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Kevin Ennis, on a white marble head at the Penn Museum (rear cover image)

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

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FROM THE EDITOR

In this issue’s penetrating interview with Professor C. Brian Rose (p. 51), the professor suggests that the best thing parents can do for their children is to help them learn a different language—ideally, by living in a foreign country. He asserts that, “You can’t really understand the hopes, desires, the fear, the anger of a different group of people unless you can converse with them in their language.”

The study of classics is, in many ways, the study of a language—not Latin or Ancient Greek but a language of thought and communication. As students of classical antiquity, we learn to see the themes and buried meanings of words. We learn to see a story in a coin and an epic in an amphora. We learn to understand the ideas of others and express our own to the world.

In this issue, four authors communicate their thoughts. Katie Levesque picks apart the evidence surrounding the “Tomb of Philip II” in Vergina to identify its occupants. Carly Sokach analyzes Athens’ use of divine cults to reinforce the rhetoric of Athenian expansion into the Saronic Gulf. Nathan Weinbren questions the role of gender in Hecuba’s and Demeter’s reactions to the deaths of their children. Finally, Allyson Zucker investigates Seneca’s take on first impressions in Medea and De Consolatione ad Helviam.

Discentes sat down with Professor Rose to discuss his research, perspectives on archaeology, and experience working with the U.S. military to protect cultural treasures in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also in Conversations, this semester’s featured post-baccalaureate student, Thomas Motter, explains his unorthodox path to the graduate study of classics. This issue also includes several recent graduates’ perspectives on
life after Penn classics as well as a Homer-themed holiday card written and designed by Katie Levesque.

*Discentes* was conceived as a forum for students to converse and expand their understanding of classics and its place in the modern world. The magazine is for “those who learn.” Join us.

Carson Woodbury

Carson Woodbury
Faculty Teas and Favorite Pages

The Classical Studies Undergraduate Advisory Board (UAB) was thrilled to share two symposia with faculty members this fall. On September 30th, Professor Peter Struck sat down with students for a faculty tea. Professor Struck described the unique path he took to his position in Penn’s Department of Classical Studies before the conversation morphed into a free-flowing discussion of the role of religion and mythology in cultures, past and present.

Professor Rita Copeland joined the UAB for a favorite pages symposium on November 25th. Professor Copeland, who is also a professor in the Department of English, selected passages from Augustine’s *Confessions* as some of her favorites in all of ancient literature. The event was titled, “St. Augustine the Schoolboy: Weeping for Dido.” Students discussed the adult Augustine’s infatuation with Dido, a fictional female character from Augustine’s boyhood education, and they contemplated how this example illustrates a common educational style of 3rd- and 4th-century Roman grammar schools.

Ancient Drugs at the Penn Museum

On October 18th, the Penn Museum hosted the symposium, “Ancient Drugs: Pharmacology Across the Ancient World,” with speakers from around the U.S. and Europe. Subjects ranged from the pharmacological (Laurence Totelin’s talk on selling *pharmaka* in antiquity) to the violent (Mark Plotkin’s lecture, entitled “Flying Death: Arrow Poisons from the Ancient Scythians to the Amazon”) to the recreational (Alain Towaide’s inquiry into whether or not the
Greeks knew and used mind-altering substances). Towaide concluded that, for better or worse, the Greeks were aware of mind-altering substances but did not use them for recreational purposes—at least on purpose. Dioscorides says that the wild and crazy Scythians used cannabis (*Materia medica* 4.73), but that’s an issue for another symposium.

**Inside the Penn Museum with the Clio Society**

The UAB enjoyed an evening of archaeology and ancient artwork along with the Clio Society on November 6th in the Penn Museum. Student members of the Clio Society gave a guided tour of the Roman, Greek, and Etruscan galleries, sharing fascinating background information on select pieces, including what they were used for at the time, where they came from, and how they arrived at the museum.

Sarah Lynch, a member of the Clio Society, describing the origin of the Penn Museum’s Etruscan helmet and breastplate to UAB members.
**Medea: A Dramatic Reading**

On November 18th, the UAB held its fifth biannual dramatic reading: a spirited performance of Seneca’s *Medea*. Students read and acted out Professor Emily Wilson’s English translation of the play, and members of Professor Ker’s Latin 309 class joined to recite several sections in the original Latin. Professor Wilson’s eldest daughter and her young friend stole the show in a guest appearance as the children of Jason and Medea. The audience and cast enjoyed seeing Seneca’s tragedy come to life in a modern context. Actors and audience members gathered in the lounge after the performance for pizza and a lively discussion of the difficulties and unexpected pleasures of staging a Senecan tragedy.

Molly Hutt, a post-bacc student in classical studies, slays Professor Emily Wilson’s elder daughter and her young friend in the UAB’s dramatic reading of Seneca’s *Medea*. 
V O I C E S  F R O M  T H E  P A S T

On October 6th, Professor James Ker hosted a symposium on Careers After Classical Studies. In preparation for this event, Professor Ker wrote to recent graduates to ask where they were in life. The diversity of experiences was remarkable and testified to the strength and flexibility of Penn’s classical studies program. Here are some of the responses he received.

Alex Clapp (’13), a major in Classical Languages and Literature, now working at a newspaper in Athens:

I set out to learn modern Greek my senior year at Penn and am now working for a Greek newspaper called *Kathimerini*. I was thankful to have found a job at all; to have found one in Greece was miraculous. I write a column every week or so on something related to Greek history or archaeology. I'm also writing for the Greek America Foundation's blog. There's a whole Penn contingent here: Jeremy McInerney, Jake Morton, Morgan, Sarah, etc. It eases some of the difficulty of being abroad.

I had always planned to go to grad school while at Penn, but I never mustered the energy to apply my senior year. I figured (rightly, I believe) that there was no great rush to enter into a Masters or PhD program. That's definitely something I would stress to current seniors: if you're very determined to spend the next X years in school, great; but it may be helpful to step out of school for a few years, learn what else is out there, let the future come a bit more naturally. If anything, a few years outside academia can only make you
a more qualified candidate for graduate school. The chance to travel and do a fair amount of writing has definitely proved to be the more interesting life-choice in my case. I also find that time spent outside of school gives you the chance to refine your intellectual narrative. That's never a bad thing.

I try to pitch CLST/ANCH as a degree that will teach you to read critically and form persuasive arguments. As I see it, antiquity just happens to be the medium with which you make those arguments. Classics is unique, however, in the range of knowledge it demands of its students. Theoretically, you could graduate with a classics degree and be as qualified to enter an art history program as a philosophy program. That differentiates it from most other majors in the humanities.

Kenny Puk (’13), a double-major in Finance and Classical Languages and Literature, now working in consulting and software:

In the second half of my undergrad years, I shifted my focus toward pursuing a job/career in business/consulting. My current job is a variation of consulting and software. I think that during my search for job/career opportunities, I framed an education in classics (especially in the language track) as an equal to my finance concentration in analytical rigor.

In reviewing resumes of interested Penn students for my company, I can say that we focus on presence of and performance in quantitative and/or analytical courses regardless of major. Obviously, certain majors lend themselves more to the quantitative end, but for less common majors, we look for the candidate to communicate how those courses are analytical. So if I had any advice for CLST/ANCH interested in a job/career in a business-related industry, then I would advise them to spend time/effort/care in
how to frame their courses.

—

Elliot Rambach (’13), a major in Classical Languages and Literature and a minor in English, working for a video-game company and a public-radio show:

I have a friend who works for a translations company, and she got a contract for an upcoming Xbox game that takes place in Ancient Rome. I've gotten the contract for their English-to-Latin translation needs. I'm not sure if it’s for ads or in-game, but the language is pretty violent which makes for a fun time choosing words and phrasing.

I didn't end up securing a teaching position, so I now work at a publication in Tulsa called *This Land Press*. This publication has a program on public radio, and they’ve hired me as an audio producer. It’s good to be able to channel my various experiences into one set of skills that I need for my job, and my classics stuff is really coming in handy in a mental-process-line-of-thought way. Sometime soon, I’m hoping to produce stories that are more directly classical.

—

Noreen Sit (’13), a major in Classical Languages and Literature, now doing a Classics PhD at Yale:

I’m in my first year in the Classics PhD program at Yale. It’s a long program (five years minimum) but, like many other PhD programs, fully funded—meaning that my tuition, insurance, housing, and living expenses are covered until I (hopefully) finish and find a job. That said, the program is very rigorous, and the level of commitment required is akin to that of a demanding full-time job.

How did I end up here? Simply put, I realized that I
loved what I was doing and wanted to keep going after graduation. Practical things had be considered—mainly, the question of what I’d ultimately do with my life. I wanted to be an employed classicist.

