nature in the second stanza. In the fragment’s opening line, Sappho underscores the changes in her physique: “Age withers now my flesh” (Sappho 58.1). Assuming she is addressing the same “beautiful girls” mentioned in fragment 41, Sappho asks younger generations in fragment 58 to live in the present, before they, too, exhibit the withered flesh of the poet. Throughout the remainder of the first stanza, Sappho describes her physical transformation: “my black locks are white” and “no longer do my knees/carry me” (2;3-4). In emphasizing her current condition, Sappho alludes to the passage of time; she used to be attractive, with dark hair and strong limbs. Overall, the first stanza, constituting one half of the fragment, suggests that unfavorable external forces cause old age, victimizing the poet (and eventually, her audience as well), rather than strengthening her position.

In the second stanza, Sappho moves away from the concrete and negative and arrives at the abstract and positive, emphasizing that what “I love” is nature and attractiveness (6). According to scholar Ellen Greene in her paper “Sappho 58: Philosophical Reflections on Death and Aging,” the “passion for sunlight” Sappho mentions in the second stanza could serve as allegory for the mythical figure Tithonus, whose beauty and youth mesmerizes the beautiful goddess

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9 Again, it is important to note that her biography is debated; therefore, it is with caution that we take any portion of her writing as autobiographical. However, we can use her poems to help us understand how she wanted others to perceive her.
Dawn (9).¹⁰ Zeus grants Tithonus immortality at Dawn’s request; however, the goddess fails to request eternal youth. As a result, Tithonus ends up in a state of continuous physical decay, repelling the once-enamored Dawn.¹¹

Regardless of whether Sappho intended to embody the goddess Dawn in this stanza, the sunlight imagery underlines the idea that death may serve as a welcome relief from the suffering produced by old age, as mentioned by the poet in the first stanza. Conversely, the optimism of the second stanza may allude to Sappho’s confidence in her own literary immortality (like the sun, her poems will not die) or her attempt to glorify the notion of old age for her psychological well-being. Additionally, since her thiasos (her addressees) are younger than the poet, she trusts that they, symbolic of a lineage of followers, will preserve her poetry (and thus her memory). Overall, fragment 58 with its two stanzas points to the dual nature of lyric poetry itself: contingent and eternal. Ultimately, Sappho’s body may decay (first stanza), but she can live in the moment, because, unlike her physical condition, her poetry has the potential to last forever (second stanza).

Six centuries after Sappho, the poet Horace was born on December 8, 65 BCE at Venusia in Apulia. Nothing is known of his mother; however, his father was a freedman, who owned a small farm and sent Horace to school in Rome. Around 45 BCE, Horace moved to Athens to continue his studies, learning Greek and reading Greek authors. However, in 44 BCE, following the assassination of Julius Caesar, he


¹¹ In the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, which Sappho was likely to have known, the story of Tithonus illustrates the horrors of old age. Though his body utterly fails him in the Hymn, Tithonus’ voice “flows endlessly.” (“Hymn to Aphrodite” Archaic Greek Poetry: An Anthology, Ed. And Trans. Barbara Hughes Fowler (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 39.)
joined Brutus’ army as a tribunus militum (a senior officer). On the losing side at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BCE, Horace experienced embarrassment, fleeing the scene without his shield (Odes II.7), evoking the Greek lyric poets Alcaeus and Archilochos, who also wrote about abandoning their shields. Accepting Octavian’s amnesty, a disheartened Horace returned to Rome to find his father no longer living and his farm confiscated – a heartrending manifestation of old age. Impoverished, he began writing poetry and embraced an Epicurean philosophy.\(^2\)

In Rome, Horace befriended Virgil and Varius, who welcomed him into the circle of Maecenas, an aristocratic friend of Octavian.\(^3\) As Horace’s benefactor, Maecenas empowered Horace both monetarily and intellectually, enabling him to reclaim his father’s farm and expand his knowledge of other poets, including Sappho. For instance, in Odes I.1, Horace addresses Maecenas, confessing that he aims to be considered lyricis vatibus (among the lyric poets), demonstrating their shared knowledge of Archaic Greek poets like Sappho, thus fulfilling her presumption of literary immortality (previously discussed and skilfully framed in fragment 58).\(^4\) Horace published his third major work, The Odes, in two collections: Books I-III in 23 BCE and Book IV in 13 BCE. Horace’s 103 lyric poems of varying lengths employ Alcaic, Sapphic and Asclepiad metrical patterns.\(^5\) Never marrying, Horace died on November 27, 8 BCE.

Horace probably wrote Odes II.11, “To Quinctius Hirpinus,” (Alcaic meter, after Alcaeus, Sappho’s


contemporary) around 27/6 BCE, when the Cantabrians were challenging the Romans and the Scythians were yet to send their peace mission to Rome (25 BCE). Although Quinctius’ exact identity is unknown, Horace speaks warmly of a well-known and prosperous man, who fears old age, by the same name in Epistles I.16, “And you live rightly, if you truly live/as you are said to live by all of us/who have for so long talked of you as happy.” Thus, like Sappho and her female addressees, Horace addresses someone with whom he socializes (probably in the circle of Maecenas, since a collective group discusses his happiness).

Unlike Sappho’s poetic construction in fragment 58, which shifts from a concrete to an abstract description of old age, Horace’s Odes II.11 inverts Sappho’s order, shifting instead from an abstract to a concrete description of old age. Consistently, the ode begins with politics and ends with love, moving backwards from the future to the present, arriving emphatically at the here-and-now: old age. In the first stanza (Horace II.11, 1-4), Horace attempts to quell his friend’s anxieties about Rome’s foreign enemies, the Cantabrians and the Scythians. Horace’s brief reference marginalizes the enemy, transforming the ode into both a lament on old age and an emblem of the empire, internally at peace with enemies elsewhere. Confidently, Horace dismisses Quinctius’ implied concern with a rational remark: “Life’s too short for that” (4). In the second stanza (5-8), he cries out about the passage of time: “Youth and good looks go by pretty fast,” suggesting to Quinctius (and the implied larger audience) that the passage of time is beyond mortal control (5). Elaborating, he associates the passage of time with a compounding of

16 There were Cantabrian wars in 29 BCE, 26/5 BCE and 24 BCE (p 170).
problems. For example, in old age, sex becomes obscene and insomnia becomes commonplace (6-8). Horace’s matter-of-fact treatment of the aging process suggests that he has made peace with the physical realities of his own aging and in turn wants to eternalize his wisdom.

Instead of looking forward at what “the Cantabrians…might be planning” (emphasis mine), the remaining three stanzas describe the concrete realities of living for today (2). The third stanza uses nature imagery to describe the ephemerality of beauty: “Flowers don’t bloom forever” and the moon’s “brightness dims” (9-10). Using a rhetorical question, Horace emphasizes that looking forward – “trying to see what eyes are unable to see” – is pointless; rather, living in the present makes sense (12). Finally, in the fourth stanza, Horace locates his locus amoenus (perfect place) “under the olive trees,” depicting himself and his addressee as old men with canos...capillos (untranslated: white hair) happily in need of repose (13;15). While resting, Horace suggests to Quinctius, “let’s have a drink,” introducing wine: a symbol of forgetting one’s woes (i.e. old age), bliss, and association with the immortal Bacchus (13). Following, he contrasts his own (and Quinctius’) inactivity and physical appearance with the quickness and youthfulness of the servant puer (boy) sent to gather water (14).

In the final stanza (lines 17-20), Horace introduces a third character, Lyde, who embodies the erotic crises of both Horace and his addressee, Quinctius, and crowns Horace’s undeniable reference to Sappho with clarity. Instead of encouraging sexual relations (the men’s inability is aforementioned in stanza two), Lyde, similar to the alcohol the men are consuming, furthers their forgetfulness. Additionally, with an exotic name with Greek and poetical associations and hair arranged “in the Laconian fashion,” Lyde is meant to evoke Greek lyric poetry (19).

Additionally, Horace describes Lyde as possessing an “ivory lyre to sing and play us some music,” possibly an indirect reference to the poet Sappho (17). Concluding the poem with such imagery, Horace reinforces that in old age, man must rely on poetry, music (such as Sappho’s), and intoxication to occupy the here-and-now.

Despite the overwhelming number of parallels drawn between Sappho’s Fragment 58 and Horace’s *Odes* II.11, each lyric poet achieved individual distinction. Although Horace aimed to bring Latin lyric poetry to the level of Greek lyric poetry, as a male poet, Horace described women, including Sappho, as inextricably linked to aesthetics and music. Unlike Horace’s *Odes*, many of Sappho’s personal lyric fragments demanded monody, a literary form in which a singer performs a poem accompanied by music (usually from a lyre). In *Odes* II.13, after his close encounter with death, Horace exclaims, “How close I came to hearing the music of Sappho/complaining of those young women of her island.” According to Horace, Sappho’s music belongs in the past, while his poetry belongs in the present. In *Odes* IV.9, Horace further emphasizes his distance from Sappho, remarking, “And Sappho’s passion lives and breathes confided/to the strings of Sappho’s lyre.” In fact, when Horace mentions Sappho, he deliberately mentions her connection to the lyre as something he lacks, isolating himself from the past, females, and Greece in order to pay homage to himself. Consequently, although dubbed ‘lyric poetry’, Horace’s *Odes* functioned as speeches or readings for his literate Roman society, while Sappho’s fragments functioned as songs for her Greek followers. Although Sappho’s lyre captures her literary immortality, Horace expresses that he, too, possesses literary immortality, but confined to his words, rather than emotion

20 In fragment 118, Sappho addresses the instrument, “But come,/my heavenly lute,/take voice.”
21 With that said, Quintillian (X.I.96) claims that Horace is the only successful Latin lyric poet.
felt during a dramatic performance. Nevertheless, having acknowledged that significant differences exist between Sappho and Horace, the poets’ emphasis on old age indubitably informs their poetry, juxtaposing their mortality as human beings with their immortality as sources of literary genius.

Although both Sappho and Horace necessitate the motif of living for today by presenting a negative view of old age and summarizing the present, they exhibit only one societal attitude towards old age. In fact, many ancient authors present a positive view of old age, since societal attitudes vary greatly across cultures and times. Horace’s Augustan Rome looked to Sappho’s Archaic Greece for inspiration, making the comparison between Sappho and Horace viable. However, for example, in his 8th century BCE epic poetry, Homer presents old age as a sign of maturity and wisdom. Author Thomas Falkner sheds light on Homer’s positive view:

The passage into old age is less a process of disengagement than of transition to a different but valued social role. Although old age precludes the elderly from certain activities, their status is determined by other factors: the political power they have accumulated, their knowledge and experience, their spiritual and moral resources. In Book IV of Homer’s Odyssey, Nestor assumes this “valued social role,” describing the authority associated with his old age to Agamemnon: “I shall be among the riders, and command them with word and counsel; such is the privilege of the old men” (320-1). Consequently, Agamemnon strives

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to emulate Nestor with his presumed “privilege of the old men.” Sappho and Horace counter the concept of old age as representing a “valued social role,” describing the negative end of the spectrum with powerful and enduring clarity.

