



## HORACE, *HUMANITAS*, AND CRETE

by Janice M. Benario

Hom<sup>e</sup>r speaks of Crete as a rich and lovely sea-girt land. The island has long been the setting for strange and exotic stories, many in Greek mythology. Here, for instance, Zeus was born, and Theseus met Ariadne before slaying the Minotaur who prowled the labyrinth. Today, historical events that took place in Crete during World War II are fast becoming legends. Residents continue to recount the deeds of two eminent classical archaeologists (John D. S. Pendlebury and Thomas J. Dunbabin) who played key roles in the Greek Resistance during the German occupation of Crete. They also still tell the story of the daring kidnapping in 1944 of a German general by two British officers and a few guerrillas.

On May 20, 1941, the German parachute attack on Crete started the quick defeat of the Allies followed by the long and strong Greek Resistance – one of the most moving dramas of World War II. By June 1, 1941, the Allies had evacuated thousands of troops from Crete, leaving behind, with the Greeks, a few Britons, Australians, and New Zealanders. British Major Patrick Leigh Fermor, who worked for the Special Operations Executive in Cairo, Division of Crete, had organized guerrilla operations on the island for two years. While on leave in Cairo in December 1943, Leigh Fermor and British Captain W. Stanley Moss conceived a plan to kidnap the island's enemy commander. The purpose was to strike a blow to German morale and to boost that of the

hard-pressed people of Crete.

At nightfall on April 26, 1944, Leigh Fermor and Moss, with the aid of some Cretan locals, kidnapped the forty-eight-year-old German General Karl Heinrich Kreipe, who had been sent from Russia, in February 1944, to command the occupying forces in Crete. Sitting in the front of a chauffeur-driven car, Kreipe had been on his way from headquarters to his lodging in the Villa Ariadne near Knossos (see Fig. 2), which had been built originally by Sir Arthur Evans as a storehouse for artifacts from the nearby Palace of Minos. Both Leigh Fermor and Moss wore German uniforms. Kreipe's chauffeur was knocked out and removed, and the general was hidden in the rear of the car. With Moss driving Kreipe's car, and Leigh Fermor pretending to be Kreipe (wearing the general's hat and speaking German like a native), they bluffed their way through more than twenty German checkpoints before vanishing into the mountains. As they traveled by foot from Heraklion in the north to the beaches on the southern shore (see Fig. 1), they evaded the pursuing Germans.

On the night of April 29, while abductors and abductee hid in a cave, Leigh Fermor discovered that the general was a fair Greek and Latin scholar who had spent ten years attending the classical (humanistic) gymnasium. The two then spent the evening exchanging

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## Editorial

by Margaret A. Brucia

In the first issue of *Amphora*, Anne-Marie and I explained our choice of a name for this fledgling publication. We commented on the symbolism of an amphora, a vessel as common in the Greek as in the Roman world, a container that could be both simple and elaborate and that held a wide variety of commodities. A year-and-a-half and two issues later, a new analogy between *Amphora* and its classical namesake has occurred to me. Like an amphora, our publication stands tall and upright, but it cannot nor is it designed to do so unassisted. You, our readers, have been and must continue to be its base and its support by providing literary contributions, new ideas, and valuable feedback. *Amphora* needs your help if it is to fulfill its mission: "to convey the excitement of classical studies to a broad readership by offering accessible articles written by professional scholars and experts on topics of classical interest that include literature, language, mythology, history, culture, classical tradition, and the arts, and by featuring reviews of relevant books, films, and Web sites."

We are, to be sure, grateful for the articles and reviews that you have generously provided. And we are happy to report that we now have articles reserved for future issues. But we hope that you will continue to keep *Amphora* in mind whenever you are tempted to write a piece about a classical subject in a footnote-free environment. Please don't hesitate to suggest topics for articles and reviews on classical themes, whether they pertain to the past or to the present.

When, as a member of the Committee on Outreach of the APA, I accepted the task of helping to launch a new and different kind of APA journal, I decided to serve

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as co-editor until the new publication had a clear identity and strong leadership. *Amphora* now has both, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Adam Blistein, Jennifer Roberts, and a cadre of referees and proof-readers, but especially thanks to my co-editor, Anne-Marie Lewis. With just the right editorial touch and a deep commitment to promoting the classics in the world of academia and beyond, Anne-Marie has succeeded admirably in shaping *Amphora*.

