

The XXV International Congress of Papyrology:

## Plenary Session on Papyri and the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Property

by Traianos Gagos and B.W. Frier



**N**EW papyri emerge every year, above all from the sands of Egypt. Some are systematically excavated in scientifically controlled digs and remain within Egypt. Others end up in the antiquities market and are sold at exorbitant prices. Who owns these valuable witnesses for the history and literature of the ancient world, and how can they best be protected from unscrupulous marauders?

This thorny issue was the subject of a special plenary session at the XXV International Congress of Papyrology, held in Ann Arbor last summer. Dorothy Thompson, the President of the International Association of Papyrologists (AIP), had requested the local committee to organize a forum in which modern legal developments, particularly as to the international trade in antiquities, could be discussed in relation to papyri. Bruce Frier undertook to facilitate the session.

During the last forty years, both in the West and in developing countries, attitudes have changed substantially regarding the flow of cultural antiquities. In part, there has been an increased recognition that such antiquities may form part of the cultural heritage of nations, so that their unrestricted removal abroad weakens cultural identity. In part, scholars have come to emphasize the importance of excavating and recording papyri under tightly controlled circumstances, following the most recent scientific methods; any other course deprives them of association with their immediate contexts. In part, the free market, which often acts to disperse these antiquities from poorer nations to wealthier ones, is no longer viewed as neutral in its operation. And in part, finally, some governments, particularly in the developing world, have come to see antiquities as a resource and have sought to obtain their fair share of the financial value that they may have.

The consequence has been a rapidly developing battery of legal protections, including the 1970 UNESCO Convention barring illicit international trade in antiquities, and the 1983 Egyptian law establishing its ownership of all antiquities discovered on Egyptian soil. Prof. Patty Gerstenblith, a DePaul University law professor who is one of the world's foremost experts in this field, explained the changing legal landscape to the 250 members of the audience. Then, after some initial exploratory remarks by Prof. Jean-Luc Fournet from the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, the audience began a vigorous debate about how to deal with the practical and scholarly implications of the changes.

A few days later, the General Meeting of the International Association adopted a resolution calling upon its members to "probe these issues further in a way that helps to reconcile the legal, ethical and practical restraints on the acquisition of papyri on the one hand with the need on the other to promote and assist the development of scholarly and scientific knowledge of the human past." To that end, Prof. Roger Bagnall, the incoming President of the Association, will chair a seven-member international working party charged with preparing a plan of action for the next Congress in 2010.

This is apparently the first time that a text-based scholarly organization has voluntarily undertaken to implement international legal restraints.

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Ruth Scodel

BEING chair of a department is one of those things where you can know exactly what you're letting yourself in for, but that doesn't make the reality much easier. I have not been so tired since my daughter was a newborn. I especially don't recommend being department chair and president of the American Philological Association at the same time, but since the annual meeting of the APA I've had my inaugural lecture to worry about on top of teaching, scholarly obligations, and departmental business...But the newsletter is not actually a venue for the chair to whine, and most of the job provides considerable satisfaction.

Various events of the past semester: we converted Classical Civilization 101 to a course that would meet the first-year writing requirement for all students, not just those in Honors. The course was reorganized to have two lectures and two sections a week. It was an immense amount of work, especially for Ben Acosta-Hughes, Netta Berlin, and the "mentoring" GSI Sanjay Thakur, but it was a great success.

We have had the usual round of stimulating events. Some of these we report on elsewhere in the newsletter, such as the discussion of the trade in papyri at the International Papyrological Congress, and the Platsis Symposium. Stephen Halliwell gave the Else lecture on "Is There a Poetics in Homer?" (The answer was "not if we mean a systematic poetics"—but there is, not surprisingly, a lot more to say about it). Quite a few undergraduates attended—some followed pretty well, some were at sea—but some of those who were at sea enjoyed the trip anyway. In November, the Onassis Foundation sponsored a visit from Diskin Clay, who visited classes, gave a lecture on Seferis and Delphi, and offered a translation workshop for Contexts for Classics that included both classical and modern poems. In early January, we had an extraordinary event, a conference co-sponsored by the University of Michigan and the German Archaeological Institute on "The Cities of Asia Minor in Late Antiquity." (The Institute has never held a co-sponsored event in the US before). I am coming to think that for many European scholars, Ann Arbor

is one of the very few real places in the flyover zone—and next year the Roman Archaeology Conference will be here. Coming up this spring, we have "Feminism and Classics V: Bringing It All Back Home" on May 8-11, with a free, public performance of Aristophanes' *Assembly Women* on May 10—we hope everyone in the area will come; and Maud Gleason will deliver the Jerome Lectures starting March 31.