One way to do this was to become a professor of classics. The path seemed clear. To become a teacher, I first had to be a student: so I applied to graduate programs, keeping in mind that despite all the undergraduate training Penn offered me and all the things I had learned during that time, there were simply not enough spots and funding to accommodate everybody who applied. I consoled myself by considering the other skills I had learned during my time at Penn: writing effectively, organizing my thoughts, digging up information from various sources and presenting it in a way to support my argument, speaking to an audience, sharing ideas with people who might not agree with me, etc. These aren't just classics skills. These are skills necessary for jobs that require communicating with other human beings which is pretty much every job. So I was comforted to know that even if I didn’t get into grad school, all the techniques I had learned along the way would still be useful for life.

I kept reassuring myself of this fact as the rejections started rolling in. Waiting was the most torturous part. But I got good news in the end and am very happy where I am now. I’m still using those skills I mentioned above, and I think I will be for a long time.
RESEARCH

The Tomb of Philip II (I Arrhidaeus): The Identity of a King

By Katie Levesque

At the end of the 5th century BCE, King Archelaos moved the political capital of Macedonia to the geographical center of the state, Pella.\(^1\) Despite this change, Aegae remained the cultural and royal court center of the Macedonian world, and continued to act as the funerary location for the kings. For years, modern scholars debated the location of the city of Aegae. In the late 1970s, Manolis Anronicos, an amateur Greek archaeologist, made the discovery of three underground tombs located within the tumuli cemetery at Vergina. Based on the construction, decoration, and contents of the tombs—two of the three had managed to survive antiquity un-plundered—it was clear that the location of Aegae had finally been identified. Excavation at Vergina had continued on and off, with little funding and little interest, for half a century before the discovery of the royal cemetery which brought with it an explosion of attention and financial support.\(^2\) There is no doubt that these tombs belong to members of the royal Macedonian family; the question, to this day still fiercely debated, is: exactly to


whom do the tombs belong?

The first and third tomb, the Tomb of Persephone and the Tomb of the Prince as they are called, are the least debated of the group. The Tomb of the Prince contained only a single burial, the cremated remains of a young male between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, located in the main chamber. This information, coupled with the dating of the tomb to the last quarter of the 4th century BCE, makes it the easiest to attribute to a particular person. It is almost certainly the Tomb of Alexander IV. And while no consensus has been reached on the identity of the remains found within the Tomb of Persephone, three inhumed individuals (a man, woman, and infant), the fact that the tomb was completely plundered means there is little evidence for examination. This leaves the second tomb, the so-called Tomb of Philip II, at the center of the identification controversy.

As the name of the tomb clearly indicates, upon discovery, it was quickly hailed as belonging to the Macedonian ruler, King Philip II. With no written evidence or inscriptions to aid in the identification process, claims must be made solely on the archaeological evidence, and from the very start, the claim that this tomb belonged to Philip II has been contested. The Tomb of Philip II contained two burials, the cremated remains of a male in the main chamber (between thirty-five and fifty-five years of age) and a female in the antechamber (between twenty and thirty years of age) and dates to the third quarter of the 4th century, roughly 350 to 325 BCE. The joint burial suggests a married couple who were entombed together; accordingly, it makes sense to identify a male royal who had a wife that died around the

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5 Romero, *Vergina*, p. 221.
same time as he did. If the parameters of the possible date of the tomb are extended to the widest feasible margin, and King Amyntas III, Philip II’s father, is used as the earliest candidate for the tomb, a number of Macedonian royals can be systematically eliminated as viable contenders.

Amyntas himself is an extremely poor candidate; for it is recorded in multiple ancient sources that he died of old age. Additionally, both of his wives would have also died at an age significantly outside of the range given for the female remains. Amyntas’ successor was his eldest son, Alexander II. Alexander died in his mid-twenties, unmarried and without children. He also is an ill fit for the remains. Perdiccas III, another of Amyntas’ sons, succeeded his brother. Perdiccas was killed in battle in his late twenties in 359 BCE. This eliminates him as a viable candidate for several reasons: his age is outside of the reasonable parameters; it is extremely unlikely that his body was retrieved from battle; and while he clearly had a wife—he was survived by his son, Amyntas IV—there is no evidence for her death anywhere near the time of his own. This narrows down the pool of possible occupants of the Tomb of Phillip II considerably, leaving only two plausible candidates: Philip II, as was declared upon discovery of the tomb, and as present scholars who have found fault with this identification have asserted, his son, Philip III Arrhidaeus.

The first of several important factors to consider in order to determine the true occupant of the tomb are the elements which emulate Homeric burials. Buried above the physical structure of the tomb itself, a layer of burnt brick was found. Mixed in among the bricks were two burnt iron swords, an iron spearhead, and a number of small iron pieces from horse trappings, pointing to the remains of a funeral pyre that were collected after the body was removed and
placed over the tomb. This would indicate the sacrifice of objects (the weapons) and animals (horses) on the pyre when the body was being burnt; these are signs of heroic funerary practices, evoking Homeric descriptions of funerals commemorating fallen warriors, particularly that of Patroclus (Iliad 23.171). Philip II was the first Macedonian conqueror of Greece; he was a knowledgeable and impressive warrior king often fighting in the front lines of battle himself. These Homeric funerary practices seem perfectly fitting for such a man. Philip III Arrhidaeus, on the other hand, was by no means a warrior; he never fought in battle.

Homeric elements also occur in the treatment of the remains after cremation. The bones were carefully collected and cleaned, likely in wine, before being wrapped in a purple cloth and placed within a golden larnax; this greatly resembles the funeral of Hector (Iliad 24.791). This attention to Homeric detail has been associated with Alexander III and his love of epic poetry; as it would have been Alexander who entombed his father, this has been used to support the tomb as belonging to Philip II. Nevertheless it must be remembered that many royals and aristocrats of the time held Homeric poetry in high esteem, and Cassander, the man responsible for giving Philip III Arrhidaeus a proper burial, was reported to have kept copies of Homer’s work that he transcribed in his own hand. When considering the drastically different lives of the two Philips, the use of Homeric elements, particularly the remnants of the funerary pyre, seem more fitting for the elder, Philip II. However, the men were both royals of the same dynasty, and the use of Homeric elements in Philip III Arrhidaeus’ burial would not be unusual.

Something crucial to correctly identifying the occupant

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6 Romero, Vergina, p. 46.
7 Andronikos, Vergina, p. 170.
8 Romero, Vergina, p. 47.
of the Tomb of Philip II is the identification of the woman who was also buried there. If the tomb belonged to Philip II, the most likely candidate would be his seventh and final wife Cleopatra. She was a young woman, when, upon Philip’s death, she was either killed or forced into suicide by Philip’s fourth wife—and mother of Alexander—Olympias. As Philip’s only Macedonian wife, it would have been appropriate for Cleopatra to be buried with Philip at Aegae. If the tomb belonged to Philip III Arrhidaeus, it can be assumed that the woman is his wife Eurydice, who would have been of an appropriate age and, like Cleopatra, would have died around the same time that her husband did: after Olympias executed Philip III Arrhidaeus, she forced Eurydice to commit suicide. Both Philip and Eurydice were then inhumed by Olympias. It was only several months after the execution of Olympias that Cassander moved their remains to Aegae and entombed them in the royal cemetery.9

To identify the woman, the best place to start is with a thorough examination of the antechamber of the tomb, in which the remains were placed. The antechamber contained no jewelry or specifically feminine objects, only weapons and vessels. If considering the contents of the antechamber to be in some way representative of the individual who was entombed there, the presence of weapons does not seem fitting for Cleopatra. For Eurydice, on the other hand, the weapons would have actually been appropriate to be buried with her as her mother, Cynane, was the most famous of the female warriors of the Argead dynasty (the ruling dynasty of Macedon to which Philip and Alexander belonged). Eurydice herself had received military training and command of troops.10 Additional support in favor of Eurydice is the fact

that the antechamber of the Tomb of Philip II is larger than a typical Macedonian antechamber. It seems to have been intentionally enlarged to accommodate the joint burial of a man and a woman.\footnote{Romero, Vergina, p. 50.} Cleopatra’s death was sudden; there quite possibly would not have been enough time to specifically adjust the plans for the purpose of her burial within the antechamber. In contrast, a number of months passed after Eurydice’s death before she was buried at Aegae — more than enough time to plan for and construct the larger antechamber. If Eurydice is the most logical occupant of the antechamber, Philip III Arrhidaeus is associated more strongly with the main chamber. However, it cannot be overlooked that the main chamber and the antechamber were constructed differently and were completed and sealed off at different times.\footnote{Andronikos, Vergina, p. 100.} This disjunction between the two rooms of the tomb provides evidence in support of the Tomb belonging to Philip II. Alexander was responsible for Philip II’s burial, but upon Philip’s death, revolts rose up across the Macedonian empire that warranted Alexander’s attention, prompting him to give Philip a rushed burial so that he would be free to leave Macedonia and deal with the revolts as quickly as possible. Before leaving Aegae, Alexander would have overseen the construction of the main chamber and sealed his father’s remains within it; allowing for the antechamber to be finished at a later date. However, Philip III Arrhidaeus and Eurydice’s remains were assembled months after their deaths for burial at Aegae. This would not have necessitated a rushed burial, leaving ample time to plan and construct the tomb.