Understanding their own mortality and the misfortunes of old age motivated the lyric poets Sappho and Horace to embrace the motif of living for today, despite nature’s destructive will. Resigning themselves to the physical realities of old age, Sappho and Horace turned towards poetry as a means of conveying their distress and immortalizing their legacy, literally.

Acknowledgements: I discussed my paper topic with Professor Ker before beginning the writing process.

References


Note: This paper was originally written for Professor James Ker’s Spring 2012 section of CLST 243: Authors and Audiences in the Greek and Roman World.
Recycling Homer in Greco-Roman Egypt: The Appreciation and Consumption of Homeric Papyri

By Laura Santander

Introduction
Perusing the Homeric papyri collection at the University of Michigan –Ann Arbor, I found two fragments that were reused: one as a personal letter and the other as a wine *annona*. This led to the question which I will attempt to answer in this paper: why would someone recycle a Homeric text? Homer’s works are considered classics. In most of the Western world, they are required reading for a cultured person. Though typically introduced in a classroom setting, the general public is quite familiar with Homer. The sacking of Troy and names like Achilles, Odysseus, and Helen are well known. Directors have made movies on the subject, authors have written historical fiction, academics have translated the text in many different styles, and even children’s book authors have made simple and engaging versions of his stories. Did people in the ancient world not value Homer as highly as we do nowadays?

Before beginning to answer that question, we must acknowledge the limitations of the evidence. Many esteemed literary figures proclaim Homer as the greatest poet; it would be interesting to complement the literary approval with what the physical texts can reveal about their value.

Of all papyrus fragments that have been found, Homeric texts are by far the most numerous. This fact comes with the assumption that majority equals popularity and value, but this should be taken with a grain of salt. For example, not every fragment has been found, so the papyri pool of texts may be heavily skewed. Also, weather and temperature limits confine most of the existing fragment pool
to North Africa. Papyri were used all over the Mediterranean; however, they need a hot and dry environment to survive through the ages. Typically other sites around the Mediterranean are too wet to effectively preserve papyrus and it is rare to find any fragments outside of North Africa.

I will attempt to first answer the question of Homer’s importance in the ancient world by examining his popularity and value at the time. Then, I will return to the original question of why someone in the ancient world would recycle his or her Homeric text.

**Homer’s Popularity**

By the time of Greco-Roman Egypt, Homer was part of the literary canon and integrated into various aspects of everyday life. Jean-Luc Fournet quotes Claire Préaux describing the reading of Homeric poetry as “*courante et normale*” (“common and normal”) in the ancient world.²⁴ Despite Homer’s prominence, not everyone owned the entirety of his works. Letters exist in which the sender is asking to borrow a certain book from a friend. Clearly, there was a scholarly or educational demand for Homer; however, the scarcity of this sort of request can argue the opposite, that Homer was not popular. Fournet considers this and counters that the lack of quantity actually can reveal that people did not need to borrow Homer often because they already had their own copy, “*plus un auteur est répandu, moins il y a de gens pour en réclamer le prêt*” (“the more widespread an author is, the less likely people are going to ask to borrow him.”)²⁵ In some cases, a person would write out his or her own Homeric text. The University of Michigan has a fragment (inv. 1318) in its collection that consists of two fragments from other scrolls pasted together and a Homeric

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²⁵ Fournet, 132.
passage written on it. Apparently, he was popular enough that someone felt it was acceptable to scrap other works for a Homeric passage.

Off the page, his poems or specific scenes were performed on many occasions during religious festivities and perhaps even in honor of Homer himself. Ptolemy IV built a temple dedicated to him, so there may have even been a cult surrounding his figure. His poems were also a popular artistic subject. People would decorate their houses with scenes from the *Iliad*. For example, a man named Capiton wrote a letter to Terens (his friend and probable client), asking him if he would like to commission Homeric scenes for his home. The interesting nuance is that Capiton did not ask Terens what he would like or list several options. He directly suggested Homer as if his experience taught him that clients have a strong tendency to ask for Homeric scenes. In the ruins of Pompeii, the House of the Tragic Poet contains multiple examples of scenes from Homer painted on the walls of its atrium. Fournet concisely summarizes, “*Homère se révèle omniprésent dans la vie privée et sociale des Grecs d’Égypte. Il marque leur vie intellectuelle autant que matérielle*” (‘Homer is revealed to be omnipresent in the public and private lives of Greeks in Egypt. He influences their intellectual life as much as their material one”).

“Homer is a God, Not a Man”

Having established that Homer had widespread popularity, now his reputation and value must be determined. Was he famous or infamous? Was he regarded as the modern perception of Shakespeare and his *Romeo and Juliet* or as Stephanie Meyer and her *Twilight*? One method of

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27 Fournet, 135.
28 Fournet, 136.
29 Fournet, 137.
30 Fournet, 138.
determining his value is by examining the educational system and curricula. According to Raffaella Cribiore, “some Homer, a bit of Euripides, and some gnomic quotations from Isocrates formed the cultural package of students at the primary level.”

Cribiore highlights the prominence of Homer at every stage of a student’s education. At the primary level, the teacher would write out a Homeric passage for his students to copy. Through repetition, these students practiced writing their letters and penmanship. At the intermediate level, students would advance to the next step and start reading Homer with a commentary typically made by the teacher. They would have a list of mythological names to assist them in keeping characters in order, and glossaries for the more difficult and archaic words. Finally, for those who reached the advanced stage of their education, Homer was read all the way through and also served as an aid for rhetoric.

Literary texts in particular are more likely to be written by a professional scribe, especially if they are going to be in a library or bought for someone’s personal use. The writing tends to be more stylized, more of a script or book hand, than handwriting or personal hand. The scribal letters are uniform and less individualized. However, because this was a Homer-laden curriculum, professional scribes were not the only ones writing out this text. Teachers or tutors would write out Homeric passages for their pupils, students would copy sections for their own use, or scholars would comment on certain verses; therefore, many fragments have partial Homeric verses written in a less elegant personal hand.

A second method to ascertain Homer’s value is by examining what other authors have written about him. One writer in particular gives him rather magnanimous attributes. Despite the fact that he intended to censor Homer completely

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out of his ideal city-state, the philosopher Plato wrote in his *Republic*:

> λέγουσιν ὡς τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαίδευκεν οὖτος ὁ ποιητής καὶ πρὸς διοίκησιν τε καὶ παιδείαν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων ἄξιος ἀναλαβόντι μανθάνειν τε καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν ποιητήν πάντα τὸν αὐτὸν βίον κατασκευασάμενον ζῆν, φιλεῖν μὲν χρῆ καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι ὡς ὄντας βελτίστους εἰς ὅσον δύναται, καὶ συγχωρεῖν Ὄμηρον ποιητικῶτατον εἶναι καὶ πρῶτον τῶν τραγῳδοποιῶν.

They say that this poet has educated Hellas, and that for the administration and education of human matters it is worthy to take him up for learning and for living by, by arranging our whole life according to this poet, it is necessary to love and salute them as doing the best they can, and to concede that Homer is the most poetic of poets and the first of tragedians. (10.606e-7a)

He wrote the *Republic* around 380 BCE—about 400 years before the time period of Greco-Roman Egypt; thus, Homer had already been established as one of the greatest poets to exist. In the 1st century CE and later, his veneration was retained in the school curriculum and, with temples and festivities in his name, had even extended beyond a purely literary and textual basis. Homeric reverence seemed to be engrained at a young age. Evidence of this is present in a couple school exercises on which the following statement “θεὸς οὐκ ἄνθρωπος Ὅμηρος” (“Homer is a god, not a man”) was found.³³

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Recycling Homer

Recycling paper nowadays involves blue bins, pulp, and an off-color product that can be used for an amalgam of tasks. In Egypt, papyrus sheets were produced very differently, involving flattening and layering the papyrus plant. Once the sheet was used, there was no ‘recycling’ method for it to be marketable again for writing. People would either sponge off as much ink as they could,\(^\text{34}\) write on the back of the sheet, or cut off blank sections of other documents and paste them together to make a new sheet. Typically, a ‘recycled’ sheet could not be resold because all the evidence of its prior use could not be completely removed, so it was often used as scrap or draft paper.\(^\text{35}\)

The Michigan collection has two interesting Homeric pieces, which have been reused as scrap paper.\(^\text{36}\) Knowing how popular and venerated Homer was as an author, the motivations behind why anyone would recycle him should be scrutinized. Homer was a popular and revered poet at a level unmatched by any other author; it seems unnatural and almost blasphemous for someone to actively erase or cut into pieces of his work and use it as scrap paper, and yet there is evidence that this was done. I will first discuss different possible reasons why people would reuse their scrolls more generally, and then examine in more detail the specific cases in the Michigan collection.

One option why someone would reuse their scrolls is perhaps the result of inheritance. Cribiore mentions that scrolls could be inherited and specifically uses the example of Aurelia Ptolemais, a woman who inherited scrolls from her father.\(^\text{37}\) It is possible that the children and/or grandchildren who were inheriting their parent’s collection did not have the


\(^{\text{35}}\) Skeat, 81.

\(^{\text{36}}\) These 2 fragments will be discussed in detail in the next section.

\(^{\text{37}}\) Cribiore, *Gymnastics* 88.
same level of literacy and could not read the scrolls; thus, did not know what they were reusing. Women in particular did not often make it past the intermediate level of education,\textsuperscript{38} making authors such as Homer or Plato difficult to read without the assistance of glossaries or a tutor. They also could have viewed their inheritance as simply grandpa’s old scrolls and not seen any real value in them. It would be wasteful to throw out the papyri instead of using the blank backs for their own purposes.

A second option as to why could be because of the state of the scroll itself. Literary texts are more likely to be written by a professional scribe, especially if they are going to be in a library or bought for someone’s personal use. The writing tends to be more stylized, more of a script than handwriting. It is possible that certain bookhands (or scripts) would go in and out of fashion, and thus some people would update their scrolls to keep up with the styles. Perhaps the less wealthy would have a cheaper version by a less-skilled scribe and replace it later with a more professional version. In Homer’s specific case, scribes were not the only ones writing his poetry. Because of his prominence in education, many teachers would write out passages for their students to copy; thus, many fragments are in a personal hand. After the passage is not used anymore, the teacher could use the back of the sheet for a shopping list if he wished. The same would apply to the students reusing the backs of their school exercises. However, the most straightforward reason why someone would reuse his or her Homeric text would be because of a scroll’s physical damage. If the scroll was ripped in half or had holes perforating multiple layers and rendering the text unreadable, it would be common sense to replace the scroll. Richer estates could have scribes of their own who would recopy damaged scrolls as part of their employment and later reuse the old scrolls for non-literary purposes.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{38} Cribiore, \textit{Gymnastics} 56.
\textsuperscript{39} Fournet, 142.
A third and last option could simply be that need and/or convenience overruled the literary value. The owner needed a piece of papyri for whatever important reason at the moment and grabbed whatever was lying on his or her desk. Papyrus sheets were not particularly expensive; in some personal letters, the sender could afford to include some blank sheets to encourage the addressee to reply. However it would be inaccurate to label them as cheap. Papyrus was not a commodity readily available to the poor, so it did involve a significant expense. Even so, people must have encountered a moment in their lives that required them to overlook the literary value of a text for the free paper. Perhaps a receipt for a Roman tax collector knocking on their door was reason enough.