At the APA, we had one of the most memorable versions of the Michigass, the department party, ever. The fact that as APA president I had a suite with a pool table (!) really helped. I had no idea so many of my colleagues, students, and former students were so capable with a cue. (I am hopeless and was a contented spectator). So it isn't all work.

We have typically included a form in *Convivium* for donations to our Strategic Fund. These gifts are always welcome, but in this last year of the Michigan capital campaign the president's office is matching gifts for graduate student support at 50%. Since summer support for our students is one of our most pressing needs, we are asking everyone to consider directing their gifts this year to this match.



The department's new treasure:  
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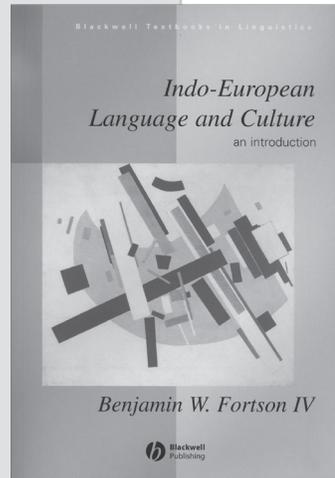
# Indo-European Language and Culture

by Ben Fortson

IT is a familiar fact that English vocabulary has borrowed heavily from Greek and Latin. But there is another, deeper level at which these three languages are connected: they are “cousins” of each other, being descended from the prehistoric ancestral language spoken roughly five or six thousand years ago that we call Indo-European. This language also spawned dozens of other ancient and modern languages of Europe and Asia, including Russian, Gaulish, Sanskrit, Lithuanian, Armenian, Persian, and Hittite.

The guiding principle behind the field of Indo-European studies is simple: always keep in touch with your cousins, for you never know when you might need them. (You could call this Indo-European family values.) I am an Indo-Europeanist who joined the Department of Classical Studies close to five years ago, and with this little piece I hope to show two brief examples of how Indo-European studies can be useful for teaching and research in Classics. My first example will be familiar to many classicists, while the other is a recent suggestion.

In Greek and Latin language classes, knowledge of some very basic Indo-European facts can be illuminating to students as they wrestle with grammar and morphology. More than one curious first-year Latin student has paused over the paradigm of *Iupiter*, the head of the Roman pantheon, and stopped to wonder why this word behaves so strangely, with nominative singular *Iupiter* but a radically different stem *Iov-* for the other cases. Our student might understandably be tempted to ascribe this strangeness to a conspiracy engineered by the Romans, or to the lead in the pipes that proverbially addled their wits. But such anomalies have a history, one whose full elucidation in this case will take our student far from the banks of the Tiber.



Classicists know that the immediate answer can be found by comparing Latin with its cousin Greek. There the equivalent god is addressed in prayers as *Zeus pater*, “Father Zeus.” The first syllable *Iu-* of *Iupiter* can easily be shown (though I cannot go into all the details here) to be the same as the *Iov-* in the rest of the paradigm, and the second element *-piter* is none other than a regular variant of *pater*, “father”. So *Iu-piter* is “Father Jove” just like *Zeus pater* is “Father Zeus.”

But we can go further, especially if our student’s curiosity and eagerness run especially high. Here knowing additional cousins becomes even more useful. The relevant one in this case is Sanskrit, the sacred speech of the Hindus of ancient India and also an Indo-European language. Among the gods they revered was one *dyaus pitar*, “Father Dyaus.” Now *dyaus* happens also to be an ordinary noun in this language and not just a divine name: it is the word for sky. And that meaning takes on additional significance when we consider a couple of additional corners of Greek and Latin: Latin has the idiom *sub Iove*, meaning “under the sky, outdoors,” while Greek has the phrase *Zeus hui*, which means “the sky is raining.” These pieces of evidence (plus some others) led Indo-Europeanists long ago to conclude

that the words *Zeus*, *Iov-*, and *Dyaus* all descend from a reconstructible prehistoric word in the ancestral Indo-European language for the sky and the sky-god. (Incidentally, the earliest spelling of *Iov-* in Latin was *Diov-*, which looks almost eerily like Sanskrit *Dyau-*.)

Using stories like this—there are many, many others—I try to impress on students that the Greeks and Romans, and their languages, did not (as it were) spring forth fully formed from the head of Father Sky. They, too, came from somewhere, and the form in which we know them from Classical texts resulted from thousands of years of prior development.