As discussed in reference to the antechamber above, the contents of the tomb — especially considering that the Tomb of Philip II survived antiquity completely intact — are a
key factor when determining the identity of its occupants. Again, no objects with names or inscriptions noting the identities of said occupants were recovered from the tomb, but a huge wealth and range of objects as well as preserved wall paintings were recovered. The treasures are plentiful as would be expected for any king. Perhaps the most intriguing of finds is the imagery of Alexander and Philip II in association with the tomb. A particularly striking feature is found on the exterior wall: a painted frieze depicting a lion hunt. The lion hunt was nothing new to the Macedonian elite and was often undertaken as a joint outing between the king or princes and the men of the aristocracy; it is a common theme represented in Macedonian palaces and tombs. In this particular hunting scene there is only one mature man present; he is depicted in the instant before he kills the lion. This act is a true symbol of strength and is a signifier—consistent with Macedonian imagery—that this man is likely the king. The assumption would then follow that this king was painted on the façade of the tomb because it was he who resided in it. The central person depicted in the frieze is not this older king, but a young man mounted on horseback, wearing a laurel wreath and directing his spear towards the lion; he is clearly a member of the royal family. This mentorship between a mature king and younger prince is only known to have existed between Philip II and his son and successor Alexander III. Furthermore, the mature man is depicted only in left profile; as it is commonly known that Philip II experienced an eye wound which left his right eye slightly disfigured, this has been suggested as further proof of the king’s identification.

13 Andronikos, Vergina, p. 106.
16 Andronikos, Vergina, p. 117.
With the identification of a young Alexander and an experienced Philip painted on the exterior of the tomb, it seems logical to assert that the tomb was in fact constructed for Philip II. The lion hunt is a truly Macedonian representation of a warrior, fitting for Philip II’s background as a successful military king. The depiction of Alexander as the central figure in the frieze reflects the fact that the young king would have overseen the funerary arrangements for his father. Amidst the revolts taking place across the Macedonian empire, Alexander would have sought to align himself with his father’s military prowess and power.

Further images of Philip II and Alexander were discovered within the tomb. A number of small ivory heads, assumed to have once been ornamental pieces of a wooden couch that had long since decomposed, were discovered inside the main chamber among the sacrificial offerings. Among these ivory portraits are two male heads which, based on comparative portraits and ancient descriptions, have been identified as Alexander III and Philip II. A dozen other ivory heads were found among the rubble of the couch, but no others can be positively identified. It is, however, strongly suggested that one of the female heads, bearing resemblance to Alexander, is in fact his mother, Olympias. If the portrait is indeed of Olympias, it would seem unlikely and inappropriate that the tomb belonged to Philip III Arrhidaeus as it was Olympias who murdered Philip. This is by no means conclusive evidence, and there is of course the very real possibility that this particular artifact was not commissioned specifically for the tomb but was rather chosen as an example of superb Macedonian craftsmanship. The inclusion of

17 Andronikos, *Vergina*, p. 130.
Olympias could be unintentional.\textsuperscript{19} It is not uncommon for this practice to be undertaken when making funerary arrangements as the burial of a body is of a time-sensitive nature and not everything can be commissioned specifically for the funeral.

Perhaps the most important factor in determining the identities of the occupants of the Tomb of Philip II comes from more recent studies of the cremated remains. New and improved technologies allow for a more thorough examination of the physical remains. Philip II was hailed as a great military leader throughout the entirety of his reign and was known to have entered into combat regularly. As a result he suffered many injuries, including a near-fatal upper leg injury and an arrow-inflicted wound to his right eye. Given that the remains in question are relatively intact for a cremation, evidence of these and other wounds sustained in his long military career should be evident. In an early study of the skull of the male from the Tomb of Philip II, conducted by Musgrave, Neave, and Prag, it was concluded, based on apparent asymmetries and abnormalities between the eye sockets, that the remains were in fact those of Philip II.\textsuperscript{20} However, this conclusion is not in accordance with the official report on the human remains of the tomb which stated, “an injury in the area of the right supraorbital margin could not be established.”\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore, Antonis Bartsiokas undertook an additional examination of the bones some fifteen years later. First, this study found that that no significant postcranial injuries existed; something that speaks

\textsuperscript{19} Robin Lane Fox, \textit{The search for Alexander}, Boston: Little, Brown, 1980: 82.
\textsuperscript{21} Musgrave et al., “The Skull from Tomb II at Vergina,” p. 61.
for Philip III Arrhidaeus as the inhabitant of the tomb. Secondly, the supposed eye injury of Philip II was explained by both damage to the bones sustained during cremation and natural facial asymmetry that occurs in humans. There was no evidence of a notch on the eye orbit, or any bone healing or remolding as would be expected to be seen, given that Philip sustained the injury eighteen years prior to his death.

This more recent study also undertook an examination of the long bones in an effort to determine the circumstances under which they were cremated. “Wet” remains that are cremated soon after death, with the flesh still present on the bone, look different from “dry” remains that are cremated after the body has decomposed significantly and thus lacking flesh. When long bones are cremated dry, they tend to stay intact with little warping. They turn a light brown in color and sustain only a few, straight fractures. In contrast, long bones that are cremated wet fragment, warp, turn a blue-white color, and sustain curved fractures. The bones of the male present in the Tomb of Philip II were remarkably intact, showing little warping and straight fractures, and are an overall light brown in color—all signs pointing to a cremation of dry bones. Such a cremation fits with the entombment of Philip III, who was inhumed first by Olympias before and then, months later, was cremated and reburied in Aegae by Cassander. Philip II, who was murdered in Aegae, would have been cremated immediately upon his death.

It is difficult to determine who exactly is buried within the Tomb of Philip II, and this man’s identity has been

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debated since the tomb was first discovered. The remains either belong to Philip II, as originally thought, or to his son Philip III Arrhidaeus, as many modern researchers are attesting. This much is certain, but a lack of any inscriptions makes it hard to assert one particular man as the inhabitant of the tomb. Theories must be based upon an understanding and careful examination of the archaeological evidence present, and it must be remembered that archaeological theories are just that—theories and not fact. Eurydice seems most fitting for the identity of the woman in the antechamber. This, in conjunction with the examination of the bones of the male—something based more strongly in science than interpretation, suggests that the most logical identification of the man seems to be Philip III. While the disjointed structure of the tomb, the paintings on the tomb, and artifacts found within the tomb seem most fitting for Philip II, Philip III Arrhidaeus was still a Macedonian king and upon his death it would be expected that he would receive a grand burial. It is also important to remember that Philip III was buried by Cassander, who at the time was both legitimizing his own claim to the throne and giving his predecessor a glorified burial at Aegae. As seen in the grave goods and painting, this was achieved with references to the great warrior kings that came before him: Philip II and Alexander. It is a shame that so much attention must be given to the physical remains of the tombs when there is such an astounding wealth of cultural material present. Archaeologically speaking, the human remains are the least important aspect of the tomb. This is evident with the Tomb of Persephone where it is just as likely that the remains of Philip II resided. However, as there are no remaining artifacts in the tomb—it was completely plundered in antiquity—almost no attention has been given to the tomb, save for when trying to identify the inhabitants of the Tomb of Philip II. Archaeology lends itself to competing theories
and interpretations. I am sure that this debate over the identity of the royals buried within the Tomb of Philip II will continue for many years to come.

**References**


Note: This paper was originally written for Professor Julia Wilker’s Fall 2012 course CLST 330: Rise and Decline of Macedonia.
The Athenian Empire and Control of the Saronic Gulf: Expansion Courtesy of the Gods

By Carly Sokach

As a stalwart of democracy, classical Athens refused to limit its power and influence to Attica. Throughout the 6th and 5th centuries BCE, Athens sought to extend her power throughout the rest of mainland Greece. The focus of this expansion initially centered around the Saronic Gulf, part of the Aegean Sea on the Eastern side of the Isthmus of Corinth. Athens’ new imperial mentality could have easily conflicted with the popular Athenian title: most pious of the Greeks. However, through a variety of hero cults, the Athenians spun their devout religious practices to support their expansion and control throughout Greece. This process is remarkably illustrated by the cults of Theseus and Asklepios. Both are considered heroes—mortal men who became worshipped divinities after their deaths. The creation of cult practices for Theseus and the importation of the cult of Asklepios from Epidauros to Athens demonstrate Athenian control and influence around the Saronic Gulf.

Theseus represents the token Athenian hero in many ways. As a young adult, he gains his fame by traveling to Athens to throw off the yoke of the Cretan King Minos. Minos demanded yearly tribute from the Athenians to be given to the Minotaur. Theseus ended this grisly custom by traveling to Crete as tribute and slaying the Minotaur. Before he became an Athenian tribute, however, Theseus embarked upon a variety of quests throughout Attica and along the coast of the Saronic Gulf, eventually ending in Athens. During this
time period, he defeated a variety of notable bandits and thieves. Although Theseus upholds Athenian valor, piety, and honor, it is notable that he travels to Athens from his birthplace in Troezen on the Peloponnese.  