This is my last issue as co-editor, but I step down knowing that *Amphora* is in the capable hands of Anne-Marie Lewis, the editor-in-chief. I have enjoyed the challenge and the excitement of being one of the founders of this publication, and I hope that our readership will continue actively to support *Amphora* and its crucial mission.

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verses from Sophocles, much to the amusement and amazement of the other kidnapers. Leigh Fermor had a good command of Latin and Greek. Instead of attending university, however, he had made his way alone, in 1933, from Holland across central Europe, living like a tramp and a wandering scholar. One of the books he carried with him was the first volume of Horace's poetry from the Loeb Classical Library. While walking, he memorized many of his favorite odes, poems which he described as "infallible mood-changers."

In his book, *A Time of Gifts* (1977), Leigh Fermor describes the moment when Horace helped create a profound sense of *humanitas*, "humane conduct toward others," between himself and his enemy:

It was a time of anxiety and danger; and for our captive, of hardship and distress. During a lull in the pursuit, we woke up (April 30) among the rocks just as a brilliant dawn was

And the laboring trees no longer  
bear their  
Burden, and rivers have become  
frozen  
Because of the piercing cold,

and so on through the remaining five stanzas to the end. The general's blue eyes had swiveled away from the mountain top to mine – and when I'd finished, after a long silence, he said: "*Ach so, Herr Major!*" "Ah, yes, Major!" It was very strange. As though, for a long moment, the war had ceased to exist. We had both drunk at the same fountains long before; and things were different between us for the rest of our time together.

Recently, Leigh Fermor wrote to me that Kreipe, in addition to this ode (*Ode* 1.9), also knew the ode to Aristius Fuscus (*Ode* 1.22) and that together they were able to reconstruct the last part of the Regulus Ode (*Ode* 3.5). Horace, known for moderation and decorum, proved to be the stimulus for continuing gentlemanly behavior between captor and captive.

The journey to the beaches in the south lasted about two more weeks. On the night of May 14, they were picked up by a small motorboat and taken safely to Egypt. From there, the general was flown to London, interrogated, and transferred to a prison camp near Calgary, Alberta, from which he was released in 1947. As a result of the successful undertaking, Leigh Fermor received the Distinguished Service Order and was made, in 1947, an honorary citizen of Heraklion. Moss received the Military Cross.

In 1950, Moss published a stirring day-by-day account of the kidnapping, *Ill Met By Moonlight*. The book was made into a black-and-white movie in 1957 by British director J. Arthur Rank. It appeared a year later in the United States as *Night Ambush*, with Dirk Bogarde as Leigh Fermor, David Oxley as Moss, and Marius Goring as Kreipe. Described as "stiffly made," it was only moderately well received (the Horace episode is not in the movie). On May 7, 1972, the abduction team (except for Moss, who had died tragically in 1956) held a reunion in Greece. Kreipe was also present. During the banquet, Leigh Fermor, in fluent Greek and German said, "After twenty-eight years, General, we apologize to you for what happened and hope you have no hard feelings." The white-haired general, sitting with

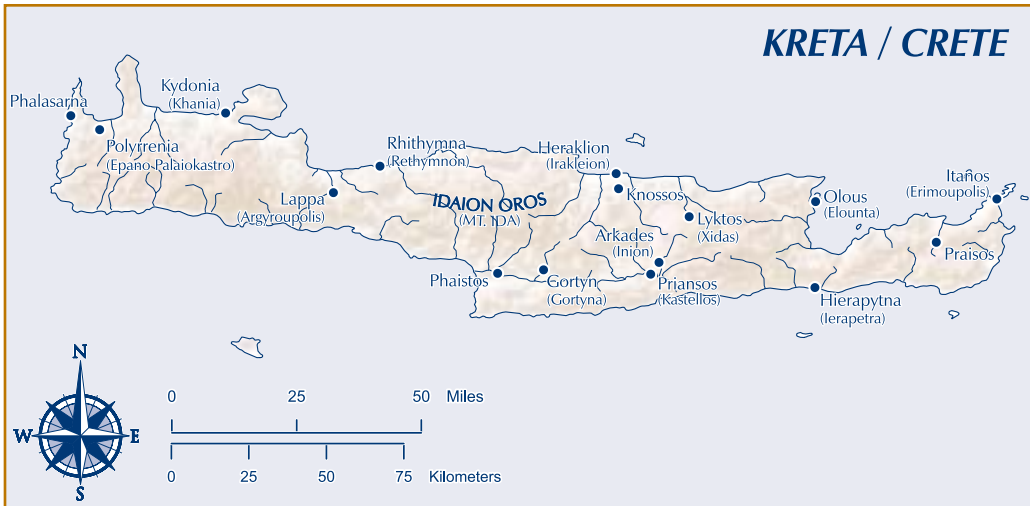


Fig. 1. Map by Tom Elliott. Copyright 2003, Ancient World Mapping Center.