Two Fragments of the Michigan Collection

The Michigan collection has two interesting Homeric pieces, which have been reused as scrap paper. Knowing how popular and venerated Homer was as an author, it is surprising to find such fragments reused as scrap.

The first papyrus fragment (P. Mich. 2931) had lines from Book 2 of the *Iliad*, which were later sponged off and replaced with a receipt for an *annona* of wine (Fig. 1). Someone erased Homer for a tax receipt. The writer took the erased page, turned it upside down, and wrote the receipt at the bottom (or at the top if it is rotated back around as it is in Fig. 1). All that is left of the Homeric text are the remnants of a title and some poorly erased script on the right hand side. The writing on the right is the beginning of the second book of the *Iliad*. The remains of the original script on the right hand margin appear to be written by a scribe. The letters are small, practiced, and neatly close together. The writing is regular and even—more characteristic of a professional scribe

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40 Skeat, 86.
41 Skeat, 75.
than a teacher or student. Also, because of the title (the hovering shadow of a beta) and what appears to be a ruled column of text, we can hypothesize that this Homeric text was more likely a high-quality personal copy of the book rather than a passage from a school exercise. It is possible that this text was reused because the scroll became defective in some way. Perhaps that scribal script was not in style anymore, or the scroll was damaged. Or, possibly, it was the only papyrus available at the time and need overpowered its Homeric value.

The second fragment (P. Mich. 1576) contains some lines from Book 1 of the Iliad (Fig. 2). The writing is not as neat as the first one, especially along the bottom, and there is even a blatant correction along the bottom. The letters are large and not close together, and even the lines are not as equally spaced as the previous fragment. It is possible that this could be a passage that a teacher copied out for his students, the exercise itself, or a practicing scribe. Based on the handwriting alone, it is difficult to speculate its purpose with some certainty. The interesting part about this fragment is that the back was reused for a private letter (Fig. 3). The letter was written a while after the original text on the front. The owner or whoever found the sheet turned it over and took advantage of the blank space. Unfortunately, the writer and addressee’s names are lost, and the letter contains mostly staple greetings and regards to certain friends and family. Why this person reused this sheet is difficult to tell; however, upon closer examination of the hole in the middle of the fragment, one can see the writer of the private letter avoided it. The word ἀλεξανδρία stops at the iota, skips the hole, and continues with the alpha. Perhaps the original document was damaged and ruined; thus, this piece was reused as scrap for a private letter. If it originally was a part of a school

43 Published. Priest NE, ZPE 46, 53-4, 1982.
exercise, it is also possible that the owner could have reused it because he or she did not need it anymore. If the owner had thrown it away, someone else could have easily found it and decided to make use of the back.

**Conclusion**

Homer was a renowned poet. The Greeks in Greco-Roman Egypt were taught to venerate him at a young age and his works were present at all levels of education. Even outside of the classroom, the poet’s work stood out. Homes had frescoes lining their walls with Homeric scenes, and towns had live performances of the rage of Achilles. Homer in some shape or form permeated an ancient Greek’s everyday life. Knowing the prominence of his character, it was surprising to find that people had erased and reused their Homeric texts for mundane tasks.

Literary texts in general are not often reused in this fashion. According to T. C. Skeat, about 91% of literary papyri are not reused. There are many possible reasons for the reuse of a papyrus. Sometimes a child inherits scrolls from his or her father and uses the scrolls as free paper, ignorant of their contents or simply uninterested in them. Sometimes the writing is below par or out of style and the owner wishes to replace it with a better copy. Sometimes the scroll is physically damaged, or after studying the Homeric passages, a student discards them. Sometimes unsuccessful books are printed and their pages are used as scrap.

Although there is no concrete answer as to why Greeks in Egypt would reuse Homeric papyri, there are several options to explore. Specifically, the possibility that people could have chosen convenience over literary value can be

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45 Skeat, 82.
46 Cribiore, *Gymnastics* 148. Cribiore mentions how school exercises were often times left in dumps.
47 Skeat, 83.
revealing in regards to the relationship between an ancient owner and his or her physical text.

Figure 1: P. Mich. Inv. 2931.
Figure 2: P. Mich. Inv. 1576, recto, Homer side.

Figure 3: P. Mich. inv. 1576, verso, Personal letter.
References


Plato. *The Republic*.


Note: This paper was originally written for the Summer Research Opportunity Program at the University of Michigan under the guidance of Professor Arthur Verhoogt.
The Making of a Statesman: Demosthenes’ *Philippics* and the Education of James Madison

By Madeleine Brown

Demosthenes, Athenian statesman and orator, served both as a political statesman in fourth century BCE Athens and as a powerful figure in eighteenth-century rhetorical education. In the 350s BCE, Demosthenes became alarmed at the Athenians’ lack of response to Philip of Macedon’s conquests and delivered four speeches – the *Philippics* – prodding them to action against Philip. Philip had strengthened the Macedonian army and Demosthenes was concerned about the freedom of Athens. His *Philippics* have been carefully examined by students of rhetoric ever since, especially in the universities of the eighteenth century American colonies. The *Third Philippic* is particularly notable for its rhetorical strength, in contrast to the *Fourth Philippic*, which is marked by a desperate tone and stronger language. The *Third Philippic* would have had an impact – rhetorically, politically and emotionally – on a young man attending a university like Princeton in the eighteenth century.

James Madison, a Founding Father and the architect of the Constitution, was raised in Virginia and received an education at Princeton University where the classics were an integral part of his education. Madison, a student of oratory, would have learned much from the rhetorical strength and style of Demosthenes’ *Third Philippic*. Demosthenes’ goal in this speech is to goad the Athenians into action. He repeats the same refrain: chastising the Athenians for specific faults, and then reminding them that they can turn around the present situation for the good of the state before it is too late. A young man like Madison may have been reminded of
Odysseus’ speech to Agamemnon’s troops in Book Two of the *Iliad*, another work he was sure to have read. Odysseus relies on the same technique: alternating chastisement and encouragement to recall recalcitrant men back to military service and the battles involved in the long Trojan War.

Demosthenes pointedly reminds the Athenians of the values they hold dear, and explains how their lack of reaction to Philip reflects a diminishment of those values. Athenians cherish freedom of speech, even affording it to foreigners and slaves. Why, then, is the threat posed by Philip absent from political rhetoric? This silent taboo is destroying the Athenian freedom of speech and will ultimately harm the institution of democracy itself because no one has been brave enough to challenge Philip even in speech. Demosthenes also points out the Athenians’ love of peace, now conflated with weakness and manifesting in inaction and indifference. If Athenians continue on this slothful path and do not fight now, they will have no choice but to fight later, destroying the peace they hold so dear. Demosthenes suggests that the Athenians channel their love of peace to fight immediately to secure a longer, more stable peace in the future. Demosthenes’ emphasis on the core values of Athenian society must have stirred an eighteenth-century college student in the Colonies. Such a student at Princeton would have been surrounded by anti-British sentiment and would have understood the Colonies to have a different set of values from the British, emphasizing freedom above all else.

Another related rhetorical device used by Demosthenes is moralizing. He makes much of his hatred of bribery and avarice, a sentiment that was probably shared by an eighteenth-century student of rhetoric, and identifies and elevates the value of courage with the effect of inspiring the Athenians’ – and no doubt the student’s – disgust in the face of rampant corruption. Knowing that Athenian society holds piety and morality dear, Demosthenes denounces Philip not only for his political machinations, but also for his disregard
for Greek morals. Philip does not fight in the normal Greek way, preferring to operate with distrust and trickery. Even the hated Spartans, traditional enemies of Athens, fight with honor. Philip has also been marching through Greece, overtaking poleis and establishing tyrannies. Demosthenes carefully emphasizes this fate, which Athens is sure to share if its citizens remain inactive.

Demosthenes’ Third Philippic would also have political influence on a young man studying at Princeton in the eighteenth century. Demosthenes highlights the inefficiencies of the Athenian government, providing James Madison – architect of the American republic – with a vivid example of the perils of pure democracy. Demosthenes expresses frustration with Athenian democracy, and hints at Philip’s plans to take advantage of the inefficiencies of such a chaotic system. The Athenians’ intentions seem to be in the right place at times, but the wheels of democracy have to be set in motion, and then grind slowly, before anything constructive ensues. A representative democracy instead of a direct one might have struck Madison as more effective.

An eighteenth-century student of politics might also have learned about recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of an enemy. Demosthenes maintains that the Athenians cannot fight Philip in the same way they would fight the Spartans. Philip utilizes trickery rather than raw military might. Such an approach would have struck a chord with a young revolutionary of the eighteenth century. The American colonists had already fought wars on their land and were intimately familiar with the territory and the tactics needed there. The British tendency to do the opposite – fight on American soil like they fought everywhere else – contributed to their heavy losses.

Possibly the most important political lesson derived from the Third Philippic is that of unity. Demosthenes recognizes that it would be impossible to implement his suggestions without a unified Athens, and even calls for a
Panhellenic alliance. He asserts, though, that an internally unified Athens is most important, a theme important to a student of politics in the Colonies at the tumultuous end of the eighteenth century. Aware that he could be part of a new national narrative after a potential break with the British, he would have been struck by this call for cohesiveness.

The Third Philippic would also have had an emotional impact on the young Princeton student of the eighteenth century. Demosthenes’ constant references to the tyranny of Philip would have been familiar and moving to such a young man, educated in an environment hostile to the British tyranny. A young student of rhetoric and politics might also have felt uplifted by the notion of victory through hard work, and learning from and overcoming challenges, a theme reflected in Scripture (e.g. the Joseph narrative) and prevalent moral literature of the day.

Demosthenes’ definition of patriotism would have especially resounded with a young man who, like Madison, was studying in a society with a high level of dissatisfaction with the government. Demosthenes maintains that love of one’s country is not enough. The true patriot must understand his country, recognize its deficiencies and not be afraid to point them out for the good of all.

The young Madison might also have learned a lesson in caution and moderation. He would admire Demosthenes’ passion and power of persuasion, but would have borne in mind the fact that without a strong backing, Demosthenes was on his own against the Macedonians. Although the Third Philippic was successful in driving the Athenians to action, Demosthenes became unpopular and later was exiled by the Athenians. Athens ultimately fell to Macedonia, and Demosthenes was forced by Antipater to commit suicide.

There is a key difference between the audience Demosthenes was addressing and the audience a young Colonial revolutionary would have addressed: Demosthenes was dealing with an undecided nation, while a young
revolutionary would have to direct pre-existing anti-British sentiment to the right course of action. There had already been violent skirmishes between colonists and the British army; the Boston Massacre, after all, occurred in 1770. The Founding Fathers and American revolutionaries might have known that there was great strength in the sort of unity Demosthenes begged from his audience but ultimately did not achieve. Perhaps this is why James Madison and the Founding Fathers, learning a lesson from Demosthenes, succeeded where Demosthenes and the Athenians failed.

