

UCLA Department of Classics

Greetings from the Chair



Dear Friends of Classics,

We were in the final stages of editing our Winter Newsletter when the COVID-19 crisis burst upon us. My first task, then, is to send to all of you our wishes that you will pass through this time of uncertainty and isolation in safety and good health. Here in the Classics Department we were in our final week of classes when the order came from the Chancellor to make the transition to remote instruction, and all of us, students, TAs, and faculty, scrambled to learn how to conduct our classes remotely through Zoom, and then to redesign our final exams so that they too could be

conducted remotely. Now that we are in Spring Break, everyone is working hard to prepare for remote teaching in the Spring Quarter. Sadly, all our spring events have been cancelled, but we hope to reschedule many of them when the crisis is past. We will miss the in-person interaction and community between students and faculty that make Classics classes so special. There will be some loss in dynamism and liveliness; the charisma of our many award-winning teachers may be difficult to capture via teleconference, but we are a resilient bunch, and are committed to exploring new modes of interaction and assessment.

These trying times remind us of the importance of community and integrity. Perhaps inevitably one is reminded of Thucydides' famous plague narrative. The "plague" of the fifth century BCE was of course very different (maybe viral hemorrhagic fever or typhus), but it remains chilling after all these centuries to read of the social breakdown that accompanied the outbreak: "Men who had hitherto concealed what they took pleasure in, now grew bolder. For, seeing the sudden change ... they reflected that life and riches were alike transitory ... Who would be willing to sacrifice himself to the law of honour when he knew not whether he would ever live to be held in honour?" (2.53, Jowett's translation). We all hope that we can learn from the past—indeed, the discipline of Classics is predicated upon that belief—and it's salutary to be reminded that a very real challenge is in how we behave.



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Department News

Greetings from the Chair (continued)

A sense of historical and cultural perspective can be a material help, and we intend to keep that perspective alive as we progress through the spring and summer. We are creating workshops and meetings, and, if there is the desire for them, online reading groups for graduate students and faculty. Are there any (remote!!) outreach activities we might organize for our broader community of friends and supporters?; anything you would like to see us do to lighten your spirits? Do send me your ideas, and send me your stories as well. How are you dealing with whatever restrictions are enforced in your area? Have you read anything that really speaks to you (whether from antiquity or not)? If possible, I would like to include some of these stories and recommendations in our summer newsletter.

Finally, I want to record for all of you how proud I am of the spirit with which our students have faced the recent disruption of their lives. Some will be spending the spring quarter at home, some in their apartments in LA, but everyone I have talked to has reacted with grace (even in the face of concern for family members from whom they are separated), with what humor they can, and with the determination to carry on. I feel lucky in the community that we have created, and of which we are all a part.

Kathryn Morgan

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Professor Amy Richlin's *Slave Theater* named Choice Outstanding Academic Title

The department would like to congratulate Professor Amy Richlin for *Slave Theater in the Roman Republic: Plautus and Popular Comedy* on being named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2019. This recognition receives about 6000 nominations a year from across all subjects and selects no more than ten percent. Congratulations Amy!