Outside of the introductory language classroom, once in a while a problem arises in Classical philology that cannot be readily solved by remaining within the confines of the Greco-Roman world. Take, for instance, the famous *teikhoskopia* (“view from the wall”) episode in the *Iliad* (3.150ff.). In it, Priam and Helen are standing on the wall of Troy, looking down at a company of Greeks assembling on the plain below in preparation for a duel between Menelaos and Paris. Priam asks Helen who the principal Greek warriors are, and she identifies them one by one. Why, in the tenth year of the war, does Priam appear to need a primer on his by now surely very familiar enemies? This question has presented a fairly intractable puzzle for decades.

Call in the cousins! An intriguing solution has been recently proposed by Prof. Stephanie Jamison of UCLA that draws on information from the Sanskrit epics. It has long been established that the early Sanskrit texts and the Homeric epics share much poetic and cultural material inherited from Indo-European. The Sanskrit texts attest a set of ritualized procedures employed during a counterabduction, that is, the retrieval

*continued on page 5*

# 2007

# Platsis Symposium



## “Iconoclasm”

is not a word or a problem with which non-Greeks are always familiar. But any standard history of the Byzantine Empire devotes considerable space to the “Iconoclast Controversy” of the eighth and ninth centuries. From 730-787, and again from 815-843, Byzantine emperors opposed the use of images in Orthodox worship. Icons have a special place in Eastern Orthodoxy, and so this debate of more than a millennium ago still resonates for contemporary Greeks. Even today, the first Sunday in Lent celebrates the restoration of icons.

The well-attended Platsis Symposium on September 23, 2007—“Iconoclasm: the War on Images”—looked at religious images and opposition to them from three very different perspectives. Michael R. Kapetan is a sculptor whose work can be seen in more than thirty churches and a synagogue. He offered a fascinating view of how a contemporary artist can engage authentically with very different

religious groups. John Holden, Professor of Byzantine History at Princeton, spoke about “myths and realities” about iconoclasm. He argued that most iconoclasm was far less destructive and radical than we usually think, because our sources present not what actually happened, but the ninth century’s re-writing of the past. Then Charles Barber, Associate Professor of Art History, discussed the afterlife of the controversy, arguing that the question of what images meant was by no means settled, but continued to be debated.

Even for those who are not specialists in Byzantine history or even members of the Orthodox Church, the talks and discussion were fascinating. We look forward to the Platsis in Fall 2008, which will focus on the Antikythera Mechanism, an astonishing ancient “computer.” The wonderful thing about the Greek heritage is that it can take you almost anywhere...

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# “*Tapinocyba cameroni*”

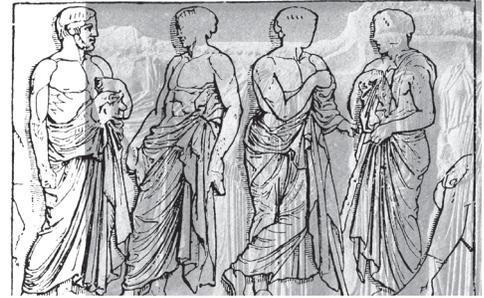
If you are in Canada, especially in Quebec, south of James’ Bay, and you come across a very small spider, less than 2 mm long, light orange brown suffused with dark grey, shiny and hairless: you may have met *Tapinocyba cameroni*, named in honor of our own H. D. Cameron, in recognition of all the services he has performed for arachnology, particularly in giving help with Latin.

Pierre Paquin & Nadine Dupérré, “Description of Five New Spiders from Canada,” *Zootaxa* 1632 (2007) 1-20.

*Indo-European cont’d from page 3*

of an abducted wife (involving, of course, a fight) by her rightful husband. The procedures included the identification, by the wife, of her husband and the members of his retinue. There are independent reasons to suppose that this ritual is old and could be of Indo-European date. Jamison submits that the *teikhoskopia* contains a version of this very ritual, preceding the attempted counterabduction by Menelaos, inherited from the parent language but no longer remembered as such by the Classical period.

While this idea does not solve all the problems posed by this passage, it opens up a whole new line of inquiry that will surely yield additional insights in the future. And, contrary to some popular notions, Indo-European is far from a dead or unchanging field. Archaeological campaigns are constantly turning up new texts and inscriptions in many ancient languages, slowly but surely adding pieces to the puzzle of the past. And the information and insights to be drawn from already familiar texts, like the Homeric and Sanskrit epics, are very unlikely to dry up anytime soon. All that is needed is a steady supply of eager, curious minds willing to work on them—and plenty of cousins.