The Peloponnese is traditionally viewed as Spartan territory while the mainland portion of Attica is viewed as Athenian. Theseus travels from his birthplace of Troezen, within the sphere of influence of Sparta, to dedicate his life to fighting for Athens. The route that he takes involves land travel over the Isthmus of Corinth (Northern/Northwestern portion of the Saronic Gulf—see Figure 1). The appeal of Athenian democracy and values must have been so strong and the situation in Sparta so displeasing that a young man would be willing to travel to Athens to devote his life to the security of that city. Theseus also takes on the task of affirming Athenian control. His five labors took place “along the Saronic Gulf begin[ning] at the Isthmus with Sinis, continu[ing] along the coast through Megara and Eleusis, and com[ing] to an end on the Cephisus with Procrustes.” Sinis catapulted passing travelers to death on giant pine trees. Sciron (Megara) would ask for his feet to be washed and then push the travelers off of a cliff into the jaws of a man-eating tortoise. Cercyon (Eleusis) challenged those passing by to lethal wrestling matches. Finally, Procrustes mutilated the travelers sleeping in his bed.  

All of these locations are places “where, at least according to ancient tradition, Athens had vied for territorial control and won it under Theseus.”

By reaffirming the power of Athens in these areas around the Saronic Gulf, Theseus proves that the Isthmus is under Athenian control. The labors therefore have an innate “tradition of Attic synoecism and hope for further expansion.”

Theseus’ popularity as a hero deserving of tribute and dedications arises with the increased popularity and influx of donations in the mid 6th century BCE (540-530 BCE). Cult practices arise closer to 510 or 520 BCE, “coincide[ing] almost exactly with the promotion of a cult in honour of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who had unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow the Peisistratid tyranny in 514.” Harmodios and Aristogeiton were both young, ambitious men like Theseus and were later viewed as heroes for their efforts. The political uprising to decisively eliminate tyranny in Athens was a clear expression of the Athenian devotion and commitment to democracy. This distinct political system set Athens apart from the rest of Greece, especially her rival Sparta. The cult to Harmodios and Aristogeiton provides the Athenians “with a most serviceable instrument with which to primp themselves upon their indomitable self-reliance and indissoluble attachment to democracy.” This cult intrinsically pits Athenian democracy against Sparta’s centralized government, paralleling the anti-Spartan attitude expressed by the cult of Theseus. Therefore, the labors of Theseus do not just reaffirm Athenian dominance in the areas of the Isthmus; they claim those controversial areas for Athens instead of Sparta.

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The rise of the cult of Theseus marks an increase in imperial aspirations in the minds of the Athenians. He represents certainty over “what Athens already controlled, namely Eleusis, and provide[s] mythic validation for its claims to further territory.” These desires to expand are executed over the course of the 5th century with the Peloponnesian Wars. Here, Athens actively—and successfully—tries to conquer lands owned by other city-states. A majority of these territories are on the Peloponnese and controlled by Sparta, emphasizing the distinction between the two main powers in Greece. Theseus ties into the story by validating these imperial efforts. He left Sparta to claim the lands of the Isthmus for the Athenians, making it acceptable for Athens to attempt an expansion. Theseus provides divine approval for the creation of the Athenian empire. His cult reaffirms the fact that “it is necessary that the gods should have sanctioned all Athenian action, especially the establishment of the Athenian empire.”

As the Peloponnesian War raged, a new god joined the Athenian pantheon to continue the tradition of Athenian conquest approved by the gods. Asklepios was the “son of Apollo, a deity who is also closely associated with healing, and a mortal woman named Koronis.” As Asklepios grew older, he realized his aptitude for healing but was “eventually struck by Zeus’ thunderbolt for having accepted a fee to resurrect one of his patients from the dead.” Asklepios was human and became a hero and a healing god after his death. The cult of Asklepios originated before the Peloponnesian War and was focused almost exclusively in the northeast.

33 Wickkiser, Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece, p. 96.
34 Mills, Theseus, Tragedy, and the Athenian Empire, p 75.
Peloponnese with the main sanctuary located at Epidauros. Epidauros was the birthplace of Asklepios, housed the major Asklepiion of the Greek world and conveniently laid “in the direct line of fire between Sparta and Athens at a period of protracted hostilities.”

Athens, however, was never able to conquer the city of Epidauros. After all of their efforts had failed, the Athenians took an incredibly curious measure and effectively made a treaty with the city by arranging a transfer of the god Asklepios to Athens. Asklepios did not make the journey to Athens until after the Peace of Nikias ended the First Peloponnesian War. Before this truce, “conditions of war are likely to have prevented the journey to the Epidaurian sanctuary to fetch Asklepios.” The man who undertook these efforts to transport Asklepios (in the form of his sacred snake) to Athens, between 421 and 419 BCE, was Telemachos. He erected a monument commemorating the journey and detailing its events at Asklepios’ final resting place on the Acropolis.

Asklepios traveled by ship from his birthplace and home of his largest sanctuary, Epidauros, to Attica, docking in the Zea port of Piraeus, a few miles from the city of Athens. His daughter Hygieia, “the personification of health,” accompanied him. On his journey from the Piraeus to the city of Athens, Asklepios was welcomed and assisted by “the Two Goddesses” (Demeter and Persephone). He was even allowed temporary housing “in the City Eleusinion alongside the Panathenaic Way, a short distance northwest of the Acropolis.”

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40 Garland, *Introducing New Gods*, p. 120.
The motives behind Asklepios’ journey to Athens are often attributed to the plague that broke out in Athens from 430 to 426 BCE and the association that Telemachos seemed to have with the god in a private cult manner. On the surface, these explanations are reasonable: it makes sense to bring a healing god into the city to cure the plague. A person able to shoulder such a burden and build an extravagant and expensive sanctuary for the god must be incredibly wealthy and personally driven with religious zeal for the cult. Yet recent scholarship has disproven portions of these theories and cast light on a more expansionist outlook towards the inclusion of Asklepios in the divine pantheon.

The plague was supposed to have ravaged Athens throughout the early 420’s BCE. Piraeus was reported as “the first region in Attica to fall victim to the epidemic,” possibly explaining Asklepios’ entry to Athens via this point. Thucydides’ account, however, is the only true primary source that attests that the plague occurred at this time. While there very well may have been an outbreak, it could have served Thucydides’ writing to exaggerate the conditions in Athens. He was able to emphasize the Greek concept of hubris through Athens being stricken with the plague during the Peloponnesian War. Also, Asklepios “is not generally known to have treated individuals suffering from plague.” He deals mainly with smaller personal injuries or persistent problems such as infertility, blindness, and deafness as shown by the votive dedications found at his temples.

This calls into question Telemachos’ choice to transport the god to Athens. If Telemachos personally wanted

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44 Wickkaser, *Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece*, p. 64.
to spend his money to make a significant enough donation to Epidauros to facilitate Asklepios moving to Athens, then the cult of the god would most likely have been installed in a private cult setting in a family estate or small village rather than on the Acropolis. Telemachos’ action of “bringing a new god into Athens in the late fifth century would have required approval of the demos…. [and] authorization from the state to found the Acropolis sanctuary.”

These two major problems add to the troublesome fact that Asklepios was imported from enemy territory—dangerous land controlled by Sparta. All of these issues could have been avoided had Athens chosen to import Asklepios from another sanctuary. While Epidauros was home to the largest Asklepiion, major and very legitimate cults of the god existed in Aegina and Trikka in Thessaly. Thessaly, in particular, “was an ally of Athens throughout much of the war and, unlike Epidauros, would not have posed the difficulties incurred in importing a god from enemy territory.”

The rationale that can effectively explain the steps the city of Athens took to import Asklepios shares many ideals with the cult of Theseus and relates back to the Athenian emphasis on empire.

Athens began its attack of the Peloponnese in the First Peloponnesian War by taking Halieis in the Southern Akte peninsula. Then, in the Second Peloponnesian War, they succeeded in taking Methana. At that point in time, Athens held significant footholds in the areas of the Peloponnesse south of Epidauros (see Figure 1). Epidauros would have been an incredibly valuable addition to Athens because “it was the port of entry into the Peloponnesse closest to Athens… [and] was the city on the Akte peninsula nearest the Isthmus

46 Wickkaser, *Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece*, p. 64.
of Corinth—the only land route into and out of the Peloponnese.”

Athens had established firm control over the areas of the Isthmus, ensuring safe passage of the land army into the northern-most part of the Peloponnese. Controlling Epidauros, the city closest to the Isthmus, would confirm that the Athenian hoplites would make it safely into enemy territory. The failure of the Athenian army to capture Epidauros forced the Athenian government to consider a more creative approach. Forming a pact through the god Asklepios would allow the Athenian soldiers some sort of protection sanctioned by the religious power at Epidauros to ensure safe passage.