Faculty News

Queen Elizabeth's Tacitus

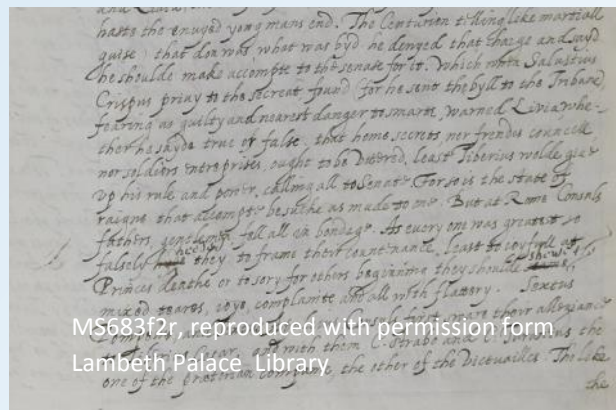
Lydia Spielberg

Last year, a researcher working in the archives of Lambeth Palace Library in England has made a plausible case that an anonymous 16th century translation of the first book of Tacitus' *Annals* (LPL MS 683) was composed by Queen Elizabeth I in the 1590s. Dr. John-Mark Philo has argued, in a recently published article, that Elizabeth translated the text in the 1590s, probably as a private exercise. The Lambeth manuscript is a fair copy done in a clean scribal hand, but a different hand corrected what appear to be copyist's errors. This handwriting, Philo shows in his article, matches autographs of Elizabeth from the later part of her reign. Elizabeth was well-versed in both Greek and Latin, and made a hobby of translating Classical texts throughout her reign (her translations of Horace, Cicero, Plutarch, and Boethius have been known for some time). Elizabeth's Tacitus is the first translation of any part of the *Annals* into English, preceding the first published English translation by perhaps five years. The attribution of this manuscript allows us to see a skilled 16th century student of Classics wrestling with a difficult, unfamiliar Latin author.

One scholar has compared Elizabeth's technique to "sight-reading." She appears to have translated as she read, matching the syntax of each piece of the original text, much as a student might translate in an upper-level reading course at UCLA to demonstrate comprehension. Sometimes, her English practically requires the reader to consult the Latin original in order to understand it! But this means that the translations offer us a little window into Elizabeth's mind: how did she process Latin? What were her "weak points" in Latin vocabulary and syntax? And how did she, a ruling monarch, understand this ancient author often considered a central theorist of absolute monarchical power?

Through the fifteenth and much of the sixteenth century, classical texts were mustered as sources for "virtue politics": encouraging the powerful to rule wisely and justly through the examples of morally upright heroes from the biblical and Classical past. Elizabeth's humanist education would have trained her to read and think in terms of these clear moral examples, just as much as it trained her to read and write Ciceronian Latin. By the late 16th century, Tacitus had entered the canon of classical texts held up as potential "mirrors for princes", but the world of power politics he reflected was much darker. In the *Annals*, the "secrets of power" include cold-blooded murder, and "the account-books of ruling won't balance unless they are rendered to a single person." If this sounds Machiavellian, it very much is. Although Machiavelli does not seem to have made much use of Tacitus when writing *The Prince*, his 1519 book on ruling by pragmatism rather than virtue was so controversial that even his name was inflammatory. But Tacitus, a respectable ancient author, could be brought into the debate about virtue or pragmatism in his place.

We may be able to see both the grammatical and the ideological difficulties that Tacitus presented in Elizabeth's translation of a passage early in *Annals* 1. The "first mischief" of the reign of the emperor Tiberius, as Elizabeth puts it, was the secret murder of a potential alternate candidate for imperial power (*Annals* 1.6.1). Tacitus writes that Tiberius intended to disavow responsibility and request that the senate investigate, but the courtier behind the



Faculty News

Queen Elizabeth's Tacitus (Continued)

assassination, one Sallustius Crispus, started to worry that he would be implicated. So he advised Tiberius' influential mother Livia to tell her son to keep everything hushed up. Here's what Tacitus writes (translation mine):

Crispus... fearing that he would be handed over to the defendant's stand – an equally dangerous situation whether he offered lies or the truth – warned Livia that she should not let household secrets, friends' counsels, and soldiers' orders be publicized, and that Tiberius must not destroy the power of his supremacy by calling everything before the senate: ruling, he said, carries this condition: that the accounts won't balance unless they are rendered to a single person (Tacitus *Annals* 1.6.3).

Crispus' advice is exactly the kind of dangerously frank statement about the hidden workings of power that made Tacitus infamous as a kind of how-to book for tyrants.

And it is here that Elizabeth seems to have faltered over Tacitus' Latin, which is especially compressed in this section. She translates this passage as follows:

Crispus...fearing as guilty and nearest danger to smarte, warned Livia, whether he sayde true or false, that home secretes, nor frendes counsell nor soldiers enterprises, ought [sic] to be uttered, least Tiberius wolde give up his rule and power, calling all to Senate. For so is the state of raigne that accompts be suche as made to one. (LPL MS683 fol. 2^r)

Elizabeth appears to mistakenly treat Tacitus' description of Crispus' estimation of the situation ("equally dangerous whether he offered lies or the truth") as part of a description of Crispus himself ("guilty and nearest to danger"). Note that this change makes the underlying Crispus unquestionably the guilty party (he admits it himself!), whereas Tacitus leaves it unclear how far up the ultimate responsibility for the murder lies.

