

I begin by expressing my deep gratitude to the National Endowment for the Humanities and the committee for awarding me the TLL / APA fellowship for 2007-2008. My time at the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, made possible by the fellowship, was of enormous value to me in a number of respects. On the cultural and linguistic level, the opportunity to live in Germany for an extended period had a profound impact. Prior to holding the fellowship, I had spent no time to speak of in Germany and knew very little of contemporary German culture. Living in Munich for nearly a year thus enabled me to learn a great deal. Munich is particularly rich in museums and other sites of cultural significance, and of course is renowned for various festivals and the like. Over the course of my stay I developed an appreciation of many facets of both the national and regional cultures. One cannot help but be impressed by such things as Munich's wonderful transit system and the pleasant atmosphere on the city's parks and its broad streets, which are often teeming not only with pedestrians and cyclists, but also classical musicians, often of surprisingly high caliber. Munich is also a city rich in history, and the location of the *Thesaurus* in the elegant Residenz complex in the heart of the city reminds one of that fact on a daily basis. Finally, the opportunity to practice and develop one's German over an extended period is something that virtually any Classicist would find to be of great practical importance.

The experience of working at the *Thesaurus* was a rich and valuable one. The *TLL* is perhaps the most important collaborative research venture ever undertaken for the Latin language, and it is a singular privilege to participate in it. There are many things that one learns by writing *TLL* articles, and much value derives from rummaging around in the texts themselves. To be sure, I came in with a thorough grounding in Classical Latin literature, but my familiarity with the post-Classical - and particularly the early Christian - texts was somewhat more uneven. Thus I particularly appreciated the repeated exposure to those later texts, which has enriched my understanding not only of later Latin (and particularly early Christian) literature, but also the Romance languages that would eventually develop from Latin.

Then there are the things that one learns or discovers en route, as it were. While writing *Thesaurus* articles one often apprises facts about peripheral fields. In my case, a good example of such subsidiary learning came from my research on *nanus* ("dwarf"). References to vases of the "*nanus*-type" prompted me to conduct a fascinating research excursus into ancient vase-types. A bit closer to home, I detected in some later Christian texts a tendency for punning on the name "Nanus". Though such material cannot be included in the *Thesaurus* article proper, it is intriguing and valuable enough to justify a separate scholarly article, which I hope soon to write.

Aside from such general benefits, one gains a thorough familiarity with the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* itself. This is perhaps not an obvious point. Before holding the TLL / APA fellowship I considered myself to be a very competent user of the *Thesaurus*. But the *Thesaurus* is a critical tool of great complexity, with its own developmental history over the century of its existence. Most obviously the style, format and sophistication of

individual articles has evolved considerably, and the adept reader will always factor this history into his or her usage.

The article writing itself, as I soon discovered, is anything but a mechanical exercise. After sifting through the individual passages, which involves coming to a determination of the (often disputed) sense of the word in a particular passage, and then reading and absorbing the indicated secondary literature, one faces the task of how to structure the article according to categories of meaning. With the larger and more complicated words one is constantly conjuring up and then revising or rejecting a particular disposition. In most cases this is by far the most creative part of the article-writing process, and it is certainly the part that I enjoyed the most. In the case of my most difficult word, *nenia*, the article was completely restructured many times over a period of several months. The final phase of the article-writing process involves typing out the properly disposed article with the *TLL* symbols, according to the somewhat arcane formatting standards of the *Thesaurus*. Though the value of such coding is undeniable - it both provides global conceptual standards and saves a good deal of space - I confess I found this part of the exercise a bit less interesting. I was also a little hampered in the later stages of my time in Munich by the inability of my computer successfully to operate with the necessary *TLL* fonts. Though my colleagues at the *Thesaurus* were an extremely helpful cohort, this was a problem we never solved.

One of my major long-term goals in taking up this award was to enrich my teaching repertoire as a direct result of my *TLL* experience, in particular to transmit knowledge and understanding of the *Thesaurus* to my students, especially at the graduate level. This objective will be met in the coming fall quarter, when I will teach a revised version of a required methodology course, CLAS 201, in the Tri-Campus Graduate Program in Classics (UC-Irvine, Riverside, San Diego). In my inaugural version of this course, lexicography and the *TLL* will comprise about 30% of the content. My teaching will be informed not only by my own experience as a fellow, but also by the rich and helpful secondary bibliography and the kinds of pedagogical exercises developed by past fellows and others, which are maintained by the committee.

In sum, then, my year at the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* has been an invaluable experience for me as a professional classicist, positively impacting both my scholarship and my teaching. I hope to maintain a working relationship with the project in the coming years. Once again, I want to express my deepest thanks to the *National Endowment to the Humanities* for making possible this remarkable and rewarding experience.

Andrew Zissos
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Classics,
University of California, Irvine
pzissos@uci.edu