The choice to import the Asklepios of Epidauros instead of Thessaly or Aegina was a simple political move by the Athenians. Aside from the geographical advantage of having allies on the Peloponnese, moving Asklepios from Epidauros to Athens showed the appeal of the city of Athens. It should be noted that Asklepios arriving in Athens did not mean that the god had abandoned Epidauros. In Greek religion, it was believed that a single god could be in many places at one time. Nevertheless, Asklepios’ journey to Athens from the Spartan-dominated Peloponnese showed a distinct anti-Spartan move by the god and his priests. They were willing to share the cult with the enemy, bolstering Athenian feelings of supremacy. In the same way that Theseus’ departure from Spartan Troezen shows support of Athens, Asklepios’ departure from Spartan Epidauros supports Athens’ new imperial ambitions.

Once the Athenian government made a strategic move to import a religious cult, they had to ensure that the general public would accept the cult. The Athenians are known as “the most pious of the Greeks” and are very particular about

47 Wickkaser, Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece, p. 92.
their religious practices. Aside from the worship of Athena taking place on the Acropolis, the most significant state-sponsored cult was that of the Two Goddesses—Demeter and Persephone—at Eleusis. The Mysteries at Eleusis “enjoyed strong support from the Athenian state,” second only to the Panathenaia. It is no coincidence that both Theseus and Asklepios have ties to Eleusis. Theseus performed one of his labors in Eleusis while “a priestess of Eleusinian Demeter” met Asklepios “and escorted him to the Eleusinion.” Thus, both newly introduced cults needed to gain the support of the major cult in Athens. Asklepios even arrived in Athens during the Mysteries at Eleusis, binding him “solidly into the fabric of the Eleusinian cult.” Gaining the approval of the Two Goddesses would have induced the approval of the polis as a whole, creating a unified front behind the expansionist ideals of the Athenian state.

Epidauros represents an area on the coast of the Saronic Gulf not yet under Athenian control. In the 5th century, the area extending from north of Epidauros to the Isthmus was relatively rural with Epidauros as the center of control. Building a relationship with Epidauros completes an Athenian sphere of influence that stretches along the Western coast of the Saronic Gulf to meet the area of control created by Theseus to the north along the Isthmus and the area gained during the Peloponnesian Wars (as well as Theseus’ birthplace of Troezen) to the south. These acquired areas on the Peloponnese connect with the poleis of Attica, encompassing the Saronic Gulf (see Figure 1) and dramatically extending the Athenian sphere of influence. The cults of Theseus and

48 Wickkaser, Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece, p. 72.
49 Wickkaser, Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece, p. 73-4.
50 Wickkaser, Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece, p.73-4.
Asklepios played integral roles both in creating these ties and extending Athenian influence throughout the Gulf. Both cults were publicly supported, distinctively anti-Spartan, and advantageously located. They supported the Athenian aspiration of empire while providing divine approval for Athens’ expansionist actions.

Figure 1: Background map from Google Maps accessed 23 November 2013. Annotated by Carly Sokach.
References


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Gender and the Reaction to Grief in Euripides’ *Hecuba* and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

By Nathan Weinbren

Classical Greek society did not fear much, yet a woman in mourning was enough to frighten many. A common theme throughout much of classical Greek literature, lamenting mothers were known to act without conscience against those who wronged them. However, this literature exhibits grief in mortal and immortal women differently. Hecuba and Demeter, both queens in their own right, are good representations of this difference. These powerful women are the primary focus of two classical works: mortal Hecuba in Euripides’ *Hecuba* and immortal Demeter in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. Both *Hecuba* and the *Hymn* depict a mother who loses a daughter then a son: Hecuba will lose Polyxena and Polydoros while Demeter will lose Persephone and Demophoon. For Hecuba and Demeter, this gender difference influences the manifestation of grief.

The two women begin their stories at very different points in their lives. In *Hecuba*, the titular character is in slavery with her daughter, Polyxena. Her only living son is Polydoros, entrusted to a friend, Polymestor. Eventually, both children are killed—Polyxena at the behest of the ghost of Achilles and Polydoros by Polymestor (Euripides *Hecuba* 189-190, 24-25). In contrast, Demeter begins her tale happy with her daughter, Persephone. When Persephone is abducted by Hades, Demeter wanders the Earth grieving, disguised as an old mortal woman. She becomes nurse to the young boy Demophoon, raising him to be immortal and caring for him
similar to a mother nurturing her son (Homeric Hymn to Demeter p. 8). Eventually, Demophoon’s mortal mother discovers Demeter’s intentions, and he too is separated from Demeter. Demophoon’s death, discussed by Nancy Felson Rubin and Harriet M. Deal, is not a literal death—the child does not lose his life—but a return to mortality, thus separating mortal son from immortal mother.\footnote{Nancy F. Rubin and Harriet M. Deal, “Some Functions of the Demophoon Episode in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” Quadermi Urbinati di Cultura Classica 5, 7-21: Fabrizio Serra editore, 1980: 15ff.}

The death of a daughter provokes different reactions in the two women. Initially, following her daughter’s death, each woman’s grief is similar. Both are passive and withdrawn in their grief. While retreating from the outside world, Hecuba moans, “Why do you disturb me in my grief?” (Hecuba 502). Nicole Loraux points out that Hecuba’s mourning symbolizes how mothers are “always wounded in their motherhood.”\footnote{Loraux does mention that this wound is most typically tied to a mother-son bond, possibly the reason here no physical pain is shown in Hecuba. Nicole Loraux, Mothers in Mourning, trans. Corinne Pache, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998: 49.}

Likewise, Demeter initially mourns passively for her daughter, directing her grief inwards as she “for nine days...never tasted ambrosia and the sweet draught of nectar” (Hymn to Demeter 2). Each mother initially feels pain at the loss of her child, but each mother’s grief evolves differently. Hecuba chooses to moan aloud, announcing her grief in a long monologue to her fellow slaves (Hecuba 585). In contrast, Demeter chooses to remain silent—hiding her emotions and not involving the mortal or immortal worlds (Homeric Hymn to Demeter 5). Thus, while the mothers’ grief may have similar tones, the actions from this lamentation unfold differently.

The mothers manifest the grief over the losses of their sons very similarly. Each woman actively grieves through
revenge. Loraux points out that, while Hecuba suffered from Polyxena’s death, “it is the mutilated corpse of Polydoros that leads her to vengeance.”\(^{53}\) When Polyxena dies, Hecuba is not spurred to avenge her death; following Polydoros’ death, she immediately goes to Agamemnon, beseeching him to “extend...a hand of vengeance” (\textit{Hecuba} 842-843). Hecuba’s request to avenge her son’s death by the hands of Polymestor symbolizes a change: her grief is now directed outward. Demophoon’s death is similarly jarring to Demeter. Rubin and Deal argue that Demophoon’s death is symbolized by “Demeter’s rejection, los[s of] immortality and return to a mortal state.”\(^{54}\) In other words, when Demophoon regains mortality, his ties with Demeter are severed and she loses her “son.” It is only following this that Demeter’s anger is released on the mortal world as she withholds grain from the mortals (\textit{Hymn to Demeter} 10). Thus, Loraux concludes that “vengeance does not follow the same course whether the mother has a son or daughter for a child.”\(^{55}\)

It may be argued that Hecuba seeks vengeance for her son because she has a tangible being against whom to vent her rage (Polymestor) while there is no being to avenge for her daughters’ death as her death was at the demand of a ghost. However, Hecuba shows no signs of anger following Polyxena’s death and, therefore, has no rage to vent. On the other hand, Demeter does show slight anger when she loses Persephone; however, her overwhelming emotion is sadness, and she does not project any anger to seek revenge.\(^{56}\)

Additionally, Demeter’s loss of a son could be seen as her

\(^{53}\) Loraux, \textit{Mothers in Mourning}, p. 50.

\(^{54}\) Rubin and Deal, “Some Functions of the Demophoon Episode in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” p. 15.

\(^{55}\) Loraux, \textit{Mothers in Mourning}, p. 52.

\(^{56}\) Demeter is shown to have “grief yet more and terrible.” Therefore, while there is the presence of anger, grief has overwhelmed her and is the manifestation of the anger. \textit{Homeric Hymn to Demeter} 4.
own fault because she voluntarily throws him to the ground, cutting him off from immortality. But as Rubin and Deal note, the act is merely a symbol of her recognition that the boy will never be like her—immortal. This recognition is the true “death” of her son, and thus the root of her vengeance. Therefore her attack on the mortal world stands as an attack on those who symbolize her son’s difference and separate him from her. Similarly, it may be argued that withholding grain is an attack against the gods as grain is an offering presented to the gods. The immortals, just like the mortals, symbolize the separation of Demeter and Demophoon and therefore both groups can be seen as the focus of Demeter’s anger as both represent her infinite separation from her son.