More intriguing, however, because harder to explain, is Elizabeth's relocation of the phrase that she translates as "whether he sayde true or false." In Tacitus' original, it forms part of Crispus' internal calculation that a public investigation would put him in danger. But Elizabeth moves the phrase out of Crispus' thought or speech and seemingly into the narrator's voice, who now pre-emptively expresses doubt about whether the claim Crispus makes about the nature of monarchical power is true.

Elizabeth I was hardly a naïve monarch when she encountered Tacitus. Canny, isolated, and difficult to read, by the 1590s she was not dissimilar to a Tacitean emperor. Nevertheless, it is tempting to see her mistranslation as something more than a slip of the pen, as if the text she is translating has provoked a question in her mind that has in turn broken through into her translation: *is it true that a ruler's security lies in secrecy and unaccountability?* And even if it is, is it wise for anyone – courtier, historian, or queen – to admit it?

Further reading:

Lambeth Palace Library, MS 683: <http://images.lambethpalacelibrary.org.uk/luna/servlet/s/uq2w41>

John-Mark Philo, "Elizabeth I's Translation of Tacitus: Lambeth Palace Library, MS 683". *The Review of English Studies* (2019), pp. 1-30. doi: 10.1093/res/hgz112

Ronald Mellor, "The Impact of Tacitus", in *Tacitus* (Routledge: 1984), pp. 137-162.

Undergraduate News

A Field Trip on a “School Night”: College Night at the Getty Villa

Bryant Kirkland

On November 12, around twenty-five students from Professor Bryant Kirkland's "Discovering the Greeks" class took a yellow school bus across Sunset Blvd. and up the PCH for the fabulous event known as College Night at the Getty Villa. Students in the course donned crowns of laurel leaf, designed their own tote bags with Ancient Greek motifs, and encountered first-hand some of the material culture they've studied in the class, including: Cycladic figurines, an Archaic Corinthian *olpe* adorned with lions, a drinking-cup showing an *eromenos* and *erastes*, and a funerary vessel showing the laying out of the corpse surrounded by figures in mourning, similar to the Dipylon Krater that had just appeared on their mid-term! Students had a great time "spotting" pieces of antiquity they had previously seen only on the page or in a lecture slide. In one of the photos, several students (and their instructor!) attempt to impersonate the bronze figurine of a running Spartan woman, while in the other, many students are laughing at Professor Kirkland's cue to smile: not the usual "cheeeese" but, rather, the mouthful *seisachtheia*, Solon's shaking off of burdens (which had also just appeared on their mid-term). The trip to the Villa was its own *seisachtheia*, a chance to leave the burdens of campus and to see antiquity up close.



Happy Halloween from the Terrible Twins!

Post-Bacc students Alyson Blanck and Hannah Slough celebrate Halloween with some fun!

Capstone Seminar

Since 2009, the Department has offered one or two senior seminars in fulfillment of the university requirement of a capstone experience for each major. Faculty instructors and topics change each year. Senior Sarah Brauer shares her experience in Professor Papadopoulos's 2019 seminar, Image & Text in Classical Antiquity.

