**Student Comments on this week's blog post:**

1. Elizabeth Winkelhoff says:
April 14, 2015 at 11:33 pm
Awesome post! Even though I couldn't make it, reading this is just as good.
I found it interesting that the best wares were on the bottom level (excluding the tile belonging to Ross, of course). It could make sense that it was because they received the most heat. But how could the Greeks be able to stack their kilns to the brim and not run into a similar problem? They must have had a method that we missed or didn't administer, like a shelf or even a different arrangement of the objects. I suppose only more experiments will tell. I'm looking forward to the discussion over our wares to see what everyone else thinks.

2. Ashley Fallon says:
April 14, 2015 at 11:39 pm
Great post Savannah! I was surprised at the vast difference between the shelves. There could be as much as a 200 degree difference from the top and bottom of the kiln, but the importance of that difference became clear when comparing the pieces from the top and bottom shelves. It's also interesting that the middle shelf, which was considered the "sweet spot" did not vitrify the cups as successfully as the bottom shelf. I wonder if the vast temperature difference could be alleviated by using a smaller kiln.

3. Anna Soifer says:
April 15, 2015 at 8:44 am
Since there are tentative plans to fire a second time, it might be interesting to put some of the objects from this firing back into the kiln to see if we can get them to fully vitrify a second time around. If this proves feasible, it could have a large impact on how we think about the economic realities of an ancient Greek ceramic workshop. If it is possible to correct an underfired vessel with a second firing, firing mistakes may not have been as disastrous for the workshop as has been previously thought since a second firing is much less economically costly than creating an entirely new vessel.

4. Hana Chop says:
April 15, 2015 at 12:30 pm
I was so excited to open the kiln. This is the culmination of so much time and effort! I wasn't surprised at the variation that the kiln produced because we knew there was inconsistency in temperature between layers in the kiln. It was really cool to see which methods worked and what results were produced. The linierhaar came out really well in the firing. Overall, most of the pieces came out scorched or gunmetal in some regard, indicating that our firing was inconsistent and over the delicate threshold of black glossy vitrification in some regards.
I was very happy with how my group's kylix came out and surprised at the fact

that parts of the glaze fired on the exterior of the bowl and others not at all! I hope we can do a second firing (possibly on my group's kylix again) to see if we can fix that with another application of slip?

5. Lauren Aldoroty says:
April 15, 2015 at 1:03 pm
Opening the kiln was so exciting! It was great to see the result of our semester's work. Of course, there's still more to do!
My group's kylix was on the third level (from the top) of the kiln. I think that the most interesting part of our cup is that half of the outside turned black, while the other half was a streaky red and black. Based on pictures of the kylix in both its kiln location and removed from the kiln, the part that turned black was facing the outside of the kiln. This is in agreement with Savannah's statement "It was very clear how some tiles and kylikes were affected by their position in the kiln, showing dark slip only where the object faced the outside of the kiln".
I am looking forward to analyzing our results!

6. Arthur Zhang says:
April 15, 2015 at 9:41 pm
Great post! I painted my tile with a thickened slip but I did not dip the brush very frequently, so the beginning part of each brushstroke had more slip and the later part had very little. I am very delighted that this actually translated into black surfaces and non-black surfaces after firing, accounting for the amount of slip from start to end of a brushstroke.

7. Dane Clark says:
April 15, 2015 at 9:56 pm
A great post about a great event! It was amazing to see the extreme variations that resulted from putting the pieces in different sections of the kiln! Matt brought up the idea of trying out the perforated shelf method to try and prevent the obvious effects of the fire only moving along the sides of the kiln walls. It seems that this may have been what led to the vessels on the periphery of the kiln becoming blackened. The perforations would hopefully allow the fire to travel more freely through the kiln, interacting more with the vessels in the interior and (hopefully) resulting in a more uniform firing.

8. Maddy Brancati says:
April 15, 2015 at 10:52 pm
Great post! After going through this entire process, I must say that I am in complete awe of the the ancient pots we held during the second week of class.The fact that these vessels–after over 2,000 years–still retain their original sheen is absolutely magnificent. Even with the aid of modern technology we were unable to produce pots of the same quality. Although the results of our firing were very informative, there is still so much left to learn.

9. Travis Schmauss says:
April 15, 2015 at 11:11 pm
Savannah, loved the post. When I saw my tile peeking out from under the first layer, complete with black and red portions, I was giddy.
Every one of our tiles and cups has a story to tell about the production process. I really appreciate your last paragraph, because it speaks to the excitement of wanting to run through this process again, iteratively fixing what had gone wrong previously. I would be entirely game for another attempt, knowing what we do now.
And actually drinking from our cups! Briefly, the class could have been called "Recreating Ancient Greek Symposia." I'll remember that forever.

10. Gianna Puzzo says:
April 15, 2015 at 11:38 pm
One of my theories for further improvements for heat circulation within the kiln would be the inclusion of perforated shelves rather than solid ones when staking. Or even the exclusion of shelves (if we felt confident that stacking the cups atop each other would be stable enough), since you don't often see shelving in ancient depictions of the kilns. I think this might explain some inconsistent firing on the cups and tiles and maybe what restricted heat from rising up the core of the kiln. Then again, I'm not kiln expert but addition supports seemed to make notable "ghost" marks in the black slip.

11. Kelly McBride says:
April 15, 2015 at 11:40 pm
Great post! My tile, unfortunately, split right down the middle. I was extremely upset when the kiln opened and my poor tile hadn't garnered any vitrification, as when it split, it leaned against another tile and I believe it affected its firing. I guess storing it in an air-tight plastic bag for weeks did a little too good of job protecting it!

12. Haley Huang says:
April 17, 2015 at 11:59 pm
Thanks Savannah!
I thought my heart was going to burst when we were opening the kilns! I was just praying that my tile ended up intact enough that I could see the results of some of my experiments. Seeing the two casualties we did have was truly disappointing… even though they weren't my own, I really empathized with the poor luck that had a lot to do with positioning in the kiln. But in the end, I think we all learned a lot about the importance of the firing process as well as the density and formula of our slip. It seemed that certain slips would vitrify at very specific temperatures. In our cup, several relief lines that were painted with one slip formula vitrified beneath the contour lines of a slip of a different formula!

How’s that for mind boggling?