breaking over the crest of Mount Ida. We had been toiling over it through snow and then rain, for the last two days. Looking across the valley at this flashing mountain-crest, the general murmured to himself:

*Vides ut alta stet nive candidum  
Soracte . . .*

You see how Soracte stands white  
with deep  
Snow . . .

It was one of the ones I knew! I continued from where he had broken off:

*. . . nec jam sustineant onus  
Silvae laborantes, geluque  
Flumina constiterint acuto,*



**Fig. 2. Villa Ariadne, Knossos. Photo credit: David Tandy, Department of Classics, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.**

his wife, nodded and said, “None; otherwise I would not be here.” In a letter to me, Leigh Fermor adds that Kreipe, together with his captors, then appeared on a television program called *This is Your Life*. When asked by journalists how he was treated by his abductors, Kreipe said firmly, “*Ritterlich*,” “Chivalrously.”

Kreipe, having been a prisoner of war, was honorably discharged from the military in 1947 and spent his retirement in Germany, in the Hanover area. He died in 1976 at age 81. Leigh Fermor, scholar and linguist, is often considered the preeminent English travel writer of his generation. His books have won many awards, and several have been translated into other languages. Now eighty-eight years old, he lives with his wife in a house of his design in the Peloponnesus overlooking the sea, and he continues to write. He recalls still to this day “the strange encounter and journey” of 1944 that endures as part of the history and legend of Crete.

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## Book Review: *The Athenian Trireme*

by Lionel Casson

J.S. Morrison, J. F. Coates, N. B. Rankov. *The Athenian Trireme: The History and Reconstruction of an Ancient Greek Warship*, 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press (1-800-872-7423), 2000. Pp. xxviii, 319. Paper \$26.00. ISBN 0-521-56456-5.

The controversy over the “riddle of the trireme” started centuries ago and gained in intensity during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. “Trireme” is the name we give to a type of war galley that served as the ship of the line during the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars of the fifth century B.C. and continued to serve as a standard naval unit down to the days of the later Roman Empire. Its Greek name was *trieres*, “three-fitted,” and the controversy revolved about what this name indicates concerning the arrangement of the rowers.

We know that on Athenian triremes each rower pulled his own oar and that the oars were short, about nine feet long. There is evidence that seems to show that the rowers were arranged in three super-imposed levels, and the adherents of one school of thought held that this is what the term “three-fitted” refers to. But adherents of a rival school of thought held that such an arrangement was unlikely. They bolstered their case by pointing out that on all the oared warships of later ages, including the fifteenth to the seventeenth century (the great age of the galley), oarsmen were always on one level. They pointed out, furthermore, that there was one type of galley, favored by the Venetian navy, in which the oarsmen, each pulling his own oar, were seated alongside each other three to a bench. They held that the ancient trireme surely had a similar arrangement.

The problem for the three-level school was that its adherents could not offer a reconstruction in which the oars of the levels were of the same length, as they had to be in order to permit a harmonious stroke. The problem for the one-level school was that the oars of the Venetian galleys they used as their parallel were far longer than nine feet, four times as long, in fact.

In 1941, John Morrison, in a watershed article that brought to bear all available

ancient evidence both literary and representational, presented a reconstruction in which the oarsmen were on three levels and yet all pulled nine-foot oars. He set the lowest level and the middle level above each other, and the topmost level in an outrigger alongside and outboard of the middle level. The oars of each level entered the water in the same line but at different angles: those of the topmost level at a steep angle, those of the middle level at a flatter angle, and those of the lowest level at an even flatter angle. In 1981, he joined forces with John Coates, an experienced naval architect, and Coates arranged the building of a full-scale mock-up of a segment of Morrison’s reconstruction. It was set up alongside a pool, tried out with live rowers – and it worked!