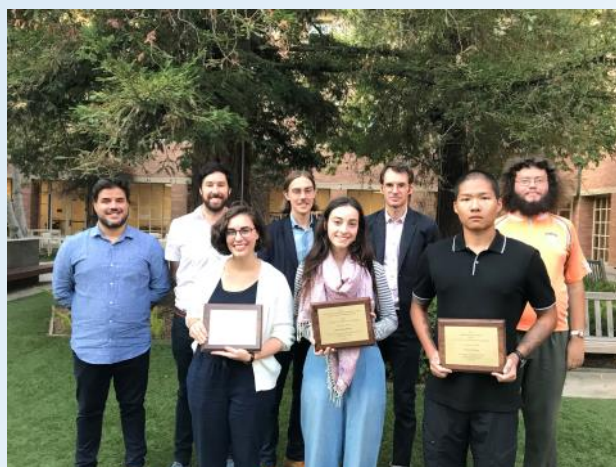
I have always been excited to take the classics capstone seminar, ever since I found out what it was freshman year. It fascinated me that there was a culmination of the major in the form of a class that could be any topic of the professor's choosing. As I picked my classes for fall quarter senior year, I learned the topic of the capstone would be Image and Text in Classical Antiquity, and before even enrolling in the class, I knew I would enjoy it immensely. Professor Papadopoulos gave thorough lectures that taught us how myths and stories both differed and stayed the same as they were portrayed in art. Each week we read a new text that gave us different perspectives about what scholars thought about the image and text and their analysis of it. One text in particular really opened my eyes and made me realize that we assume all art in antiquity has to do with Homeric epics because that is what we know best. In the small classroom environment, it was easy to stay engaged and really dive into the material; we were also given the chance to offer our own opinions on the subject and really get into in depth conversations about what we were learning. We took part in fun activities such as taking a field trip to the Getty Villa in Malibu, where we were able to see what we were learning about in person. The class concluded with each of us writing a paper, and my paper, "The Mysteries Surrounding Rhesos of Thrace" was about the controversial Book 10 of Homer's *Iliad*, and how it was portrayed on an amphora we saw at the Getty Villa. After spending so much time looking at and researching the amphora, it truly felt like it was mine, which was such a great feeling and made me that much more proud of the work I had done. It was really remarkable to see all my classmate's presentations and see how far we have all come in learning about the subject. Taking this class and writing the paper were both incredible experiences, and Professor Papadopoulos's engaging teaching style made this my favorite class I've taken at UCLA.



Undergraduate News

Helen Caldwell Awards and Prizes

Each year the Department is pleased to bestow the annual Helen Caldwell Awards and Prizes, named in honor of a dedicated teacher of Greek and Latin in our department for over thirty years (1939-70). Helen F. Caldwell graduated in the first class at UCLA to award the Bachelor of Arts in 1925 and earned her M.A. in Latin fourteen years later. She later was employed by the Classics Department for 30 years until her retirement in 1970. A dedicated teacher of Latin and Greek, Helen Caldwell was also a respected scholar of Brazilian literature, one of the first to translate into English some of the most important works of the 19th century novelist Machado de Assis. The Caldwell Prizes in Elementary Greek and Latin are given each year to the top students in our elementary language classes and are awarded at our annual fall welcome reception, held at the Shapiro Courtyard. The recipients for 2018-19 were Edward Geng (Greek & Latin) in Greek, Lauren August (Political Science, minor in Philosophy) in Latin, and Abigail Chapman (Business Economics) in Latin. This year, the department had the honor to present the first ever Gus and Judie Christopoulos Award for Modern Greek to Ilana Brandstetter (Psychology).

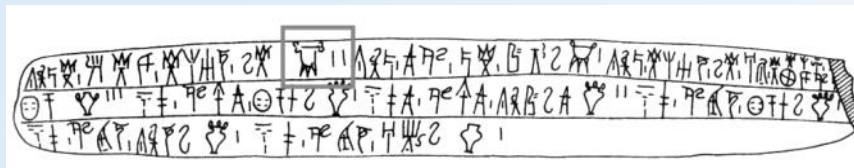


Undergraduate & Graduate News

Greek Language Day

In collaboration with the UCLA Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for the Study of Hellenic Culture and other campus partners, the Classics Department was proud to co-sponsor International Greek Language Day on February 6th. Four different speakers discussed fascinating moments in the transmission of the Greek language and culture. The talks ranged widely from Cavafy's "Ithaca" to Byzantine philosophy and advice literature in the Ottoman Balkans, to Greek in the Bronze Age. This last talk was delivered by our own Professor Brent Vine, who revealed how much we can learn about Mycenaean culture by looking at the Linear B tablets and the Mycenaean Greek recorded on them. Professor Vine also recalled for us the decipherment of Linear B by Michael Ventris in 1952, and showed how the "tripod tablet", published not long after Ventris's decipherment, was a clincher for his system. If one approaches this tablet using Ventris's proposed interpretations of the syllabograms, one sees *ti-ri-po-de* (= Gk. /tripode/ '2 tripods') followed in the text by an ideogram showing a 3-legged vessel, followed by the number 2 (two vertical strokes, already clear as "2" from Linear A practice). After this, Professor Vine observed, no rational person could disbelieve

