

A Study of Ancient Manuscripts in Rome, Florence, and Paris

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Global Engagement Center

EDGE
PROJECT

Project Summary

For my EDGE project, I studied ancient Greek manuscripts at the Vatican Archives in Rome, the Laurentian Library in Florence, and in the Richelieu Library in Paris. This was done for the purpose of writing an academic paper on a specific subject: the 6th century historian Procopius of Caesarea.

In a holistic sense, this project allowed me to engage in Paleography (the study of manuscripts), study Greek, work on a graduate-level project, and explore three of the most significant cities on Earth.

Project Highlights

Seeking admission, and working within, the Vatican Archives was a great honor. From the harrowing introductory interview with the Archival Secretary to the actual research within the inner sanctum, every step of the process was exhilarating. Holding a one-thousand-year-old text with bare hands was downright visceral.

The project helped me understand archival protocol, historiographic development, and a deeper sense of appreciation for my discipline (History). I walk away from this experience a more aware historian, better Graduate-school applicant, and a more knowledgeable scholar.

From My Journal

“At first the miniscule appeared impenetrable. Long strings of misspellings betrayed the beauty of the content. Procopius was a native Greek; he surely did not make the mistakes mentioned here.”

“In the Vatican Archives there’s a courtyard adjoining the manuscripts room. In this courtyard there was a turret which housed a café. Kirk and I would meet there to discuss recent developments.”



A picture of myself (left) with my mentor, Professor Kirk Fitzpatrick. Taken on Palatine Hill, overlooking the ancient Roman Forum in Rome, Italy. Outside of research, there was plenty of time to engage with the city.



Taken outside the Laurentian Library in Florence, Italy. The trip to Florence comprised the second week of my three-week journey. These archives were designed by Michelangelo, the great Renaissance architect, sculptor, and painter.