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The Survival of Winged Victory in Christian Late Antiquity

By Jesse Dubois

This paper seeks to explain the problems inherent in the continued depiction of the pagan goddess Victory in early Christian art. While winged angels eventually replaced Victory in iconography, this transformation was not immediate. Victory imagery remained current for hundreds of years amidst a ubiquitous trend toward monotheism among Christians and pagans alike, while other traditional personified deities (Pax, Concordia, Spes, Fortuna) disappeared entirely. This paper presents several possible explanations for her survival, none of which are mutually exclusive: her crystallization in triumphal imagery, unique aspects of her divinity, and her close visual association with the winged angel.

The rise of Christianity in the Roman world effected numerous changes in the art and iconography employed by the diverse inhabitants of the Mediterranean. However, just as numerous are the examples of artistic continuation. As a rare example of a religion that overtook an empire ‘from the inside’, Christian iconography is deeply rooted in that of its pagan predecessors, and these pagan exempla were quickly transferred into Christian images and symbols after the toleration of the early fourth century. Relatively few relics of pagan religious iconography were maintained after this transition, largely due to Christianity’s signature monotheism. However, not all pagan deities went extinct during the Christian era, and winged Victory seems to have had a life of her own in late antique imagery. Modern scholarship tends to neglect certain aspects of Victory’s divinity that problematize her inclusion in Christian art. A recent work on the imperial cult emphasizes the Pax Augusta and the Fortuna Augusta,
but neglects to mention that the *Victoria Augusta* was stressed with the creation of an altar to Victory in the Forum Romanum\(^4^8\). Further, writers on the topic of late antique art and coinage who mention that Victory had a booming cult following in Rome do not seek to explain *how* she was transferred into a merely artistic niche.\(^4^9\) This paper will attempt to explain the problems and causes of Victory’s continued existence in late antiquity.

To begin, we must review notable examples of Victory in her Christian context. As is to be expected, the majority of these will be imperial, such as the equestrian image of Constantius II shown in Figure 1. Here, the winged figure’s *palla* covers both shoulders, but her armband and her bust-line identify her as a Victory, and the ‘Chi-Rho’ on the shield behind the emperor clearly demarcates this as a Christian image. But Victory is not found only in imperial settings; a fragmentary image shows a Victory supporting a laurel wreath that encases a jeweled cross and the Greek letters alpha and omega, typical insignia of Christ (fig. 2). Her identification as a Victory, and not an angel, is indicated again by her costume: she wears an armband and her drapery covers only one shoulder, both telltale characteristics of femininity in Roman iconography at a time when angels were depicted as male figures.\(^5^0\) Typical Christian imagery utilizes angels to flank religious medallions and employs Victories for only secular medallions; thus, this image shows an anomalous mixing of the two types.

Another celebrated member of this group is the so-called Barberini diptych (fig. 3), which depicts the Emperor Justinian flanked by two winged Victories, one being offered


as a figurine and offering a laurel wreath, and the other holding a palm frond. Just above, a bust of Christ is displayed by two angels in the same pose as the Victory in Figure 2. These Victories are differentiated from the angels in the image by their gender, and therefore their costume; the angels appear chaste, donning the *pallium* typical of an early Christian male figure, while one of the Victories is identified by her exposed breast.\(^{51}\) This diptych shows that not only were angels and Victories contemporaneous in Christian art, they could even both be present on the same image (albeit different panels). Yet, the majority of Victory’s extant appearances in late antiquity are found in numismatic evidence. From Constantine until well after the reign of the last emperor of the West, there is hardly a single Roman emperor who does not display Victory prominently on his coinage.\(^{52}\) The last known image of a personified deity other than Victory minted on imperial coinage is an image of Pax, distributed between 337 and 340 CE under Constantius II. From this date forward, images of personified deities cease to exist in numismatic evidence; however, the words *pax, felicitas,* and *spes* continue to appear on coins. They are sometimes accompanied by images of the reigning emperor, but most often, and most interestingly, by an image of Victory herself. It appears, then, that not only did Victory emerge unscathed from the sweeping changes in religious and imperial iconography, but she managed to have her fellow personifications subsumed under her own image.

Furthermore, Victory seems to be a rare survivor of the Christian mob’s systematic attack on pagan statuary in the late fourth century. A statue of Victory near the Curia was


\(^{52}\) David Sear, *Roman Coins and their Values* (London: B.A. Seaby, 1964), 231-279. This section is also used to validate the remainder of the claims in this paragraph. Also see Grant, *The Roman Forum*, 125.
never the victim of religious aggression,\textsuperscript{53} but other iconic examples of statuary were utterly desecrated by the enraged, monotheist rabble. Archaeologists have even noted that certain temples in the northern Empire were so violently destroyed by ‘Christian ardor’ that no more than two capitals remain intact.\textsuperscript{54} As a case-in-point, a catalogue prepared by the Metropolitan Museum of Art shows over six hundred examples of early Christian artworks, including numerous examples of Victory, yet the deities Pax, Fortuna, Spes and Concordia do not occur in a single image.\textsuperscript{55} This is not due to a lack of opportunity; the Christian rhetoric emphasizes the hope and peace of Christ, but it is only his victory that is embodied by pagan deities.

The continued depiction of Victory by Christian patrons, especially in imperial contexts, poses problems for our understanding of the conflict between monotheism and traditional paganism in late antiquity. Victory enjoyed a large civic cult in Rome. Livy records the founding of her temple, either on the Palatine or the Capitoline, in 294 BCE (Livy X.33.9), and records another early shrine to \textit{Victoria Virgo} constructed by Cato the Elder in 193 BCE (Livy XXXV.9.6). He also relates a description of a holy procession ending at the Temple of Victory on the Palatine, verifying its use as a cult location (Livy XXIX.14.14). Furthermore, Victory was one of the featured gods of the mass cult-revival during the Augustan era. Cult locations such as the \textit{Ara Pacis} and the temple of \textit{Fortuna Augusta} in Pompeii receive a majority of the scholarly attention because they are extant and fit well into the simplified Augustan program,\textsuperscript{56} but Victory was a part of this revival as well: in 29 BCE, Augustus established

\textsuperscript{53} Brian Croke and Jill Harries, \textit{Religious Conflict in Fourth-Century Rome} (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982), 51.
\textsuperscript{55} Weitzmann, \textit{Age of Spirituality}.
\textsuperscript{56} Gradel, \textit{Emporor Worship and Roman Religion},103-105; 138-139.
an altar of Victory in front of the Curia, as well as a large cult statue nearby. It would be around this altar that the fate of Victory’s continued worship in the Christian era was to be decided.

Sacrifice on the altar was a longstanding senatorial tradition by the fourth century CE when the Christian majority began to despise the continued cult activities. In 357 CE, Christian emperor Constantius II ordered its removal and the cessation of worship; yet strangely, he made no mention of the cult statue. Some years later the altar would be replaced in front of the Curia, only to be removed again under the young emperor Gratian in 384 CE, whose decision was made largely under the influence of Ambrose, bishop of Milan. Importantly, the polemic of Ambrose never once mentions the statue of Victory or advocates for its removal; in fact, while the statue’s ultimate fate is unknown, it seems to have been removed due to barbarian invasion rather than at the behest of monotheists. This begs the question: why should Constantius II order the removal of the altar of Victory while keeping the cult statue intact and placing the pagan goddess prominently on his imagery (fig 1)? The debate over this altar is telling of Victory’s position in the larger debate between Christians, pagans, and those in between over the muddled topic of monotheism.

The religious and philosophical underpinnings of early Roman Christianity are fairly well documented. Peter Brown convincingly asserts that the Christian belief system was formed under the influence of Greek Neoplatonist philosophies that proliferated among the upper classes during late antiquity. These ideas were especially crucial to the formation of the doctrine of monotheism, and Christian

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57 Croke and Harries, Religious Conflict, 29.
58 Ibid., The letters of Ambrose are found on pages 30-35, 40-50; the discussion of the statue’s fate is on page 51.
thinkers put forth numerous interpretations that sought to establish a stable practice of worship. While Christians believed in ‘One True God’, many in the lower-class also revered angels and other holy characters as divinities. In the fourth century, these angels began to acquire a cult of their own, and high-ranking Christians were forced to find a solution to what many believed to be idol-worship. Augustine, perhaps the most influential early Christian writer, sought to elucidate the problem with a distinction between Deus and opera Dei; the Creator, and the created. Worship was only fitting of the Creator, but the objects of his creation (the angels), even if endowed with extra-human powers, were prohibited from worship; they were mere reflections of God’s power. Another writer, Longinianus, offers a different take. He describes the One True God as containing a multitude of forces (impletis virtutibus) that are manifested in the angels. These angels do not constitute reflections but extensions of God’s power; thus, their worship is meaningless unless understood to be worship of God himself. Both writers clearly affirm the existence of a single God and render meaningless or sinful the worship of lesser deities.

At the same time, Christian polemicists ridiculed paganism by highlighting the overwhelming vastness of their pantheon. Augustine presents a laundry list of pagan gods, worshipped in inscrutably specific circumstances, to prove his point. However, this view of paganism is demonstrably outdated in the time of Augustine, and employed merely as a rhetorical tool. As Neoplatonism infiltrated the Mediterranean

63 Ibid., 175-176.
64 Ibid., 169.
world, common views of the traditional pantheon began to be fine-tuned. Many of the personified deities who previously enjoyed their own private cults were seen as mere “members or aspects” of Jupiter. This henotheism is traced by some even back to the Ciceronian age. In Cicero’s later writing, he seeks to explain the art of law-giving in a very Platonic sense, calling it the “ratio recta summa Iovis.” (Cicero de Legibus ii. 10) Scholars have taken this to mean that a single deity is responsible for all ordered creation, and rules over it in a way not seen in earlier canonical religious thought. As time went on, vestiges of ‘One High God’, distinct from the ‘One True God’ of Christendom, began to replace the multiplicities of deities mentioned by Augustine as pagan thought-leaders embraced Neoplatonism more and more strongly.

In this way, both pagan henotheism and Christian monotheism became quite aware of the impact of the worship of lesser deities, and Victory’s prominent place in the iconography of the age becomes extremely problematic. Victory certainly enjoyed a large cult following, and it is similarly evident that both Christians and pagans were turning away from vast, pantheistic worship and moving toward monotheism. These parallel phenomena demand an explanation, and the following discussion will explain the ideas that set Victory apart from other pagan deities in terms of iconography, religious role, and her visual appearance, allowing her to survive in the Christian era.