Ventris's decipherment—"although, incredibly, some not entirely rational people did continue to disbelieve it for a while."



Islamic Studies PhD student Tim Garrett writes about the joys of taking Greek in the Classics Department

I'm a graduate student in Islamic Studies working on the notion of sectarianism in the Islamic Mediterranean during the 10th century, and I'm halfway through my second year of taking Greek in the Classics department. It's been a blast – the faculty as well as my fellow students have been dedicated, enthusiastic, and a delight both to work with and learn from. Arabic and Greek were the two major languages of diplomacy and commerce in the medieval eastern Mediterranean, and it's been a pleasure approaching the time period that I study from a new angle. It's exposed me to the works of the 11th century Byzantine historian John Skylitzes, who, describing a payment of tribute by the Byzantines to the Fatimids of Africa, curiously brags that "the Roman emperors knew how to reward their enemies (!)" [οὕτως ἀμείβειν οἶδασιν οἱ βασιλεῖς Ῥωμαίων τοὺς ἑαυτῶν πολεμίους]. I've also been able to read some of the writings of the Byzantine scholar and diplomat Michael Psellos, who describes himself as being so aghast at Constantine IX's friendly relations with the caliph of Egypt that he attempted to sabotage their relationship by sneaking insults into their formal correspondence. "This is why," Psellos confesses, the emperor "began to personally dictate letters to the Egyptian" [ὅθεν ἐπειδὴ... αὐτός τὰς πρὸς τὸν Αἰγύπτιον ἐπιστολὰς ὑπηγόρευεν]. Learning Greek at UCLA has been a joy, and I look forward to carrying on my coursework in the department.

Alumni Spotlight

Erika Schulz (UCLA Alumna, Classics 2013)

About two years ago, I walked into an interview at a prestigious law firm, armed with an updated resume full of accomplishments from law school and from my first couple years as a practicing lawyer. One of the interviewing partners looked at me, gave a subtle smirk, and remarked: “Classics major? *Really?*”

Amidst all of the legal experience that could have caught his attention, my undergraduate major was what stood out to him—and if I’m being honest, I couldn’t tell if it was for better or for worse. But he could not have asked a better question to get to know the real me, and I was prepared to answer without ever rehearsing. With a beaming smile, I told him all about it. It was a tale as old as time: a pre-med college student stumbles into Classics 20 (Discovering the Romans) for GE credit, unexpectedly falls in love with the subject, sneaks in more Classics GEs to temper the gloom of her personally-uninspiring pre-med classes... and ultimately faces her own *psychomachia* deciding whether to uproot her entire life path to become a Classics major.



It was the best decision I ever made. And it also turned out to be a perfect major for law school—and eventually, a career in law. Classics is the study of history, art history, archaeology, philosophy, literature, religion, politics, foreign languages, and culture. I can’t think of another major that covers so much ground. The major shaped my writing ability and sharpened my analytical skills. And if you think reading case law is hard, or that regulations are too dense to parse out, try reading Latin! (Don’t get me started on Greek—even I couldn’t tough that one out.) Believe it or not, a Classics major is also an ideal foundation for developing legal argument skills. Consider Euripides’ *Medea*. If you ever wrote a paper explaining why Medea commits the horrifying act of killing her own children, or if you ever had to examine how she might be framed as a sympathetic character—congratulations, you had your first taste of legal argument (though our cases are far less dramatic these days, and there is notably no Chorus in the courtroom). And of course, Socrates inspired the teaching practice known as the Socratic method—one of the many ways law school professors themselves prime you for practice.