This successful result led to the publication in 1986 of the first edition of this book, in which Morrison and Coates presented all that was known about the Athenian trireme. One chapter surveyed the origin and development of the trireme; three chapters were devoted to its role in the major naval battles of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars; one chapter to a general analysis of the maneuvers of triremes in combat; one chapter to the size and make-up of the crews; one chapter to the structural features of the ships; and one chapter to the details of the materials they were made of, particularly the woods that were used. In two final chapters, Coates translated Morrison’s suggested design into a full set of plans and specifications for an actual reconstruction.

Thanks to the support of British and Greek donors and the cooperation of the Greek Navy, the proposed reconstruction became a reality. Greek shipwrights working under the watchful eyes of Morrison and Coates built the *Olympias*, a presumed replica of an Athenian trireme. It was launched in 1987 and, that summer and in the summers of 1988, 1990, and 1992, it was put through a series of sea trials. The prime purpose of this second edition is to include a report on those trials. For the second edition, the text of the original edition has been changed here and there in a minor fashion, but the main difference is the

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## Book Review: *The Athenian Trireme* continued from page 3

addition of forty pages by Boris Rankov (classicist, oarsman, and rowing master on the ship during its trials) that in vivid fashion describe the trials and report on their results. There were formidable hurdles that had to be overcome at the very outset. Miscellaneous rowers, who were mostly from northern countries and hence, on average, much taller than the Athenian oarsmen for whom triremes were designed, had to learn to work efficiently in a terribly cramped space and using a style of rowing totally different from any to which they had been accustomed. As Rankov's chapter reveals, the sea trials have demonstrated that, no question about it, the three-level galley designed by Morrison and Coates works perfectly.

General readers will find in this book all that can safely be said about the appearance, make-up, crews, and performance of the ancient Athenian trireme. The lubberly among them will get welcome help from the glossaries of both English and Greek naval terms that the authors have thoughtfully provided.

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# NOVEL APPROACHES TO THE CLASSICS: PART I

by Thomas Falkner

It is ironic that as the academic world becomes more and more isolated from the American public, its literary profile has never been higher. This is particularly striking in regard to fiction, where a surprising number of novels over the last decade have involved settings, stories, and characters drawn from the world of higher education. Yet the difference is reflected not only in the number but also in the nature and provenance of these works. The "campus novel," which once depicted quaint professors living sheltered lives in the halls of academe, has yielded to what one might call the "new academic novel"—a phrase that describes less any consistent form or content than it does a spate of fiction of enormous vitality, quality, and versatility, representing some of the country's most prestigious writers.

If one were pressed to identify the origins of this phenomenon, the short answer might be two words, David Lodge, who is the author of the satiricomic masterpieces *Changing Places* (1975) and *Small World* (1984). In these novels, in almost Aristophanic terms, Lodge stages a collision between the old and new academy, made flesh in two professors of literature: the timid Englishman Philip Swallow, University of Rummidge, and the high-powered and highly paid academic superstar Morris Zapp of the State University of Euphoria. Here traditional literary criticism comes to terms with new theories and terminologies that were ripe for satire: post-structuralism, deconstructionism, post-modernism, and feminism. It helps enormously that Lodge was himself an academic (a professor of literature at the University of Birmingham), a critic conversant with and largely sympathetic to the new idiom. In the tradition of Kingsley Amis's classic *Lucky Jim* (1953), where the social upheaval in the post-war academy becomes a backdrop for issues of class conflict, Lodge's academic novels manage to be both great fun and mordant satire. Though Lodge's fictional canvas has broadened beyond the academy, he returns to it regularly, in 1988 with *Nice Work*, which charts the bumpy intersection of academic feminism and the "real world" of corporate engineering and, most recently, with *Thinks . . .* (2001), where traditional

humanism again is pitted against the world of cognitive studies.

To this one-man British invasion, the United States has responded with an array of fiction set in and against the academic world. Essential reading includes *Book* by Robert Grudin (1992); *Japanese by Spring* by Ishmael Reed (1993); *Moo* by Jane Smiley (1995); *Straight Man* by Richard Russo (1997); *Publish and Perish* by James Hynes (1997, followed in 2001 by *The Lecturer's Tale*); *Tomcat in Love* by Tim O'Brien (1998); *Blue Angel* by Francine Prose (2000); and *Ravelstein* by Saul Bellow (2001). In almost every case the authors bear academic credentials. These are writers who know whereof they speak and, even if we do not accept the representations they offer, we need to recognize the role they play in shaping public perceptions of academia.