Triumphal imagery had already crystallized by the late empire, and this no doubt played a part in Victory’s endurance. While Roman triumphs were originally celebrated for specific victories, emperors by the late third century utilized this imagery perpetually, even in the absence of concrete military success. At this time, the historical victor is

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65 Ibid., 171.
67 Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, 50-52.
no longer related to only his own triumph; he becomes the ‘ubique victor’, and his victory becomes ‘victoria perpetua’.\footnote{Hans Peter L’Orange, 
\textit{Art Forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 31.}
No longer do only the nations actually conquered by the current emperor appear in his triumphal iconography, but all the enemies of Rome. This is seen most prominently on the Arch of Constantine; almost all treatments of the Arch focus on the ‘generalization’ of the emperor through imagery.\footnote{Nancy Ramage and Andrew Ramage, \textit{Roman Art: 5th Edition} (Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2009), 345-349. L’Orange, \textit{Art Forms and Civic Life}, 31. J. Elsner, \textit{Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 81-82.}
Constantine creates an ‘emperor type’ by recycling triumphal scenes of Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, and Trajan. He creates an ‘enemy type’ by showing images of Dacians, Germans, and the followers of Maxentius. Scholars also discuss the effect this generalization has had on processional imagery, but they never go so far as to apply this change in iconography to the decorative scheme, of which Victory is a large part.\footnote{L’Orange, \textit{Art Forms and Civic Life}, 95-96.}
It is likely that through Constantine’s condensing of iconography, Victory loses her religious implications and stands only for Rome’s victory. As the most closely associated deity to imperial triumphs, she becomes generalized in a way that does not extend to any other deity. This explanation would adequately address the continued existence of the cult statue of Victory in front of the Curia – it remained both a symbol of Rome’s victory and, because of its connection to its patron, Augustus, the emperor’s \textit{victoria perpetua}.\footnote{This idea is voiced in Grant, \textit{The Roman Forum}, 125; though he states that Victory had become a symbol of Rome’s greatness without speculating on the method of transformation.}

Another answer may be found in the very letter sent by Ambrose to Gratian during the debate over the altar of Victory in the late fourth century:

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\footnote{The idea that Victory is a symbol of Rome’s greatness without speculating on the method of transformation is voiced in Grant, \textit{The Roman Forum}, 125.}
She whom the Africans worship as Celeste, the Persians as Mithras, most worship as Venus; the name varies but the divinity does not. Thus they believe even victory is a goddess, although she is something offered, not a power in her own right. She is a gift not a queen; she is effectiveness of the legions not a power of reverence. Can this be a great goddess, then, who proves herself by a crowd of soldiers, or is granted from the outcome of battles?  

By removing her divinity, Ambrose allows the image of Victory to be included in imperial art. She is not a deity in herself, nor is she an extension or aspect of the One True God, but exists merely as modern readers would describe her: a personification. Examining the iconography of Victory, one can see that she occupied a hazy middle ground in the pagan theology that governed the militaristic mindset of the empire. She was simultaneously a goddess with the power to grant victory to an emperor, and an embodiment of that victory. This is shown visually by the Barberini diptych (fig. 3). On the left panel we see Victory herself being offered to Justinian, while on the right Victory is the benefactor, offering a laurel wreath to the emperor. Perhaps this dichotomy allowed Victory to avoid the persecution that plagued the other pagan gods: when the major cults were being eradicated, the image of Victory was retained as a symbol; when the other symbols of benefits prominent in imperial iconography (spes, felicitas, pax) were being removed, she was so deeply connected with the concept of the triumph that her removal was impossible.

A final reason for Victory’s survival may have been her close visual association with the winged angel from the fourth century onward. In the canonical texts of the Christian bible, angels are never once described as winged; they are

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72 Croke and Harries, Religious Conflict, 48.
simply messengers from God who ‘appear’\(^{73}\) or ‘come down’\(^{74}\) from heaven. Thus, the earliest examples of angels in Christian iconography were non-winged, male, and were never used for artistic adornment (i.e., fig 4).\(^{75}\) The appearance of wings in angel iconography creates a motif that is completely dissociated from these early examples. This switch seems to have two roughly simultaneous causes in the late third and early fourth centuries: the burgeoning trend to describe angels as winged in apocryphal texts and the newly Christianized imperial court’s realization that they could transfer Roman imagery into Christian terms\(^{76}\). The first cause does not concern us, but the conversion of Constantine had profound effects on the future of the images of Victory.

In his book, *A Study on the Winged Angel: The Origin of a Motif*, Gunnar Berefelt describes the transformation of Victory imagery into that of the winged angel in the Roman world after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.\(^{77}\) His discussion breaks the majority of angelic depictions into four categories: advancing, frontal, hovering, and two angels hovering with a medallion in the center, along with their Victory-type counterparts (figs. 5-8). Not only do these images share a striking resemblance, they largely occupy the same function and location in the parallel imagery. The Victory in Figure 5 and the angels in Figure 6 both serve to exalt and hold up the image that is within the medallion or wreath above them. Likewise, the parallel Victories and angels in Figures 7 and 8 accentuate and decorate the image between them in the exact same pose.

\(^{75}\) Martin, “The Development of Winged Angels,” 16-17.
No other elements of pagan and Christian iconography are so evidently and directly related as Victory and the winged angel. The point is perhaps best illustrated by contrast with one of Christianity’s most complex iconographic figures: Christ himself. Andre Grabar notes the pagan religious references in the formation of Christ’s face and head, especially from Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, yet reminds that the images are not interchangeable. “There is certainly a relationship,” he writes, “and it appears likely that the Christian image-makers used this type of head to signify the all-powerful sovereignty of Christ. It may be difficult to envisage this borrowing in actual practice, since no Christian could have thought of Christ with the head of a pagan god.”

No such difficulty is found in the winged angel. Figure 2 even seems to suggest that many uneducated Christians would never have known the difference between the iconography of angels and Victories. With the exception of the subtle change in costume and the loss of breasts, Christian winged angels mirror Victory in form and function; even the hair of the angels, though now on a masculine body, mimics Victory (compare figs. 2, 3, 6, and 8). This extremely close connection undoubtedly camouflaged Victory in her new Christian context.

We have seen that Victory played a role in early Christian art which curiously transgressed both Christian and Neoplatonist ideologies about the existence and function of lesser deities in relation to the One True God. This can be explained by subtle shifts in the minds of the viewers of Christian art. Victory was subsumed as a decorative necessity to triumphal imagery after the time of Constantine. Exempla such as the Barberini diptych also suggest that she held an ambiguous status in pagan theology, halfway between a mere personification and an active goddess with her own cult and worshippers. Additionally, her close association with and resemblance to the winged angels of Christian iconography

78 Grabar, Christian Iconography, 34. The Italics are mine.
may have hidden the philosophical incongruities of her presence. As a result of these factors, Victory lived much longer than any other pagan god, and right in plain sight.

Figure 1: Grabar 1968, Index of Illustrations, 125. Constantius II Adventus with soldier holding Chi-Rho shield and winged Victory. 4th Century.
Figure 2: Weitzmann 1979, 535-6. Victory holding a medallion with Christian insignia. Egypt, 5th to early 6th century. Wool and linen.

Figure 3: Weitzmann 1979, 33-4. Ivory diptych of Justinian. Constantinople, second quarter of 6th century. Ivory.
Figure 4: Bussagli 1991, 59. Sarcophagus of Isaac, Museo gli Lateranense, now in the Vatican Museums. 1st century CE.

Figure 5: Berefelt 1968, 25. Victory bearing a laurel wreath. From the right panel of an imperial diptych, ca. 450 CE. Currently in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.
Figure 6: Berefelt 1968, 26. Angels bearing Christ’s monogram. Vault mosaic in the Archiepiscopal Chapel at Ravenna, ca. 500.
Figure 7: Berenfelt 1968, 30. Sarcophagus from Via Aurelia Antica, 3rd Century CE, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.

Figure 8: Berenfelt 1968, 31. Mosaic showing the apotheosis of Christ’s monogram. from the triumphal arch in San Vitale, Ravenna.

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Xenia Perverted:  
Guest-host Relationships in Apuleius'  
*Metamorphoses*  

By Noreen Sit  

The relationships between guests and hosts in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* are interesting because of their parallels and contrasts with similar relationships in epic. Much like Homer's tale of the wandering Odysseus, Apuleius' novel follows the adventures of Lucius who encounters many lands and people during his travels. In some cases, Lucius is the guest; at other times, he is an observer. *Xenia* appears in the *Metamorphoses* in various manifestations, but it is frequently violated. Apuleius takes the familiar theme of *xenia* and, by perverting it, challenges the tradition for his audience's entertainment.

*Xenia* is the term that refers to the relationship between guest and host. Good *xenia* is characterized by a host's willingness to accommodate a guest, no matter the circumstances, and a guest's promise that he will return the favor. Proper *xenia* includes an exchange of gifts and a pact of friendship for generations to come. Bad *xenia* appears early in the *Metamorphoses*, starting with the tale of Socrates at the inn of Meroë. Socrates recalls:

> quae me nimis quam humane tractare adorta cenae gratae atque gratuitae ac mox urigine percita cubili suo adplicat.  
> Et statim miser, ut cum illa adquievi, ab unico congressu annosam ac pestilentem con<suetudinem> contraho  
> (Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1.7)  

"And she, having endeavored to treat me much too kindly, brought me a dinner both pleasing and free of charge; and soon after, feeling hot and bothered, [brought me] to her
bedroom. As soon as I had lain with her — miserable me! — from that single encounter I consigned [myself] to a long and destructive bondage". ⁷⁹

Meroë deceives Socrates with seemingly good *xenia*, but then ensnares him with magic. Similarly, in the *Odyssey*, the sorceress Circe lures Odysseus' men into her home with apparent kindness, and then bewitches them:

εἴσεν δ’ εἰσαγαγοῦσα κατὰ κλισμούς τε θρόνους τε, ἐν δὲ σφιν τυρόν τε καὶ ἀλφιτα καὶ μέλι χλωρόν οἶνῳ Πραμνείῳ ἐκύκλωσεν ἀνέμισσε δὲ σίτῳ φάρμακα λόγρ’, ἵνα πάγχυ λαθοίατο πατρίδος αἰής.

(Homer *Odyssey* 10.233-6)

"Leading them in, she sat them down on couches and chairs, and mixed cheese and barley and yellow honey with Pramnian wine for them. But in their food she mixed dreadful drugs, so that they would utterly forget the land of their fathers."

There are strong parallels between the two episodes. In both cases, the role of host is fulfilled by a powerful woman with magical abilities, and the guests are wandering men coming from fresh bouts of hardship — violent robbery for Socrates, and terrorization by the Laestrygonians for Odysseus' crew. In both cases, the hostesses deceive their guests with hospitable actions and, bewitching them, hinder their escape. Circe's later treatment of Odysseus is similar to Meroë's treatment of Socrates in another way: both women initiate, and achieve, sexual relations with their guests although Odysseus refuses Circe's advances until she promises to free his men (10.346-7).

Meroë is later compared to another magical woman from the *Odyssey*. When she expresses her sadness over her loss of Socrates, she likens herself to Calypso: _At ego scilicet Ulixi astu deserta vice Calypsonis aeternam solitudinem flebo_ ("But certainly I, [suffering] the plight of Calypso deserted by the wiles of Odysseus, will mourn my loneliness forever."

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⁷⁹ All translations are my own.
Apuleius bases the character of Meroë on Circe and Calypso, but only selectively. Meroë displays their negative traits: black magic, vengeance, and the ability to keep guests against their will. But Meroë is no divine sorceress, like Circe and Calypso; rather, she is a mere witch whose lowly arsenal includes such earthly weapons as urine (Apul. *Met.* 1.13). Meroë is a parody of her epic counterparts. By including characters such as her, Apuleius brings his work down from its lofty precedent and makes it accessible and entertaining to his readers.