On top of all the practical skills it imparted, Classics gave me something I could talk about forever in any interview, and with genuine excitement. It gave me a lifelong passion—and for something academic! And because of that, after being put on the spot by that partner, I stood out in my interview. I beat out a number of other qualified applicants and actually got the job: I am now a fourth-year attorney practicing business litigation at the law firm Blank Rome LLP.

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the most important thing about UCLA’s Classics department: it has the best people. I am honored and privileged to have studied under my incredible professors, and I cannot thank them enough for imparting just a fraction of their knowledge and passion to me. My classmates and I who met in those introductory Classics courses ten years ago are also still close, and we still talk about our undergraduate days with great fondness (looking at you, Ryann Garcia and David Shamash).

Alumni News

Cristina Berron (Classical Civilization BA, 2019), a recent graduate from the 2019 class, recently acquired a full-time position with the Hugh and Hazel Darling Law Library (located right next to Dodd Hall!). Cristina works with Bibliographic Services as an Acquisitions and Collections Management Assistant. She helps purchase new materials for the library, update marc data for the library catalog, and assists with the maintenance/prepping of material for the library stacks. Cristina plans on pursuing an MLIS with a focus on archival studies and collections management. After that, she hopes to pursue a masters in Classics.

Andrew Lear (Classics PhD, 2004) was recently interviewed on a [podcast about same-sex love in Ancient Greece](#).

Nancy (Lee) Farestveit (Classical Civilization BA, 1984) is a senior Marketing and Business Development Manager for the Silicon Valley-based law firm of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati. She recently relocated to the firm's new London office after twenty-six years of service at its headquarters. Nancy is thrilled to be even closer to the ancient sites and locations she had studied and recently visited Istanbul with her Bruin husband Kenneth (Philosophy & English, 1983). They recalled much of what they learned during their Classics coursework at UCLA.

Matt Long (Classical Civilization BA, 2014) is the Online Media and Marketing Manager for the UCLA Division of Geriatrics. He taught himself web programming growing up, which explains why he later slept through the official classes that gave him instruction in what he already knew! As a developer managing multiple websites, Matt enjoys writing material for each of them (especially the bios). He is currently pursuing his MBA from the Anderson School at UCLA.

Suzanne Lye (Classics PhD, 2016) and **Caroline Cheung** (Classical Civilization BA, 2007) were elected to the Steering Committee of the Woman's Classical Caucus.

Sabrina Ment (Classical Civilization BA, 2000) left her position as a senior attorney at boutique entertainment law firm, LaPolt Law, to join Walt Disney Television. Her new position is Vice President, Business and Legal Affairs, Music. In this role, she handles the legal aspects of production, acquisition and distribution of music for television programming for various Disney-owned channels.

Charles Stocking (Classics PhD, 2009), **Catherine Pratt** (Archaeology PhD, 2014), and daughter Stella pictured on the right.

We want to keep in touch with all our students and friends, so please do send any news of your lives and accomplishments to kmorgan@humnet.ucla.edu!



SCS Meeting

2020 Annual SCS Meeting—Washington, D.C.

Diana Librandi

"Velut Mater Agnoscens. Hypsipyle's Recognitions in Statius's Thebaid"

"*Velut Mater Agnoscens. Hypsipyle's Recognitions in Statius's Thebaid*" is the title of the paper I presented at the SCS meeting this year. I spoke on the panel "Lucan, Statius, and Silius" presided over by Professor Andrew Zissos and attended by a responsive and insightful audience. The paper draws on my dissertation research and examines the significance of Hypsipyle's maternal recognitions in Statius's epic poem. My argument is twofold: first, I contend that Hypsipyle, who recognizes her nursling and her long-lost sons, stands out as the paradigm of the *mater agnoscens* ("the recognizing mother") and counterpoints, therefore, Jocasta's mis- or failed recognitions of her offspring; second, I argue that through the figure of Hypsipyle, Statius programmatically brings to the center of the poem recognition as a maternal duty that reveals itself essential for averting civil war. Hypsipyle's joyful encounter with her two long-lost sons, in fact, results from a type of recognition generally forgotten at Thebes, i.e. the mutual recognition between mothers and living sons, which, if performed by Jocasta, could have diverted the Theban fratricidal war from the start by forestalling the incestuous procreation of Eteocles and Polynices.