Classics is well represented in this body of fiction and, in this three-part series in *Amphora*, I will examine three novels that portray the discipline and its practitioners in three very different ways: *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt (1992), *The Fall of a Sparrow* by Robert Hellenga (1998), and *The Human Stain* by Philip Roth (2001). None of the authors, to be sure, is a professional classicist. Tartt's experience with classics is drawn primarily from her student experience at Bennington, Hellenga teaches English at Knox College, and Roth has forayed into academia through visiting appointments at the University of Pennsylvania and City College of New York. There are also some interesting overlaps. Each novel is set against the background of a small liberal arts college and involves a male faculty member who is highly regarded as a teacher. And, in each of these novels, classics provides a lens for issues that are powerful and profound.

With the publication of Donna Tartt's long-awaited second novel, *The Little Friend*, her first novel, *The Secret History*, has been re-released by Ballantine Books (2002), and it is timely to revisit this tale of murder and conspiracy. While this novel centers around a mystery, it is a far cry from murder mysteries like Amanda Cross's classic *Death in a Tenured Position* (1981). *The Secret History* is darker, more sophisticated, and intellectually more complex.

Indeed, to the extent that its protagonists are students rather than their professors, it is a kind of sub-genre of the academic novel.

Richard Papen, the narrator, has come to tiny Hampden College in Vermont as much a refugee as a transfer student. His life to date has been wasted in middle-class Plano, California and, on his arrival at Hampden, he quickly invents for himself a worthier and wealthier history. He has some talent in Greek, which he had studied at a local college and, when he attempts to continue his studies, what he encounters is less a classics department than a cabal: five students who are virtually inseparable, keep aloof from the student rabble, and take all their courses under the charming and enigmatic Professor Julian Morrow. Henry, the leader of the group, is tall and out of place with his umbrellas and wool suits, and is supported by his father's enormous wealth. Francis is red-headed, gay, and has convenient access to a family summer house in the countryside nearby. The orphan twins Charles and Camilla have been raised by their Nana in Virginia; while Camilla's Athena-like features are emphatic, the relationship between the two is at once symbiotic and sexual. And Edmund, known as "Bunny," whose father is a Connecticut businessman of unredeemed vulgarity, is loud and annoying, but ultimately loveable. The academic talents of the group range from considerable to negligible. They do speak in bits of Greek, quote from the classics, and engage in the occasional excursion – just enough to authenticate themselves without putting off the reader. The five also share a common appetite for alcohol and pharmaceuticals, which are consumed in enormous quantities.

Professor Morrow (whose students, in exchange for their devotion, are allowed to address him as Julian) is shrouded in mystery and has vague connections among the rich, the celebrity set, and shadowy governments in the Middle East. A hyper-aesthete, he has adorned his cloistered office, which serves as classroom, with objets d'art. He limits his availability to a few hand-chosen students, over whom he exercises complete control academically, and they are utterly in his thrall – in one scene Henry abandons an attempt to complete a course evaluation form: "How can I possibly make the Dean of Studies understand that there is a divinity in our midst?" In fact, the dean's willingness to acquiesce in Morrow's eccentricities

has more to do with his personal wealth and intimidating manner – he teaches at Hampden for free, and even his enemies on the faculty are cautious in their criticism.

Bunny's selfish and childish ways make him the odd man out in this circle of earnest, if pretentious, young intellectuals. He is unaware that his friends, who have taken to heart Morrow's repeated celebrations of Dionysiac madness and the Greeks' ability to divest themselves through ritual of "the burden of self," have been attempting to experience an authentic bacchanal. In one of their experiments, in the middle of the night in remote pastures, in a scene straight from Euripides' *Bacchae*, they kill (and apparently mutilate) a local farmer. Panic-stricken and faced with the real prospect of trial and imprisonment, they realize that concealment is their only recourse. But when Bunny later discovers their secret and is on the verge of exposing them, the five (Richard now has joined the conspiracy) decide that he must be eliminated and, under Henry's direction, they lay an ambush and push him down a ravine to his death.