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# Students At Large

## Learning to Teach Writing

by C.M. Sampson

MY first undergraduate paper received a C+, and in the years that I've been teaching first-year writing since, I've come to expect about the same from my students. The point isn't that high school instruction is insufficient (mine certainly wasn't) but that college writing is difficult, especially at first, and that there's a real need to teach it well.

For Classicists, it's all too easy to pass the buck for writing pedagogy off to a neighboring English department and then complain about it when our students struggle. But even though around 70% of students fulfilling LS&A's first-year writing requirement do so via English 124 and 125, faculty and GSIs in

Classics are also charged with the task: Greek Civilization 101 now satisfies the requirement, as does the first term of Great Books long required for Honors freshmen. Students can even fulfill LS&A's upper-level writing requirement via our course on ancient warfare. But few Classicists would consider themselves specialists in writing pedagogy—when I was a GSI for these courses, I certainly didn't.

As a remedy, last year I participated in the Sweetland Writing Center's Fellows Seminar. Comprised of five senior faculty fellows (including our own Netta Berlin) and eight junior graduate student fellows from a variety of LS&A disciplines (including Seth Button of IPCAA), the seminar spent a term hosting presentations from experts in composition studies and studying writing pedagogy. Afterwards, the fellows went on to teach their own writing-intensive first-year classes.

## My Year at the American Academy

by Robert Chenault

I have the good fortune of spending the 2007-8 academic year as a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, completing the research and writing of my dissertation, *Rome Without Emperors: The Revival of a Senatorial City in the Fourth Century CE*. This project is a study in the cultural history of Rome in the years 312-410. Scholarship on this period has tended to focus on Christianization—both of Rome's population, especially its senators, and of its topography, as manifested in church-building. In contrast, I argue that most aristocrats were less concerned with their religious identity as pagans or Christians than with maintaining and displaying their elite status. Nor was Christianity the only novelty of the fourth century, for this

period coincided with the emperors' abandonment of Rome as a regular residence: in this span of nearly a century, there was an emperor present in Rome for only a handful of occasions totaling less than two years. The absence of the emperors created both opportunities and challenges for Rome's senators. On the one hand, it allowed them to emerge from the emperor's shadow and recover a measure of their former visibility in the city; to this degree, Rome in some ways became more "senatorial" than it had been at any time since the late Republic. At the same time, however, the absence of the emperors called into question Rome's identity as the capital of the empire. Senators could not avoid the awkward fact that real power was located far away, in the formerly insignificant provincial cities which emperors now used as their regular residences. Thus the most difficult question confronting Rome's senators was this new political geography of empire. Senators now had to compete for appointments and influence with new elites in the provinces and at court. They were forced to articulate why Rome was still a special place in an

## Fall 2007/Winter 2008 Classical Studies Honors Theses

### Melanie Adams

*Actaeon Myth in Ovid's Metamorphoses*

### Inna Dykman

*Omens in Regime Change*

An examination of the depiction and value of omens during the rise of Augustus and the year 69AD.

### Charlotte Franklin

*Laughter in Euripides' Bacchae*

I argue that references to the "smile" of Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae* are, in fact, references to his laughter. With this as my premise, I am exploring the use of laughter in Greek literature generally, and will apply my findings to a discussion of the significance of laughter in the *Bacchae*.

### Elias Simon

*The Treatment of Cleopatra in Augustan Poetry*

How was Cleopatra received by Augustan poets? This thesis examines her portrayal in primarily Horace, Vergil, and Propertius, and how her character places on Roman ideology.

### Mary Weindorf

*From Slave to Riches--The Roman Novel*

My thesis will be focused on Suetonius' *De Rhetoribus* and *De Poetis*.

The seminar taught me why novice college writers so often struggle: they're not wholly sure what constitutes good, rigorous writing. They've seen enough red pen to recognize that spelling and grammar should be tidy, and they even have an innate sense that their writing should be profound. But when they struggle to articulate an argument, instead of deeper analysis they tend to resort to platitudes ("a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step...") or sweeping generalities ("in today's society...") to add the profundity they sense is lacking. Every instructor has read these papers! The Sweetland seminar taught me that this is normal, and recommended different techniques—using outlines, drafts, peer-review workshops, one-on-one meetings, sample paragraphs—for encouraging analysis and improving arguments. I know that students will still struggle, but if the improvement my students have recently shown is any indication, my time in Sweetland was well spent.



age when imperial patronage was making new cities into rivals and even potential replacements. From this perspective, the challenge facing Roman senators was less their religious identity than adjusting to the marginality of Rome in the late Empire.