Kristie Mann (PhD Classics 2015) received congratulations from Kirk Ormand (panel chair) on the excellence of her paper!



Lydia Spielberg at the SCS, wittily responding to a question from a fellow panelist. Indo-European Studies post-doc Milena Anfosso is third from left.

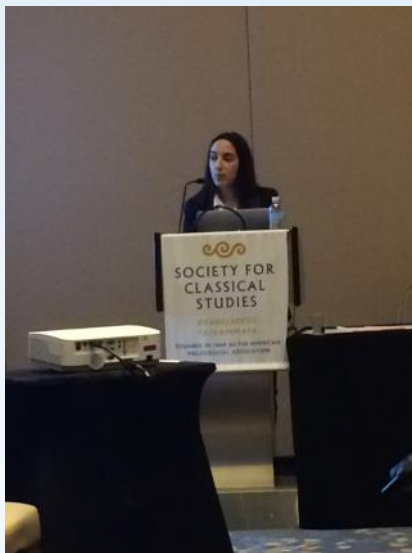
SCS Meeting

(continued)

Jasmine Akiyama-Kim

“Seeing Double: The Temporality of Theseus’s Shield in Statius’s *Thebaid*”

At this year’s SCS annual meeting, I presented a paper entitled “Seeing Double: The Temporality of Theseus’s Shield in Statius’s *Thebaid*.” My argument hinges on a temporal correlation between Thebes and Rome as two sites of cyclical civil war. Thebes, like Rome, is founded on an act of fratricide: when Cadmus kills the dragon and sows its teeth into the earth that will become Thebes, the men who spring up immediately begin to kill each other. Similarly, Rome is founded on Romulus’s murder of his brother Remus, and is henceforth cursed with persistent outbreaks of civil war. I suggest that in the context of the *Thebaid*, Thebes serves as a commentary on Domitianic Rome, which has recently experienced a full year of civil war in 69 CE, following the death of Nero and the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The figure of Theseus, who arrives in the final book of the epic, is comparable to the Flavian emperors, who are genealogically unrelated to their Julio-Claudian predecessors (as Theseus, an Athenian, is unrelated to the Thebans), but not immune from making the same mistakes and engendering the same patterns of cyclical violence. My paper focuses specifically on the description of Theseus’s shield, which bears an image of Theseus himself. The presence of Theseus’s double on his shield complicates the idea that he is meaningfully different from the string of leaders that came before him—most notably Oedipus (one person who should have been two) and Polynices and Eteocles (two people who should have been one). Theseus’s self-referential shield also comes to bear on Domitian, who in retrospect is seen as Nero’s double. Ultimately, I suggest that Theseus’s message to the Flavians is: if it is possible for Rome to forge a future meaningfully different from its past, the emperor who leads it there should not be overconfident in his own singularity.



Professor Adriana Vazquez speaking at the SCS.



Professor Bryant Kirkland dealing with a lively Q/A!



Nathan Kish (PhD 2018), VAP at Tulane University, taking a question from John Miller (University of Virginia).



Photograph © 2003 by Alan Nyiri, courtesy of the Atkinson Photographic Archive

Virgil and the Virtues of Pounding

The origin of *aioli* is often attributed to Virgil ... According to the story, one day, having lost his appetite, he was advised to restore it by crushing some cloves of garlic and mixing the resulting paste with breadcrumbs ... Pounding fragrant things — particularly garlic, basil, parsley — is a tremendous antidote to depression ... Pounding these things produces an alteration in one's being — from sighing with fatigue to inhaling with pleasure. The cheering effects of herbs and alliums cannot be too often reiterated. Virgil's appetite was probably improved equally by pounding garlic as by eating it.

From *Honey from a Weed*, by Patience Gray