This inherent difference in gender-dependent grief lies in their sanctity: Hecuba is mortal while Demeter is immortal. While grieving for their daughters, the women’s initial conditions may seem similar, but their contrasting positions result in a different evolution of action for each mother. Loraux investigates the curious similarities in Hecuba’s and Demeter’s initial conditions following the loss of her daughters: they are both grieving mothers, portrayed as older, post-menopausal women, and treated with reverence and

57 For an investigation, such as this, into the validity of the Hymn itself, both as evidence for the roles of the elderly in Greek society as well as simply an investigation into the actions of Demeter, see Louise Pratt, “The Old Women of Ancient Greece and the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” Transactions of the American Philological Association 130, 41-65: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000: 59ff.
respect. Society’s reverence allows both Hecuba and Demeter to grieve internally, while ultimately compelling Hecuba to present her grief to the community and accepting Demeter’s solidarity. Loraux speculates that these actions are due to stature. In the Greek world, a daughter is a symbol of *odis*, the mother’s anguish in childbirth, never fully separated. Therefore, when a mother loses a daughter, she loses a part of herself. Thus, the overwhelming emotion from grief is sadness at the loss of self, resulting in Hecuba and Demeter’s similar initial grief. However, Hecuba and Polyxena are mortal and cannot be reunited. Hecuba has indefinitely lost her *odis*. Demeter and Persephone, on the other hand, are immortal and thus do have the chance. Demeter’s immortality allows the possibility of regaining her daughter. Hecuba declares her sadness because it is definitive. Conversely, Demeter punishes herself quietly and does not allow others to see her grief as it is not yet in full bloom. Demeter can still hope. This hopeful self-control is not typical of a lamenting woman.

Rubin and Deal also argue that Demeter’s immortality

58 While it could be said that Hecuba is not treated with respect, Agamemnon is kind and reverent in his communication (*Hecuba* 726ff and 1240ff). Demeter, similarly, is treated with respect by her new household when she arrives (*Hymn to Demeter* 4-6).

59 Louise Pratt points out that the respect to older women is odd as they no longer have any worth to society. This respect, she claims, is because old women frequently disguised themselves as old crones and so old women were treated with respect in case they actually were goddesses. Pratt, “The Old Women of Ancient Greece and the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” p. 42.

60 Jan Bremmer investigates the importance of older women in Greek society, concluding that while they are not as free as the *Hymn* suggests, their freedom is greatly increased due to the lack of worry about their safety. However, Bremmer also notes that religion is an arena where older women are prized above all else. Jan Bremmer, “The Old Women of Ancient Greece,” *Sexual Asymmetry: Studies in Ancient Society*, Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1987: 192ff.

61 Loraux, *Mothers in Mourning*, p. 52.
allows her to assimilate herself into a new community: she can turn to the mortal world and find “a substitute [mortal] child”\footnote{Rubin and Deal, “Some Functions of the Demophoon Episode in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” p. 8.} by disguising herself. Hecuba does not have a lower community to disguise herself within. Both may distance themselves from their respective communities, but Demeter can turn to man and withhold her grief from the outside world while Hecuba remains lost in her own grief.

While a daughter is the symbol for \textit{odis}, Loraux explains that the son is the \textit{lókheuma}, the finished product of childbirth, and thus is separated from the mother.\footnote{Loraux, \textit{Mothers in Mourning} p. 52.} For a postmenopausal woman, the son is the last remaining tie to her fertile years. Louise Pratt notes that this tie is symbolized by “man’s origin to his mortal mother’s womb tie[ing] him firmly to the Earth and to mortality.”\footnote{Pratt, “The Old Women of Ancient Greece and the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” p. 59.} Thus the son is the mother’s connection to her own mortality and fertility. In killing the son, the murderer effectively cuts a mother’s tie with the Earth. This is the root for both the mortal and immortal mother’s revenge. Hecuba’s vengeance is derived from her no longer having ties to fertility; her life is just not important anymore as her womb can no longer create a new tie to the Earth. For Demeter, Demophoon’s separation symbolizes his mortality, so Demeter seeks to avenge the loss of her son by attacking the very things that took her son away. Rubin and Deal argue that by realizing Demophoon is mortal, Demeter recognizes her own immortality and no longer has ties to Earth; she is able to seek revenge on mortality because
she no longer belongs. Demeter’s own elderly disguise symbolizes her inability to reproduce again, and thus these children are both women’s last. While there are derivations for the specific reasons or targets of retribution, both manifestations of revenge are derived from the ties between postmenopausal mother and son, regardless of the mother’s mortality status.

Both Hecuba and Demeter separate their grief in lamenting their respective children. While both feel the pain of the loss of a daughter, the differences in mortality reflects different grieving patterns. However, for both, a daughter’s death incites a sort of longing sadness while vengeful anger comes from the loss of a connection between mother and son. Thus, when the classical Greeks feared a mother’s wrath, they were not fearful of a mother’s general grief, but a mother’s lamentation of a lost son.

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Rubin and Deal note that Demeter is not yet fully immortal because she will not regain immortality until she is reunited with her daughter. Rubin and Deal, “Some Functions of the Demophoon Episode in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter,” p. 18-9.

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First Impressions in Seneca’s *De Consolatione ad Helviam* and *Medea*

By Allyson Zucker

Although consolations and tragedies entail drastically different rhetorical techniques and writing styles, Seneca attempts to persuade his mother in *De Consolatione ad Helviam* and to convey to a larger audience in his tragedy, *Medea*, that things are not always what they appear to be at first glance. Seneca’s stoic nature lies in the intersection of these two works—in the seemingly unrelated characters of Helvia and Medea. By analyzing Seneca’s word choice, it is possible to cross-reference Seneca’s works beyond even these two passages to explore this theme of a reversal of first impressions.

In *De Consolatione ad Helviam*, Seneca consoles Helvia that constant misfortune can actually prove to be good fortune. *Unum habet adsidua infelicitas bonum* “constant misfortune has one good thing,” (2.3) he declares: it strengthens those it assails. In his consolation to his mother, Seneca imparts his philosophy that things are not always what they seem to be at first glance; incessant suffering may actually be an enduring blessing. Similarly, in *Medea*, Seneca suggests that Medea was not necessarily what she seemed to be at first. He writes, *Quod fuit huius pretium cursus?* “What was the *pretium* to this path?” (361). Pretium can be interpreted in two seemingly contrary ways: it can refer to a prize, a cost, or some intersection of the two. This paradox parallels the intersection of misfortune and good fortune Seneca explores in *De Consolatione ad Helviam*.

Seneca invokes the imagery of wounds to reiterate this
theme that events, people, and emotions tend to elicit a reaction contrary to one’s first impressions. He writes that wounds *plerumque contrariis curari* “[are] commonly treated by opposite methods” (2.2). Here, Seneca is justifying his harsh consolation by admitting that while it may seem cruel to remind Helvia of all her previous hardships, his words are actually kind and ultimately healing. In broader terms, Seneca is reinforcing his philosophy that there are often underlying meanings and consequences that are not always obvious. Perhaps Seneca is suggesting that the two definitions of *pretium* are not mutually exclusive. Emotions and events are twofold: cruel and kind, beneficial and costly. Similarly, the wound imagery in *Medea* is twofold. Jason’s love for his children is ultimately the cause of their death and his misery. Seneca reveals this dichotomy through wound imagery as well when Medea says aside, *Sic natos amat?...vulneri patuit locus*, “Thus he loves his children?...The place for the wound is open” (549-550). In both works, Seneca uses wound imagery perhaps to relate the fragility of one’s expectations to the fragility of one’s body so that the reader can understand this philosophy in a physical, palpable way.

Even though the similarities are apparent, what about the context of the stories of the two women makes this comparison significant? In both cases, there is a buildup of misery, a momentum to misfortune. In *De Consolatione ad Helviam*, Seneca admits that Fortune relentlessly assails Helvia: *Nullam tibi Fortuna vacationem dedit a gravissimis luctibus* “Fortune gives you no break from grave struggles” (2.4). The most recent wound, however, is the most grave. Similarly, Medea’s forthcoming crime is the most wretched. *En faxo sciant quam leuia fuerint quamque vularis notae quae commodai* “Let them know how light, of common type, they arranged crimes were” (905-907). All the detestable crimes of Medea’s past—murdering her own
brother, depriving her father of the golden fleece, and deceiving the daughters in Corinth to kill their father—pale in comparison to the most abhorrent crime yet to come. The contexts of both passages reveal Seneca’s philosophy that misery has a temporal arc. The lesser sufferings must precede the greatest suffering of all: in De Consolatione ad Helviam, mourning a living son and, in Medea, infanticide.