My work on this project has been greatly advanced by my access to the resources of the Academy and of Rome itself. The library has just been completely refurbished and enlarged. Perhaps as importantly, there is a steady stream of visiting scholars, many of them of course from American institutions, but equally from the other foreign academies and universities in Rome. They are now further attracted by the prospect of sharing our lunches and dinners; in one of the happier revolutions of which I am aware, the old kitchen regime was replaced with a sustainable agriculture project which supplies fresh fruits and vegetables from the environs of Rome. The Fellows themselves, who represent a range of fields in the humanities and fine arts, have exhibited admirable energy in organizing tours to sites and buildings not

usually open to the public. I am especially looking forward to the Academy's annual spring trip, which this year will tour the ancient (and a few modern) sites of Tunisia.

All in all it would be difficult to imagine a more congenial or collegial place in which to work. I owe special thanks to the late Arthur Ross, who generously endowed the Rome Prize which I hold this year, to Prof. Carmela Franklin, Director of the Academy, and to Prof. Tom McGinn, Professor-in-Charge (and alumnus of this Department), both of whom have taken an active interest in my work. I would also like to thank David Potter, who helped to fund an essential "scouting expedition" in summer 2006, and Bruce Frier, for encouraging me to apply. Bruce sagely warned that one year would be just long enough to grasp how hopelessly vast Rome really is; he was right, but I am nonetheless grateful for the chance to verify the claim myself.

### *Augustan Poetry*

Augustan poets? Through an analysis of her work, Virgil, and Propertius, I hope to draw out the tension between domestic technologies and identity.

### *Dream: Suetonius' Affinity for Merit*

Suetonius' view of merit in his "De Grammaticis et

## **Evan Proudfoot**

*Roman Doors and the Casa di Julius Polybius at Pompeii*

The research aims to provide a thorough account of door technologies in use in and around the Vesuvian sites in the first century A.D. Original fieldwork will be employed alongside space syntax analyses to evaluate the role such doorways played in a case example: the Casa di Julius Polybius (IX.13.1-3) at Pompeii. Implications for the use of such analyses in broader research will also be considered.

## **Lara Adriana Ghisleni**

*Marginalization: Limits of Empire*

My research focuses on how Tacitus' Agricola and the Catullan corpus use the boundaries and frontiers of empire (in particular Britain) to construct and negotiate identity.

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## *Upcoming Events!*

**March 31-April 10, 2008**

*Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series*

**“Transformation:  
Fears and Fantasies in the Roman Empire”**

Part I Lectures:

*“The So-Called Elephant Disease”*

- **3.31.08, 3–5pm: Skin Changes**, Vandenberg Room, Michigan League
- **4.3.08, 3–5pm: Origins & Causes**, 2175 Angell Hall, Classics Library
- **4.5.08, 11:30–1:30pm: Cures & Meanings**, 2115A Angell Hall

Part II Lectures:

*“Senators in Fearful Times: Identity Theft in Cassius Dio”*

- **4.8.08, 3–5pm: Disappearance & Anxieties**, 3222 Angell Hall
- **4.10.08, 3–5pm: Masquerades & Significations**, 3222 Angell Hall

**May 8-11, 2008**

*Feminism & Classics V*

**“Bringing It All Back Home”**

*All are Welcome to Attend!*

**5.8.08, 7pm**

**Keynote Lecturer, Kristina Milnor, Barnard College, “Local Knowledge”**

**5.10.08, 4:45**, Michigan Union Ballroom

**A staged reading (and singing!) of Aristophanes’ “Assembly Women”**

Adapted by Greg Robic, directed by Kathryn Boshier of Northwestern University

**3.27.08 & 3.28.08, 4-6pm**

**Ancient Philosophy Lectures by Prof Richard Kraut, Northwestern University**

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## *Attention Alumni!*



Alumni news is on our website and we would like to hear from you! Please let us know what you have been doing since you left the University as an undergraduate or graduate student in our Department. Visit our website and complete the online form at:  
<http://www.umich.edu/~classics>

You can also visit our website for more information on purchasing a Classical Studies t-shirt. Shirt texts include “Michigan Classics,” “Michigan Classics Alumna,” and “Michigan Classics Alumnus.” All proceeds go to help support the undergraduate initiative.

**We would like to hear from alums teaching K-12 who would be interested in contributing to a special issue of the *Convivium*.**

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