At first, the group seems to feel no more guilt for their friend than they had for the hapless farmer. In the second half of the story, the friendships disintegrate in a tangle of suspicion and intrigue. Although they ultimately escape detection, they are led to tragic revelations, more violence, and lives forever damaged. The group struggles desperately to keep the truth from their beloved Julian, whose fondness for them (including, and perhaps especially, Bunny) could not bear such knowledge. But, by the end of the book, Morrow's care and charisma are exposed as a selfish façade that belies a chill disregard for his students. In the novel's central *anagnôrisis*, when Morrow inadvertently discovers the murder and cover-up, he returns the telltale piece of evidence and disappears without notice.

While the premises of the novel strain belief, certain features ring true. Morrow's affectation is remarkable only for its degree, and many will recognize the elitism and sense of moral superiority that Morrow and his students derive from the cachet of the classics. While classicists certainly have no monopoly in this regard, the field has always attracted its fair share of those who find not just edification but also self-validation in the erudition and discipline that are required. Morrow, in turn, has fed his students' sense of their own superiority

to win their adulation, and his enthusiasm for Dionysus (in reality so much warmed over Nietzsche) was calculated primarily to impress. So too, Henry's obsessive study of the past reveals someone who, by his own admission, is incapable of living in the present and for whom life holds little of interest.

Clearly drawing on her own experience at Bennington, Tartt has tapped into the dark underside of the academy and, in a popular novel such as this, classics works especially well – the author can indulge in the occasional allusion or philosophical digression without fear of losing her audience. Not for the masses, classics here becomes the secret enclave of a self-selected group who find in it a home in a world in which they have no other. Yet in the end, for all their confusion, pretentiousness, and cruelty, this coterie of students is interesting because of its devotion to the ancient writers and thinkers who have withstood the test of time. Unfit for the present, they take refuge in the past. Yet they are nonetheless impressive for their willingness to be captivated, even obsessed, by a set of serious ideas and to pursue them to their dangerous conclusion. Though readers will find the characters repugnant in word and deed, many will also recall their own spellbound and wide-eyed initiation into the classics.

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# THE NASHVILLE ATHENA: REBIRTH OF A GODDESS

by Barbara Tsakirgis

According to Greek mythology, Athena was born from the head of Zeus, fully grown and fully armed. As a war goddess, she was often depicted wearing a helmet and draped in a snaky-edged goatskin, with her shield at the ready. Athena counted among her human favorites heroes such as Odysseus, Heracles, and Perseus, but no people on earth were more special to her than the Athenians, the patronage of whose city she had won in a contest with her uncle Poseidon. Among Athena's several titles in Greek mythology are Athena Nike (Athena, Goddess of Victory) and Athena Parthenos (Athena, the Virgin Goddess). She was called both at Athens.

In the mid-fifth century B.C., Pericles, the leading Athenian statesman of the time, conceived a grand plan to rebuild the temple to Athena on the Acropolis that had been destroyed by the Persians in 480 B.C. He chose Pheidias to sculpt a colossal image of the virgin goddess, Athena Parthenos. The statue, crafted of gold and ivory, depicted the goddess at rest after victory with the figure of Nike (Victory) in her outstretched right hand.

Fast forward to the United States in the late nineteenth century. To emphasize its identity as the "Athens of the South," Nashville, Tennessee, built a copy of the Parthenon as the centerpiece of the state's centennial celebration in 1897. Constructed of stucco and wood, the first Nashville Parthenon was replaced, twenty-five years later, by a second Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the ancient temple in concrete. This Parthenon stood empty for more than fifty years, despite the fact that William Bell Dinsmoor, the consultant on the building of the second Nashville Parthenon, had envisioned the construction of a colossal statue of Athena for the building. In preparation, a substantial foundation had been laid under the spot where a re-creation of Pheidias' original sculpture was to rest. When a local supporter of the arts suggested that it was time to re-create the sculpture, a competition was held in 1981.

Alan LeQuire, a Nashville native and sculptor, was awarded the commission. The judges favored LeQuire's proposal because, although Pheidias' sculpture does not survive, LeQuire planned to

take into account surviving ancient evidence for the original in his design. Almost two hundred copies of the sculpture in a variety of media and several accounts written by authors such as Pliny the Elder and Pausanias provide important details about the masterpiece. In addition to these ancient sources, LeQuire was bolstered by the informed guidance of Brunilde Ridgway and Evelyn B. Harrison, both authorities on classical Greek sculpture. Ridgway encouraged LeQuire to think of the sculpture as his own, not simply as a re-creation of the original. The results of her advice can be seen in the horrific Medusa on the shield of the goddess and on the frieze depicting Pandora's birth on the base of the statue, both of which reflect more the world of LeQuire than of Pheidias.