Other hosts in the *Metamorphoses* similarly fall short of their epic precedent. At the house of Milo, as Lucius prepares to retire for the night, his host summons him. Lucius declines: *excusavi comiter, quod viae vexationem non cibo sed somno censerem diluendam* ("I courteously made the excuse that I thought the exhaustion of my journey ought to be relieved not by food but by sleep.") When Milo hears this response,

*pergit ipse et iniecta dextera clementer me trahere adoritur: ac dum cuncitor, dum modo renitor, 'Non prius' inquit 'Discedam quam me sequaris' *(1.26)*

"He came in person and, slipping his right arm [around me], tried to pull me gently. And when I hesitated and resisted weakly, he said 'I will not leave until you accompany me.'"

Milo's rude behavior reaches absurd heights. He interrogates Lucius about his travels, not allowing him to...
leave until he starts slurring his words and dozing off mid-sentence; Lucius climbs wearily into bed *somno, non cibo, gravatus, cenatus solis fabulis* ("heavy with sleep, but not with food, having dined only on gossip"). Milo's negligence of Lucius' basic needs is an egregious violation of proper *xenia*. In the *Odyssey*, Nestor makes a point of not inquiring after his guests' intentions, or even their identity, until after they have feasted:

> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἐντο, τοῦτο ἀρα μύθων ἦρχε Γερήνιος ἵπποτα Νέστωρ. "νῦν δὴ κάλλιών ἐστι μεταλλήσαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι ξείνους, οἱ τινὲς εἰσιν, ἐπεὶ τάρπησαν ἐδωδῆς. (Hom. Od. 3.67-70)

"Then, when they had placed aside their desire for food and drink, Nestor the Gerenian horseman was first to speak to them: 'Now, indeed, it is better to ask and inquire of these strangers who they are, after they have enjoyed their meal.' "

Menelaus exhibits the same decorum:

> σίτου θ' ἀπτεσθον καὶ χαίρετον· αὐτὰρ ἐπείτα ἀείπνον πασσαμένῳ εἰρησόμεθ' οἱ τινὲς ἔστον ἀνδρῶν. (4.60-2)

"Enjoy your food and be merry. When you have eaten your meal, we will then ask what men you are."

Milo's conduct as a host is the complete opposite of proper *xenia*. His behavior and extreme stinginess make him a foil to the dignified, generous hosts immortalized in the *Odyssey*. Like Meroë, Milo is the earthly rendition of a lofty epic precedent. He is deficient, but comically so. Apuleius creates characters such as Meroë and Milo with epic tradition in mind, but he gives these characters flaws to flout the tradition for a humorous and entertaining effect.

Other guest-host relationships in the *Metamorphoses* go against the epic standard. The unfortunate Thelyphron, whose nose and ears were stolen by witches, is so cruelly
ridiculed at Byrrhena's dinner-party that he prepares to leave. The hostess, however, neither apologizes nor takes any steps to comfort her distressed guest; rather, she asks him to stay and tell the story of his misfortune *ut et filius meus iste Lucius lepidi sermonis tui perfruatur comitate* ("so that my beloved son, this Lucius, can enjoy the entertainment of your charming story" Apul. *Met.* 2.20). Thelyphron has no choice but to comply begrudgingly. Byrrhena sacrifices the comfort of one guest for the entertainment of another.

Lucius soon finds his own comfort compromised for the entertainment of the entire town of Hypata. The day after Byrrhena's party, Lucius becomes the laughingstock in the Risus Festival, the annual Hypatian celebration of laughter. He recalls his humiliation at being paraded *velut quandam victimam* ("like a beast for sacrifice") and his utter dismay at seeing the whole crowd laughing at him, *illum bonum hospitem parentemque meum Milonem risu maximo dissolutum* ("including that good host and patron of mine, Milo, collapsed with the greatest laughter" 3.2). The behavior of Byrrhena towards Thelyphron, and of Milo towards Lucius, reflects an utter disregard for a guest's feelings. Both hosts allow their guests to become unwilling objects of attention and ignore their anguish. This unseemly host-behavior stands in sharp contrast with Nausicca's and King Alcinous' treatment of Odysseus. After bathing and clothing Odysseus, Nausicaa asks him to take a separate route to her father's palace to prevent him from becoming an object of negative attention:

τῶν ἀλεξίων φημιν ἀδευκέα, μή τις ὁπίσσω μομεύῃ: μάλα δ' εἰσίν ὑπερφίαλοι κατὰ δῆμον
(Hom. *Od.* 6.273-4)
"I shun their unkind words, lest some man should later make criticism: indeed, there are overweening men in our city."

Nausicaa's father, King Alcinous, shows similar concern for Odysseus during his stay in Phaeicia. During the festivities, when a bard sings the song of Troy, Alcinous
notices Odysseus weeping and tactfully suggests a change of activity (8.93-104).

Hosts in the *Metamorphoses* do a poor job at fulfilling the expectations of proper *xenia*, but Lucius also falls short of being a model guest. Lucius is Apuleius' rendition, albeit flawed, of Homer's wandering hero. Like Odysseus, Lucius is far from home and buffeted by many hardships; he receives both punishment and assistance from deities, and eventually achieves a homecoming of sorts. Furthermore, Lucius alludes to his *sagacitas ac prudentia* ("keenness and foresight" Apul. *Met.* 9.11), which are mental qualities shared by the wily Odysseus. Both Lucius and Odysseus are guilty of surreptitious, snooping behavior. Lucius sneaks up to Pamphile's room with *insono vestigio* ("silent footsteps") and watches her *per rimam ostiorum* ("through a chink in the door" 3.21). Odysseus and his men, finding nobody inside the Cyclop's cave, invite themselves in and scrutinize everything: ἐλθόντες δ' ἔις ἄντρον ἐθηεύμεσθα ἐκαστα ("Entering the cave, we gazed at each thing" Hom. *Od.* 9.218). When his host, the Cyclops, finally appears, Odysseus and his men scamper ἐς μυχὸν ἄντρου ("into a nook in the cave") and spy on their host until they are discovered (9.236).

Despite these similarities, Lucius does not behave properly as a guest. Even though his trip to Hypata is premeditated, he brings nothing to Milo's home except for his own belongings and a letter of introduction (Apul. *Met.* 5.22). In contrast, Odysseus brings wine into the Cyclops' cave, not knowing what sort of host he will encounter, but making provisions for gift-giving anyway (Hom. *Od.* 9.196-7).

Another instance of Lucius' unseemly behavior is his seduction of the maid Photis. His actions violate the boundaries of proper guest-friendship because he shifts Photis' loyalty away from her household, with the result that she is willing to reveal her mistress' secrets to a stranger. Seducing members of a host's household is a crime in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus, before slaughtering the suitors, accuses
them of raping his maids: δμωήσιν δὲ γυναῖξι παρευνάζεσθε βιαίως: ("You lay beside the serving-women by force" 22.38). Lucius is guilty of commandeering one of his host's household resources for his own gain, but it is unclear whether he is directly punished for it. Fortune's unpredictability makes it impossible to tell which of Lucius' actions get punished and which are merely the results of bad luck.

Amidst the many instances of bad xenia in the Metamorphoses, one incident stands out for the unexpectedly good conduct of those involved. In this singular episode, a land-owning paterfamilias stops at the hut of a humble market-gardener, unable to continue home during a dark and rainy night. Guest and host both exhibit laudable behavior:

receptusque comiter pro tempore, licet non delicato, necessario tamen quietis subsidio remunerari benignum hospitem cupiens promittit ei de praediis suis sese daturum et frumenti et olivi alicuid et amplius duos vini cados. (Apul. Met. 9.33)

The paterfamilias "was received genially, as the situation required; and although the accommodations were not luxurious, but rather basic, he, wanting to repay the kindness of his host, promised to send from his estate grains, olives, and two casks full of wine."

The market-gardener and the paterfamilias act in accordance with the rules of xenia. The behavior of the host, in particular, resembles that of Odysseus' swineherd Eumaios who, though humble, nevertheless offers his disguised master whatever food his servile means allow: ξοθεὶ νῦν, ὦ ξεῖνε, τὰ τε δμώεσσι πάρεστι ("Eat now, stranger, the things that belong to a servant." Hom. Od. 14.80). Despite the proper conduct of the market-gardener and the paterfamilias, however, both men suffer terrible reversals of fate: the paterfamilias' three sons are killed in a violent and senseless
property dispute (Apul. *Met.* 9.35-8); the market-gardener, after fighting a brutal and rapacious soldier, is pursued and presumably executed (9.42). The sharp contrast between these characters' diligent adherence to *xenia* and the extreme nature of their misfortune illustrates the powerful and unpredictable role of Fortune.

Fortune plays a significant role in the quartet of adultery tales in the ninth book of the *Metamorphoses*. Adultery naturally lends itself to bad *xenia*, because there is an unwelcome guest whose sexual misconduct undermines the stability of his host's household. In the *Metamorphoses*, however, adultery by itself is not necessarily punished; rather, Fortune determines whether the adultery, with its accompanying violation of *xenia*, is detected.

Lucius tells four tales of cuckoldry, two of which are punished and two of which are not. It is interesting to note that in all four cases, the adulterer's presence is known or suspected, but the two that result in punishment are the ones where a clear case of *xenia*-violation can be made. Where the adultery goes unpunished, it is because the perpetrators are not caught violating *xenia* despite their obvious sexual crimes.

In the first tale (9.5-7) of unpunished adultery, an adulterous wife fools her husband into thinking that her lover is a prospective buyer of an old corn-jar. The issue of *xenia* does not come into play because the husband and the wife's lover have a business relationship, not a guest-host one. While the husband cleans the jar in preparation for the transaction, the unfaithful wife and her lover manage to copulate openly, within close range of the cuckolded husband who, suspecting nothing, accepts the payment and sends the jar off with his buyer.

The second tale of unpunished adultery contains clear references to the *Odyssey*. The unfaithful wife, Arete, shares a name with Queen Arete of the Phaeicians. The choice of name is ironic. The Phaeician queen is the epitome of ἀρετή
(virtue, or excellence). But the adulteress Arete shows quite different qualities from the ones that her name and epic precedent suggest. She does share a similar background: the gossipy hag describes her as *uxorem generosam et eximia formositate praeditam* ("a wife of noble stock and gifted with exceptional beauty" 9.17). In the *Odyssey*, Athena (disguised as a child) describes Queen Arete's royal lineage (Hom. *Od*. 7.54-66) and high esteem in the eyes of her children, King Alcinous, and the people (7.69-71). Yet despite her high status and beauty, Apuleius' Arete is corruptible. The conniving Philesitharus bribes his way past Myrmex, the slave charged with guarding Arete's chastity, and becomes Arete's lover. One day, surprised by the husband Barbarus' sudden arrival, Philesitharus accidentally leaves his slippers under the bed, causing Barbarus to clap Myrmex in chains and march him through town, but

> opportune Philesitherus occurrens, quanquam diverso quodam negotio destinatus, repentina tamen facie permotus, non enim deterritus, recolens festinationis suae delictum et cetera consequenter suspicatus sagaciter extemplo sumpta familiari constantia.