In Medea, Seneca also conveys this duality of emotions, people, and events through his word choice. The ambiguity of the term pretium relates to the ambiguity of the value of time. More specifically, pretium refers to an economy of time. Time holds immeasurable value, and it is difficult to put a price on its cost and utility. Pretium’s association with economic interactions further emphasizes the irrationality of measuring time and actions in contrast to the rational way sellers and consumers buy and sell priced goods in economic markets. Seneca implies that there is a time for pain, and a time for consolation, a time for hate, a time for love—none of which can be measured, predicted, or calculated in a rational sense. If these seeming opposites can be encrypted in the meaning of one word, they can also exist simultaneously. Seneca reinforces this notion of an economy of time in his Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium. He writes, Quem mihi dabis, qui aliquod pretium tempori ponat, qui diem aestimet, qui intellegat se cotidie mori? “What man can you show me who places any value on his time, who reckons the worth of each day, who understands that he is dying daily?” (1.2.1). Time has immeasurable worth, and while it may appear to be indefinite, everyone must die at some point.

Seneca employs consolatory rhetoric and dramatic dialogue to convey his philosophies, namely that one way to cope with hardships in life is to expect the unexpected, to recognize that things are not often what they seem to be. Seneca is suggesting that it is actually beneficial to meditate
on misfortune in order to prepare oneself for the future and avoid the shock when seemingly good fortune deteriorates to misfortune. It is not surprising, then, that Seneca accepted Nero’s decree to commit suicide with a brave indifference.

References

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C. BRIAN ROSE

PROFESSOR OF CLASSICAL STUDIES, JAMES B. PRITCHARD PROFESSOR OF ARCHAEOLOGY, AND CURATOR-IN-CHARGE, MEDITERRANEAN SECTION, PENN MUSEUM
Discentes: What is your position within the Department of Classical Studies, and how does that relate to the Museum?

Professor C. Brian Rose: I have a joint appointment. I am the James B. Pritchard Professor of Mediterranean Archaeology in the Department of Classical Studies and Curator-in-Charge of the Mediterranean Section of the Penn Museum.

D: How long have you been at Penn, and what did you do before that?

CBR: I have been at Penn since 2005. Before that I taught for 18 years at the University of Cincinnati.

D: What is the current research project you’re working on?

CBR: Well, I have been excavating and researching at Troy for the last 25 years, and I only recently finished all the publications relating to my fieldwork at Troy which started in 1988. So I have a large book on Troy, a synthetic overview of habitation at Troy from the Neolithic period to the Battle of Gallipoli, coming out in a couple weeks from Cambridge University Press. And then there are two other volumes I finished on the Troy excavations that will cover the material I excavated at the sanctuary dedicated to Cybele and the Samothracian gods and the Hellenistic and Roman houses in the lower city, the residential district of Troy. So my main fieldwork focus now is the site of Gordion in central Turkey about an hour’s drive southwest of Ankara. It’s been in the process of excavation and study by Penn since 1950. Last summer, I had an entire season of new excavation, the first excavation that’s taken place at the site in seven years. We made a lot of wonderful discoveries dealing with the early and middle Phrygian stages of the site, the 9th, 8th, and 7th centuries BC.

D: How do you go about designing the research project? What goes into choosing a site?

CBR: Normally what happens is that you formulate a
hypothesis that you want to test by fieldwork at a particular site or in a particular area. That can be a surface survey, and it can also be an excavation with active fieldwork. You’re digging in order to test the hypothesis that you formulated earlier in the year at Penn. In my case, the sites in essence came to me rather than me coming to the sites. This is the reverse of what one would normally do. When I was hired at the University of Cincinnati, just after finishing my PhD, my superiors told me early on in 1987 that I would be overseeing with one of my colleagues the Greek, Roman, and Byzantine excavations at Troy which were starting up again after a hiatus of 50 years. Cincinnati had excavated Troy in the 1930s—1932 to 1938—and so when Prof. Manfred Korfman of the University of Tubingen wanted to resume the excavations at Troy, he turned to Cincinnati for advice and with the offer of a partnership between our two universities. In other words, Troy sort of landed in my lap in 1987, and I thought, “Well this is fine, who wouldn’t want to dig at Troy?” But it was a situation in which I had to formulate a research agenda for the site rather than first deciding on the research questions and then seeking permission to excavate the site. The same was true for Gordion. When I was hired at Penn, there was always the sense that eventually I would take over Gordion because the director was getting close to retirement age. This was a situation where I had to devise a research design to fit Gordion, of which I was now in the process of becoming director. I looked in particular at what had been done or not done since 1950—there were a lot of things I had done at Troy in the last 25 years, and I wanted to do the same sort of thing at Gordion. That meant creating a color-phase plan so that we could understand the successive settlements of the site and how the citadel developed over time. There’s more information in that color-phase plan of Troy than you get from any other plan of the site. And I
wanted to try the same thing at Gordion. I also wanted to do a lot of remote sensing to try to get an idea of the city plan and how it changed over the years. I used a technique called magnetic perspection, also radar, and also a technique called electric resistivity. I was able to get a fairly good understanding of the defenses around the most important buildings of the citadel and in the surrounding area, and to determine what the residential district looked like. The excavation was targeted in two areas that would give me some answers to the questions the remote sensing had raised. I had put a hiatus on excavation seven years ago when I became co-director because the other archaeologists who had worked there for a very long time weren’t publishing their discoveries fast enough, so I decided we shouldn’t excavate for a while until more books came out. Six books came out in the last three years, and so I thought we could excavate now that the publication record was a little stronger.

D: How do you define classical studies?

CBR: Classical studies is a term that has come to acquire an increasingly broader definition over the course of the last few decades. Classical studies was initially focused on Greece, Italy, Turkey, and not so much the western Mediterranean. So it had a narrower spatial frame and a narrower temporal frame. People tended to focus on the period from the late 8th BC century of Homer and Hesiod through the foundation of Constantinople in the early 4th century AD. Now most Classics departments would include studies in the Bronze Age, starting around 3000 BC. Obviously we’re a case in point as that’s what my colleague Tom Tartaron studies. Many classics departments would extend their range of courses all the way to the end of the Byzantine period, so the middle of the 15th century AD. The geographical focus too has expanded, including Spain, North Africa, and all the way to Afghanistan, especially with the current wars. Those wars
focused attention more on the Greek material or Greek-inspired material culture of Afghanistan than had been the case before. So the spatial and temporal frames of classical studies have expanded dramatically as have the conceptual frames of classical studies. This is the byproduct of developments in women’s studies, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, queer theory; that’s given us a broader conceptual frame in which to analyze the literature and material culture of the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium BC to 1st millennium AD.

**D:** How do you see the field of archaeology evolving in the next fifty years?

**CBR:** You know, I should have a quick answer since I was President of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) for four years, until 2011. I suppose I would bring in the some of the issues I raised in the answer to your previous question. We need to be much more expansive in our approach. We need to cover the broader temporal and spatial dimensions much more aggressively than we have been doing. The discipline of archaeology needs to reach out to diverser audiences than it has been. We need to engage the public much more than we have been doing, and that’s one of the great things about this museum. There’s very advanced research in archaeology here, but we also have a strong public outreach program. We need to engage the children much more aggressively than we have been doing, and that’s especially true for professors of archaeology. Many would prefer to teach university-level students which is easier than teaching children in primary or secondary school. But so much of what we’re dealing with now is the preservation of cultural heritage and intolerance toward different kinds of cultural heritage. You have to reach the children before they’re taught to hate a particular group of people or a culture so that, when they grow to adulthood, they will ideally have a more tolerant
attitude toward diverse cultures very different from their own. This has been a big problem in Afghanistan with the destruction of the colossal Buddhas in Bamiyan by the Taliban in 2001. That destruction was related to an intolerance of earlier cultures, so one of the things we have been doing at AIA is working with teachers in Afghanistan, and in the U.S., on new lesson plans that promote understanding of and respect for diverse cultural heritage for primary school students. To that outreach, I would include more of an interface with the military which is a program that I tried to promote while I was president-elect and then president of the AIA. It was a program that had once been in place during the World War II with the so-called “Monuments Men”. That was a time in which academics, archaeologists, classicists, art historians, historians worked with the military on identifying, conserving, and helping to repatriate art and antiquities that had been looted by the Nazis. That strong interface between academia and the military fell apart during the Vietnam War when a metaphorical wall was constructed between the two groups. The academics weren’t working with the military anymore; they were marching against them. Universities were closing down, classes were cancelled, students were leaving the university to become activists against the war in Vietnam. I had to try to put the original partnership back in place at the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan which was not easy because I found that my colleagues didn’t trust the military, nor did the military trust us to be politically neutral in the lectures that I was proposing we would give at military bases throughout the US and—if they let me—Iraq and Afghanistan. They did ultimately let me do that although it took some time to get the program approved and organized and to convince my colleagues to do it. One subsidiary part of that was that, you know, everybody is busy. Most of my colleagues were classical archaeologists,
and they were worried about giving lectures on Iraq and Afghanistan, so I put together a lecture template for them with talking points. It was lot more involved than I realized it would be. One other difficulty was that even though I got the program approved by the U.S. Central Command, that didn’t mean I had the approval to go to every base. I had to get permission from the base commanders to do that, and they would change every two or three years, so I had to reargue the merits of the program every time. I’ve been doing it for nine years and the briefings are diminishing now because the wars are winding down. The Iraq War is over; our forces will leave Afghanistan in 2014. What I hope is that someday, the U.S. Central Command and the Department of Defense will decide that cultural heritage sensitivity training should be mandatory for all soldiers. We’re not there yet, but I’d like to think that is something that will happen in the next 10 years. Since the U.S. has ratified the Hague Convention which involves protection of cultural property that’s at risk in zones of conflict, I think that this will play a role in ultimately prompting the Secretary of Defense to promote mandatory cultural heritage training.

