

Pella Urban Dynamics Project 2026

How did one build a house? Why was it built in this specific way? What is the purpose of this room? What does this piece of tile or pottery signal to me?

Those were some of the questions that came into my mind while I was excavating at Pella on my first day. And more would follow. The ancient world was not made up only by Ciceros and Sophocleses: it was made of average normal people. People that wrote ΦΙΛΛΠΠΟΥ instead of ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ on pottery, and did not mind it, that lost or threw away old bronze coins, because maybe they did not really like them, that left the meal for too long on the fireplace and burned the pans inside out. Frequently ignored by historians and known literature, those people are remembered by the finds of Archaeology. From my standpoint, the Pella Urban Dynamics Project, promoted by the American Archaeological Society, was about seeing the excavation process firsthand and finding out something new every day, thus broadening my knowledge of the ancient Greek civilisation.

During the Project, I not only learned the basics and rules of archaeological excavation – for which I must thank Chloe Morris – but also gained hands-on experience using the total station under the steady instruction of Martin Joseph and Trevor Eminhizer, to whom I am deeply grateful. I had also the opportunity to work with tiles. Usually relegated to mere pieces of terracotta, not enough interesting to be considered alongside pottery fragments, they can communicate many things on how they were produced and how were intended by the users. Throughout the analysis of the tiles, I appreciated the Epigraphical aspect which they bore: the stamps, usually consisting of the impressed words ΠΕΛΛΗΣ and ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΣ, which might still be puzzling from an interpretative point of view; besides, it was interesting to see the everyday life that was narrated on their surface. As a matter of fact, in many tiles fingerprints and dog's footprint could be seen. I thank Antonio Lau, who drove me through this sector of Archaeology, which I did not had the chance to analyse during my studies. At the archaeological site, must be said, I enjoyed the great company of the rest of the group; with them I shared loughs, stories, archaeological incidents, conspicuous conversations. To them all, a special thanks.

I express my gratitude also to the other supervisors and the organisers of the Project, professors Lisa Nevett and David Stone, who followed me during the experience, making me explore new aspects of Archaeology and new areas of Greece.

I thank my professors Stefania De Vido and Eugenia Liosatou, who respectively enriched my knowledge of Greek Epigraphy and Modern Greek Language, which both were useful in Pella, and who supported me from the day I had the decision to get involved in the workshop, presenting me to the organisers.

“One more thing”: it was a pleasure for me to work together with the Society for the Promotion of the Hellenic Studies, and their generous support enabled my attendance at the Project. A crucial support for me, for all the students who cannot do else but look at Hellas with a keen, curious eye.