"Philesitherus showed up at this key moment and, although he was headed toward some other business, was jolted by the sudden look of things; but he was not afraid and, recalling the blunder of his hasty escape and having suspected what followed, he immediately and perspicaciously took up his familiar mental firmness."

Philesitherus then invents a credible cover-up story that exonerates himself and Myrmex. His skills in reasoning and improvisation recall the wit and cunning of Odysseus, who is repeatedly called *πολύμητις* ("many-witted") in the *Odyssey*. But unlike Odysseus, who uses his wiles for good, Philesitharus uses his mental capacity for evil. Philesitharus
more closely resembles another adulterer mentioned in the Odyssey, the δολόμητις ("conniving") Aegisthus (Hom. Od. 3.250), lover of Queen Clytemnestra.

Apuleius' story of Arete and Philesitharus shows many similarities with Homer's account of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. Prior to King Agamemnon's departure for Troy, Nestor recalls, he had enlisted a minstrel to guard Clytemnestra; but Aegisthus kidnapped the minstrel, marooned him on an island, and became Clytemnestra's lover (3.265-72). The parallels between the two stories are clear: a husband employs a servant to guard his wife from corruption; this servant is somehow removed, and the matron's virtue compromised. But in Apuleius' version, the characters fall short of their epic model. The unfaithful wife is no queen; she is only named after one. The servant who guards her is no divinely-inspired minstrel, but a slave easily wooed by a bribe. To top this all off, the cuckolded husband is no King Agamemnon; rather, his name Barbarus suggests boorish foreignness. Apuleius takes a tale of adultery famous from epic and lowers it from the dignified to the pedestrian. He writes the "soap-opera" version — fodder for gossiping women, but nowhere near the level of its glorious precedent. Apuleius' rendition also has an opposite, quite shocking outcome; Fortune sides with the adulterers and they go unpunished.

Fortune is fickle when it comes to determining the fates of the adulterers in the Metamorphoses. In the two cases where the perpetrators are punished, the crimes are equally serious but the characters' fates are heavily influenced by chance. In these cases, the adultery — and, by extension, the violation of xenia — is discovered. The laundryman hears his wife's lover coughing in a vat of poisonous fumes, and drags him outside to die (Apul. Met. 9.24-5); the baker finds his wife's lover hiding under a tub and punishes him soundly (9.27).
The baker's tale calls for special attention because it is the one adultery story that involves a semblance of a guest-host relationship between the cuckolded husband and the wife's lover. When the baker finds the adulterer in his house, he genially offers to share his wife. His unusual generosity is mere pretense, however; he leads the lover to bed and punishes him with both sexual and physical assault (9.28). The baker later dies when his vengeful wife enlists the aid of a witch (9.29-30). Even though both men violate xenia — the adulterer, by intruding on the baker's home and marriage, and the baker, by feigning hospitality and then taking advantage of his unsuspecting guest — one man escapes with his life while the other one dies. Fortune metes out unfair punishments.

Apuleius' tale of the wandering Lucius recalls many episodes from the Odyssey but renders them quite differently. Characters in the Metamorphoses behave badly as guests and hosts, but all contribute to the color and flavor of Apuleius' work. Characters such as Milo depart so absurdly far from proper xenia that the effect is humorous; others such as Meroë are entertaining parodies of their epic precedent. The force that works behind the scenes is not divine justice, as it is in epic, but rather fickle Fortune who has no qualms about punishing good xenia and overlooking the bad. The overall effect is a story full of unpredictable, tradition-flouting twists that are as entertaining as they are rebellious.

**Note:** This paper was originally written for Dr. Sarah Wahlberg’s Spring 2012 section of LATN 309: Apuleius.
**CONVERSATIONS**

**JEREMY MCINERNEY**

**DAVIDSON KENNEDY PROFESSOR OF CLASSICAL STUDIES AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

*Discentes:* What is your position in the department?

*Jeremy McInerney:* I am the Chair of the department and the title I’ve got at the moment is the Davidson Kennedy Professor of Classical Studies.
D: How long have you been here at Penn?
JM: I started here in 1992, fresh out of graduate school, so this is the one tenure track and tenure position I’ve had.

D: What are your responsibilities as department chair?

JM: Along with Professor Ker, I basically plan the roster of classes for the coming semester, and in fact, we actually work on a two-year projection of all our classes. It’s subject to a lot of change because it varies according to who’s on leave, so it’s a somewhat fluid exercise, but we’re constantly projecting anywhere from one to four semesters in the future. I also run a faculty meeting basically once every two weeks, and the agenda items for that depend upon the issues that we have to deal with. For example, in the last couple of years we’ve revamped the graduate curriculum. That’s something that Emily Wilson is very much involved in, but we do it all together as a faculty as well; so at times I help coordinate what other people are doing. We also revamped the post-baccalaureate program in terms of the number of students and faculty involvement. At the undergraduate level, the kind of things that the Chair does is, for example, work with the Undergraduate Chair and make proposals for things like the archaeology track, which has to be done in consultation with a whole bunch of other departments.

D: Not to interrupt your brilliance but, when you mentioned revamped the number of students for the post-bacc did that go up or…?

JM: No, we actually reduced the number. We wanted to keep the program at a size that we thought would balance bringing in some revenue to the university, but also maintain the very high quality of the students involved and place a lesser burden on the faculty participating in it. So, you know, I deal with things like that where you have to balance out different interests. Issues like that are nearly always discussed by the whole faculty, and the chair tends to be the person who’s steering that through. The other big thing that I spend a lot of time on is arranging the colloquium series of speakers. So I’m
basically lining up about 30 speakers a year, coming in once a week. Now again, just to be honest about this, Renée [Campbell] does a vast amount of work there. My job is to find out whom we want to have, to make sure we’ve got a bit of a balance between archaeology, history, classics, and then to invite them. But once they’ve said yes, all the logistics are taken care of by Renée.

D: Do you enjoy your administrative position?
JM: Actually, I don’t like administration for its own sake, but this is me dealing with Bridget [Murnaghan], Cam [Grey], Emily, these are my friends; so in fact, it’s actually collegial. It’s where you can really enforce the bonds of what we are as a department. In the School of Arts and Sciences, I have to represent the department; that means working with the Dean, Rebecca Bushnell, and also dealing on a slightly more day to day level with the Associate Dean, Jeff Kallberg, who coordinates all the humanities departments in SAS. That’s the job Joe Farrell used to do. So, we’re a department that actually does a lot of heavy lifting administratively around the university. We have a Graduate Chair of Classics, a Graduate Chair of Ancient History, a Graduate Chair of Archaeology, an Undergraduate Chair, a Department Chair, the Dean of Graduate Studies is Ralph Rosen, Joe is a former Associate Dean in the School of Arts and Sciences…we all do a lot of stuff up the chain, which is good for the department because it means we have a profile.

D: There are two majors, Classical Studies and Ancient History. Could you go into the differences between them?
JM: The way I put it is that there are different ways of cutting the cake. This department in the old, old days was very much a Greek and Latin department. The first track is called Classical Studies because it was primarily classical philology. Along with every other university about 20-30 years ago, we realized that to survive in the competitive marketplace we had to create a major that didn’t necessarily require Greek and Latin. So classical civilization is a track that allows a Classics
major to people who love the ancient world but don’t really want to become proficient in Greek and Latin. Ancient history came about because a student a few years ago came to me and she said, “I love doing Greek and Roman history, but I also like the history of Southeast Asia and of East Asia.” So we created an independent major for her, but she put together such a good independent major that I tried to turn it into an actual recognized major in Ancient History. The idea there is that you can include, if you want, the study of the ancient Near East, ancient India, ancient China or Japan, or basically any pre-modern, pre-industrial civilization. So it’s broader than the Mediterranean. Then the archaeology track speaks for itself. It’s attractive simply because we liaise much better with the museum, and it’s for people who want to work primarily with material culture. So if you’re language, civ, history, or material culture, we’ve got a version for you.

D: What is your most memorable moment with a student?

JM: The most memorable moment with a student…well there was the time when a student who was pre-med came to me, and I said to her, “You know, I don’t know how you handle it and your head doesn’t explode since you’re doing Latin as well as all that.” In response, she came up with the expression that this is a sanity major. That really had a very profound impact on me, because instead of thinking of us being in competition with other majors, it was one of these light bulb moments when I thought we’re not competing with mathematics and the sciences. We can complement what students are doing there. For me, it was actually a complete change of attitude as to where we fit into the broader curriculum. I love now the idea of the double major. I love the idea of someone doing communications, or being in Wharton, or in engineering, and also doing a major with us. I love that.

D: Have you had any funny experiences?

JM: Well…oh, the moo sheets! So, every time I open a book around here, like a book I haven’t used for ten years, there’ll
be a sheet of paper in it that says “MOO”. It’s because, after I did the cattle book, some of the graduate students played a prank on me where they stuck a cow into the comfy chair that was in the office, and it was a cow with a bale of wool and a glass of milk in front of it. I came in and I saw this cow and I couldn’t believe it! That was amusing, but the funny part is that I was down in Virginia and taught a class down there. I was talking with these undergraduates about research and the woman who introduced me showed them my cattle book and said, “This is the book that you wrote, *The Cattle of the Sun*.” The kids all thought that was very amusing and so forth. Then, that night after dinner, I was going to give a lecture. Again, my colleague introduces me to a much wider audience, including these undergraduates, and when she introduces me, “Welcome to the stage Professor McInerney!”…somebody started mooing. Then all the kids started doing it as well. So I walk up to start a lecture and I hear all around “mooooo!” That was the best introduction to a lecture I’ve ever had.

D: What is your current research project?

JM: My current research is that I’m editing a volume on ethnicity in the ancient world. It’s actually growing out of the conference I did last year: “Ethnicity in the Ancient World of the Mediterranean.” The people who contributed to that conference are all contributing chapters to the book, and so are about 20 more people. If you think about 40 chapters, it’s pretty big.

D: And is this on a particular period?

JM: No, it’s Greece, Rome, the Western Mediterranean, the Eastern Mediterranean, so it’s basically all. Egypt, Mesopotamia, the whole deal. Hopefully that will come out at the end of 2013. It’s close to completion right now. And then the next major project I want to work on is salt. I want to do a study of the production, consumption, and trade in salt in the Greek world. This is an area that’s been very understudied for the Greeks. There are more people working on it in the
Western Mediterranean, but I want to work on it for the Eastern Mediterranean and that’ll be fun.

**D:** What is your research process?

**JM:** Well, the way I usually work is that early in a project I keep a file of all literary references. So I’ll start to do a search of databases and lexicons just to see what I can find under salt or salt related words. Also, whenever I’m reading literary material, if any references to salt come up, I keep it in a file. So it’s like a giant shoebox, an electronic shoebox. For example, I’ve been working on sacred law and religion, and there’s a sacred law that was published a few years ago that talks about how someone can get rid of a spirit that’s haunting you and the way you can purify yourself is that you throw salt around in a circle. So that goes in the salt file. Another thing and this has been working for me is telling people about this. As a result, friends send me any salt references they come across, for example, a friend of mine sent me a reference from Lucretius on evaporation of salt water to leave behind salt deposits. That’s how the project get’s done. And also as a result of digging into things I found at least two demes in Attica that are called *Halai*, the Greek word for salt works. So one of the things I want to do is to go back to Greece and actually walk around the coastline where these demes were and find where the salt was being produced. In a kind of literal sense, where’s the salt?