**D:** What attracted you to archaeology within the larger fields of classical studies and art history?

**CBR:** When I was growing up in a rural part of southeastern Ohio, I was very bored, and so I looked for ways I could travel to another country at the earliest age possible, and the easiest way to do that, it seemed to me, was with AFS, American Field Service. When you apply to be an exchange student, you have to be willing to go anywhere in the world they decide to send you. So your horizons have to be broad and you have to be flexible, and as far as I was concerned, any place was fine because it wouldn’t be southeastern Ohio. They sent me to Italy just by chance—this was in the summer of 1973, and at the tail end of the period when everyone was
interested in alternative lifestyles. We’ve sort of moved away from that since the 70s. The earlier exchange students had complained that they had only gone to the beach with their host families and drunk wine, and that was it. It wasn’t a sufficiently rich cultural experience for them. That summer of ’73—it was the only summer they did this—they picked ten of us who were slotted to go to Italy to live in a monastery in northern Italy with the monks. I wasn’t in that group; otherwise, I might have taken up Medieval Latin, I guess. Another ten of us were selected to work on an excavation just outside of Cerveteri, north of Rome, for one month and then to dig a medieval site in Calabria in southern Italy for a month near a little town called Filadelfia, ironically. Then I decided that this was about the most interesting job I could imagine doing and I would try to do it—much to the chagrin of my parents because they said that I would never get a job and that it wouldn’t pay. And so the best undergraduate major in Mediterranean archaeology was at Bryn Mawr College, and the only way I could major at an all-women’s college was to go to Haverford which is what I did. Then I went to Columbia, got a PhD, and then I got a job at the University of Cincinnati just as I finished my PhD which put me in Troy. I had already worked in Turkey for five years during graduate school at the site of Aphrodisias, so I knew Turkish, and I knew something about what it was like to work in Turkey. Altogether, I’ve worked for 33 years in Turkey. It’s not something I ever thought would go on quite this long, but it’s become a kind of second home for me.

D: What is your favorite course to teach at Penn?
CBR: I love teaching Introduction to Mediterranean Archaeology because I don’t get an opportunity to teach a lot of undergraduate classes. A lot of what I do is graduate. Because I have this joint appointment, my course load is 1-1 rather than 2-2 which is the normal course load.
D: What would you say is the most exciting discovery you’ve made?

CBR: I’ve made a lot of exciting discoveries—I’ve been very lucky in that respect. When I was digging at Aphrodisias in southwestern Turkey, the primary sanctuary site of Aphrodite in the eastern Mediterranean, other than Cyprus, I excavated a sanctuary of the early Roman emperors. In excavating that complex, I found between 50 and 75 life-size marble reliefs of the Julio-Claudian emperors and the Olympian gods. That was phenomenally exciting. It was exhausting—we were finding too many reliefs. The more sculpture I found, the more workmen the director gave me. You don’t find that every day; I suspect that I’ll never find it again. One of my most exciting discoveries at Troy was a series of lion bones that were from an Archaic stratum—so that would be 7th-6th century BC—that seemed to belong to lion skins that decorated the walls of the sanctuary which was almost certainly a sanctuary of Cybele, the mother goddess of Anatolia. We thought these were skins that might actually have been worn by the worshippers of Cybele during ritual activities, so that was pretty exciting.

D: Do you have any final remarks about the cultural heritage protection program you implemented in Iraq and Afghanistan?

CBR: I was worried initially that the soldiers wouldn’t be interested in what I was talking about, and it was certainly a different lecture style that I had to master to do this. It’s not like lecturing in a university—these were people who were going to be the guardians of that culture. So I had to teach them in a different way, stressing not just the importance of the monuments, but how to conserve them. In a sense, I had to teach them how to be a conservator; how to handle mud-brick architecture, what to do when they go into a museum that’s just been hit with a rocket. Cultural property can vanish
immediately if you’re not careful, so I needed to make them emergency responders in conservation, and I needed to do that in an hour or fifty minutes. And that was very hard. It was an entirely new way of thinking about teaching, and it was easier to do it in the field when I went to Iraq and Afghanistan. I could just point to the monuments and say, “If this happened, here’s how you would handle it,” or “Here’s what you should do, and here’s what you shouldn’t do.” I was never frightened in Iraq. I was frightened in Afghanistan, but you put it out of your mind. I mean, you’re there to teach. But that was the first time fear entered my mind in an overseas setting because the Taliban were just down the road and even though I was wearing body armor, they could still have killed me instantly. But you learn how to put it out of your mind and move on with your appointed task. It wasn’t as if I wasn’t being protected—at one point I had 30 or 40 Afghan and U.S. Army soldiers around me—but it felt different. I don’t know how to describe it. And it was heartbreaking. It was hard to teach because I could see the situation with the women in Afghanistan, the extent to which they had been deprived of literacy, and that was hard.

D: What advice would you give to students looking to pursue a career in archaeology or in classical studies in general?

CBR: The most important thing you can do is to learn as many languages as possible, as early as possible. And when you have children, when they’re two or three, take them to a foreign country and live there for a year, because they’ll become bilingual in a week—it will take you several years, but they’ll become bilingual in a week. That’s the kindest thing we could do to our children: take them overseas when they’re young and expose them to a different culture and a different language. You can’t know enough languages, and you can’t really understand the hopes, desires, the fear, the anger of a different group of people unless you can converse
with them in their language. That’s the most important thing you can do regardless of what branch of classical studies you choose to focus on.
THOMAS MOTTER

Where have you been?
I am from Houston, Texas where I have lived my whole life. I did my undergrad at Rice University in Houston. I started as a math major and came to classics through a whim to study Latin. Up until the middle of my senior year, I was (to progressively weakening degrees) certain that I would become a mathematician. After graduating in 2012, I spent a year working as a bioinformatician at a cancer hospital in
Houston, and firmly decided that I wanted to pursue a career in the humanities, whereupon I applied to the post-bacc program.

**Why are you here?**
I am in Penn's post-bacc program because, given my late decision to switch into a classics-oriented career, I did not get enough experience with Greek and Latin during my time in undergrad - not to mention the weakening caused by a year's disuse. I left Rice with my languages at an able reading level, but I did not have the fluid and thorough familiarity that I need for future study.

**Where are you going?**
I plan to continue on to graduate school, and I would like to teach. My interests lie in Indo-European studies, especially comparative linguistics and mythology for which strong knowledge of Greek is indispensable. I have a particularly strong fascination with the Germanic languages, culture, mythology, and folklore, and I hope to be able to capitalize on that in my future work.
Men, There Are Greeks Inside: The Homerification of “Baby, It’s Cold Outside”

By Katie Levesque

It really must stay – Men there are Greeks inside
Get out of the way – Men there are Greeks inside
This conflict has been – been fated that we won’t win
So very long – why can’t you see that this is wrong?

The gods, they will start to anger – listen you are all in danger
Poseidon will be shaking the earth – instead he’ll be shaking with mirth
So really we’d better hurry – Trojans, you are making me worry
Maybe we should open the door – by morning you’ll be dead on the floor

It really must stay! – Ah, but there are Greeks inside!
This white marble head was purchased by the Penn Museum in 1901. Unfortunately, its provenance is unknown, severely limiting interpretation. Yet art historians have been able to place the head within the context of the Julio-Claudian period (1st century CE). The Julio-Claudian style has led some to believe that the boy can be identified as a rendering of the young Caligula, a Julio-Claudian emperor who ruled briefly from 37 CE until his assassination in 41 CE. The head’s identification as Caligula stems from a comparison made to the famous Grande Camée de France from 23 CE which depicts Caligula as a youth. This identification is far from certain, however, as Roman patrons commonly attempted to emulate the features of imperial portraiture in their own private statues. Another proposal for this head is that it is not of Caligula but an idealized private portrait for a young boy during the Julio-Claudian period that adopted many facial features found in the portraiture of imperial children during that era. In either case, there is a certain attractiveness to having a statue of Caligula as a youth because of the memorable passage in Suetonius’ “Life of Caligula” that explains how he came to have the nickname ‘Caligula.’ According to Suetonius, Caligula was brought up among his father Germanicus’ soldiers, who adored him and gave him the name Caligula, meaning ‘little boots,’ as he used to wear their military garb. Photo: Object #MS4030. c. 1-50 CE. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, PA. Penn Museum. Web. 2 December 2013.