**D:** Speaking of Greece, would you tell us the “trophy story”?

**JM:** The trophy story is about an early piece of scholarship when I was a graduate student, and I was working on the territory of Phocis, the area that is close to Delphi. And during one of the first weeks I was doing research up there, we’re up there for the weekend and walking between Chaireneia and the next town to the west, across the border into Phocis. I was looking to see if there were any markers on the landscape that would really mark out the border. We were going along, and there’s a hill nearby that had been burnt down by a forest fire. In Greece, the undergrowth can really
tear your legs to pieces, so the forest fire actually makes it possible to do a lot of hiking in territory which otherwise isn’t accessible. So we walked to the top of the hill and found a large fieldstone fort that ran around about fifty meters. And in the middle of it was an area that was frankly about the size of this office and made of stones. And in the middle of this, there was a block about 2 ½ by 1 ½ by 1 ½. And it was a worked, finished stone, which meant that it really stood out. So I was looking at it with a friend of mine, when John Camp, the professor at Athens at the time, walked over and said, “There’s an inscription on that.” So, we did drawings and took photographs of it. That weekend, when we were back in Athens, I got back to John’s place later in the evening. He opens the door, he’s holding a Loeb volume of Plutarch’s Life of Sulla, and he said, “Read this!” In Plutarch’s Life of Sulla, Plutarch says that when Sulla’s army was camped outside of Chaironeia, facing the army of Mithridates VI, some men from Chaironeia came to Sulla and warned him about an ambush of Pontic troops up in the hills. So, Sulla stationed men behind this detachment of Pontic forces. The next day, when he’s engaged Mithridates on the field, Sulla’s little secondary force came out of the hills and ambushed the people behind him. Plutarch says that this is the first time a Roman commander had put up not one trophy, but two trophies: one in the field and one on the hilltop. Then Plutarch says the one on the hilltop says Homoloichos and Anaxidamos are heroes. The inscription on the block said, Homoloichos and Anaxidamos aristeis. So we found the Sullan monument, which is very cool.

D: Did your jaw drop when you walked into the apartment?
JM: I wanted to cry I was so happy. But, you know, there’s a good punch line in the story as well. Afterwards John said, “This is your first week of your dissertation research. How does it feel that the best find of your career was in the first week of your dissertation? It’s all downhill from here.” Which is not true, but it was very funny.
D: How do you see the Classics discipline developing and growing over the years, and how does the Penn department fit into this?

JM: Yes, that’s a tough one; you’ll get different answers from different people. Here’s how I’d put it in a nutshell: I think that we are moving away from the margins. With fewer people reading Greek and Latin, it seemed that for a long time we were being marginalized and Classical Studies was just this arcane work done by the few people who still read Greek and Latin. But in fact, what I find increasing with each passing year is that more and more people who are applying here as graduate students or are professors, are actually interested in dealing with literary theory, sociological theory, anthropological theory, and actually talking to other disciplines; and so, they are bridging the gap between us and the other disciplines in the humanities and the sciences. So I think Penn is well positioned because our faculty are people who like to think. I mean, look at the conference that’s going on tomorrow about the beat poets, “Hip Sublime”. Where on earth except at Penn are you going to see a conference of this sort? We can actually speak to English departments, cultural studies departments, and American History departments because of that. I’d like to think we’re entering a good period, a solid period, where we can actually be central to academic discussion.

D: How would you recommend the Classical Studies major?

JM: My feeling is that for most professions either the company that employs you is going to give you the skill set that you need or you’ll have to go through a professional training. But everybody—all professions, all jobs, all careers—want to have people whom they know are hardworking, have flexible brains, and can think in an orderly, rational and engaged manner. One of the guys I met down in Virginia is a banker, and he was a Classical Studies major. He still works on Statius in his spare time. Anyone who does a Wharton degree, they can do business; well, we
can do business too because you’re smart enough to learn the skills if you want to go into merchant banking or consulting. So, I think of us as not being in competition but being value added.

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FEATURED POST-BACC

DARIEN PEREZ

Where have you been?
I am a recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. I graduated in May 2012 with a degree in Anthropology & Ancient History. Throughout my Penn career, I was involved in several excavations, ranging from local historical archaeology in New Jersey to digging in the Tuscan countryside with Dr. Cam Grey and Dr. Kimberly Bowes for
the Roman Peasant Project. I’ve also done excavation work in Egypt with Dr. Josef Wegner, exploring a middle kingdom administrative palace in the ancient town of Wah-sut.

**Why are you here?**
I returned to Penn to participate in the Classical Languages Post baccalaureate program since I came to the realization later on in my undergraduate career that I wanted to focus more on archaeology than modern cultural anthropology. Penn’s program is allowing me to acquire language skills in Greek and Latin that will be particularly useful moving forward into a doctoral program.

**Where are you going?**
Ideally, I am looking to be accepted to a program in Mediterranean archaeology and the ancient world. This would be a springboard into further archaeological work. I’m particularly interested in Greco-Roman Egypt as a subject of study for my dissertation. I’m interested in the archaeology of domestic life in Ptolemaic-era cities in Egypt and looking at cultural syncretism in religion and iconography. I find the clash and melding of cultures fascinating and think that more attention should be paid to understanding how two cultures communicate with each other through the material record. Someday, I would like to teach at a collegiate level. I’ve always loved throwing out facts and standing on my little archaeological soapbox. What better than a roomful of ears to listen?
Aphrodite

By Amy Conwell

Born in a time of violence, chronic temptress, lady from Cyprus. Cytherea frothing, red geyser of “immortal flesh,” risen aphros. Served on open scallop, girl of a divine mollusk, ripe and ridged, sanguine semen. Proto-pantheon child: snail-wearing sister, kohl-smeared seductress, fertile crescent mistress, Hathor, Ishtar,

Venus. Love of the people, Pandemos; pleasure of the heavens, Urania. Grecian slave, uxorial horse in heat, hearth bound, betrayer of her alchemist in the embrace of a misogynist. Madam of Laussel, the Parisian pimp sent one thousand to fight for a fetish. Boticellan beauty, insatiable desire, affected affection. Disguised as love, transparent cloak of motherhood.
Why I’m a Hellenist

By James Levy

It’s 6:00 PM on a Thursday night and the editors of Discentes are sitting down to discuss the outline of the magazine. At some point during our banter of James Bond and thesis anecdotes (I haven’t slept in two months), we debate the age-old question: Romanist or Hellenist? To classical scholars, this debate is equivalent to some of the great inquiries of the universe: What is the meaning of life? Is there a heaven? Do you prefer The Rolling Stones or The Beatles? Just as Leonidas and the Spartans faced the overwhelming Persian force at the Battle of Thermopylae, I too found myself fending off swarms of Romanists. So, why am I a Hellenist?

This story begins in Claire M. Fagin Hall at the first lecture of “Ancient Greece” my freshman year. Before arriving at Penn, I planned to be pre-med. Dr. Levy does have a nice ring to it and I would make my Jewish mother proud. Despite my predetermined academic path, I still wanted to pursue my interests and take a humanities course. I felt ANCH 026 would appeal to my interest in history. As I sat in the lecture hall, I was seized by the terrors of my first college class. The size of the room, the fear of College professors, and my lack of facial hair in comparison to other students heightened my general anxiety. Suddenly, the professor entered through the doors of the auditorium and took his place at the podium. While the eyes of 300 students looked on, Professor McInerney let out a fearsome and defiant battle cry, “THIS IS SPARTA.” As the auditorium laughed at this cinematic reference, I let out a sigh of relief. This moment heightened my awareness of the classical tradition. No, it was not the image of Gerard Butler in a red cape with painted-on abs. Rather, I began to understand and think about the
incredible relevance of ancient history and classical studies to contemporary culture and academia. That class ignited a passion for ancient cultures, changing the course of my college career.

As my studies continued, I could barely fathom the incredible range of modern academia that the ancient Greek world provided. From Demosthenes to Plato, from Aristophanes to Phidias, I immersed myself in law, art, philosophy, poetry and so much more. Like Professor Struck’s beloved Odysseus, I embarked on an incredible journey. Similarly, the road has been perilous at times and one must possess and demonstrate polytropia. The undergraduate classics student faces many perils and uncertainties: Can I grab a cup of coffee from the kitchen in Cohen Hall? How do I suppress the temptation to touch Professor Farrell’s beard? Do I use APA or Chicago for citations?

Despite these great challenges, the study of classics has been worth it. I have traveled to Euripides’ Underworld with Professor Ker; I have conquered Alexander’s East with Professor McInerney. As a senior at Penn, I realize that, in the Ancient Greek world, I have found an academic passion. I am immensely grateful to the incredible people of the Penn Classics Department who nurtured this love.

I hope that this magazine can enrich your interests and your studies. I also hope that I have not offended the Romanists too gravelly. Still, remember that even the great Horace said, “Captive Greece captured, in turn, her uncivilized/ Conquerors, and brought the arts to rustic Latium” (Horace Epistles 2.1.1-2). Sure, Romans were successful warriors, but the Greeks offered so much more; they were the cultural conquerors of the Mediterranean—including “her uncivilized conquerors,” the Romans.

Consider this passage from Sappho:

You for the fragrant-blossomed Muses’ lovely gifts be zealous, children, and the clear melodious lyre:
but my once tender body old age now
has seized; my hair’s turned white instead of dark;
my heart’s grown heavy, my knees will not support me,
that once on a time were fleet for the dance as fawns.
This state I oft bemoan; but what’s to do?
Not to grow old, being human, there’s no way.
Tithonus once, the tale was, rose-armed Dawn,
love-smitten, carried off to the world’s end,
handsome and young then, yet in time grey age
o’ertook him, husband of immortal wife.\textsuperscript{80}
The delicate imagery of this poem is magnificent. What Roman can match it? One final question: what if Alexander the Great had marched his army west to Italy instead of east to Asia?

Now I must be off. I am headed to the airport to flee the country. Having declared myself a Hellenist and dared to write this piece, I must escape the wrath of (Romanist) Professor “Emperor Augustus” Grey. Zeus protect me!

\textsuperscript{80} Sarah B. Pomeroy et al., eds., \textit{Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural Experience} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 137.
The Puteoli Marble Block is the centerpiece of the Roman Gallery in the Penn Museum. On one side is a defaced inscription honoring the emperor Domitian. The city was praising Domitian for his achievements and for something—this part is missing—he did for the city of Puteoli. However, following his assassination in 96 CE, Domitian was condemned by the Senate and all traces of his rule erased with the *damnatio memoriae*. On the other side, the Praetorian Guard is depicted. The back of the original marble block was reused to carve part of a relief for an arch in honor of Trajan, one of the ‘Good Emperors’. This piece literally shows the two sides of imperial rule. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Object MS4916A. Photo: <http://www.penn.museum/collections/object/115536>.