*The Nashville  
Athena stands today  
in the world's only  
full-scale replica of  
the Parthenon.*

A more significant difference between the Athena of LeQuire and that of Pheidias is the medium. The ancient artist crafted his Athena's garments and equipment of gold and her skin of ivory. Such costly materials, however, were prohibitively expensive for the modern artist. Consequently, LeQuire fashioned the Nashville Athena from gypsum plaster with a fiberglass admixture, an extremely strong and light material. More than 250 individually cast pieces that comprise the figures of Athena and Nike are hung on an armature of steel, with two I-beams serving as Athena's spine. In contrast, Pheidias' Athena Parthenos probably had a wooden spine made from one of the famous cedars of Lebanon. Furthermore, the six-foot, four-inch figure of Nike rests on the Nashville Athena's seemingly unsupported right hand thanks to an internal cantilever that bears its weight. Archaeological evidence, in the form of cut-

tings that exist on the floor of the pedimental space, reveals that the Athenians balanced the over life-size sculptures on the Parthenon's pediments with cantilevers, so we know that ancient sculptors were aware of this engineering technique. A seal recently discovered in the Athenian Agora depicts Pheidias' sculpture and reveals that his Athena Parthenos originally employed no external support for Nike. The supporting column that appears in some of the representations of the colossal statue was probably added years later, after Athena's arm showed evidence of strain. Thus, LeQuire, by following the ancient practice of cantilevering, fashioned an Athena that resembles the original Pheidias sculpture more closely than some scholars thought in 1981.

Until recently, the plaster surface of the modern image was a dull white but, in the summer of 2002, gold leaf was applied to Athena's dress and armor, and her skin was painted ivory white (see Fig. 3). Painted detail was also added to the border and interior of her shield and to her face. Again, LeQuire followed ancient practice – color was applied to ancient statues to highlight the carved folds of drapery. Her blue-grey eyes are now fringed with metal lashes, like those on ancient bronze statues, such as the *Charioteer* from the Sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi.

On the original Athena Parthenos, Pheidias had depicted three myths that told of the timeless conflict between nature and culture, myths undoubtedly used as allegories for the fifth-century B.C. conflict between the barbarian Persians and the rational Greeks. All three myths appeared also on the metopes of the Parthenon. The battle with the Amazons (the fearsome women warriors of antiquity) on the exterior of Athena's shield was much copied in antiquity. LeQuire was able to use surviving examples as a basis for his own depiction. The battle between the gods and the giants, or the Gigantomachy, on the interior of the shield, however, is somewhat more problematic. Copies of it may survive on a few red-figured vases, but whether it was originally painted or engraved is not clear. LeQuire chose to paint this battle, deriving the composition, in part, from surviving representations on classical vases. The battle between centaurs and Lapiths at the wedding feast of Pirithoüs and Hippodameia, depicted on the edge of Athena's sandals, has not survived in any ancient copy of Pheidias' Athena





**Fig. 3. The Nashville Athena in August 2002, at the completion of its gilding. Photo credit: Marianne Hillenmeyer.**

Parthenos. Here LeQuire was on his own. He knitted together several of the hand-to-hoof combat scenes from the Parthenon's south metopes to create his own version of the battle scene.

The composition of the sculpted image on the original Athena's base is unknown. There Pheidias had depicted the birth of Pandora, perhaps referencing the birth of the goddess Athena on the eastern pediment of the Parthenon, perhaps presenting a warning about women, or perhaps depicting a local Athenian character of the same name. In the second century A.D., Pausanias tells us the subject of the scene, but only two surviving copies of the Athena Parthenos have any indication of the figures on the base's frieze. On the base, Helios (the sun) rose on one side of the gods assembled at Pandora's creation, and Selene (the moon) set on the other. This temporal frame was used by Pheidias also on the Parthenon's eastern pediment and possibly also on the northern metopes. In the scene of the birth of Pandora, LeQuire displays his freest hand. While the sun in his four-horse chariot, the enthroned Zeus, and assembly of gods resemble, at first glance, images in any classical Greek sculpture, closer observation reveals highly individualized faces. The gods and goddesses, in fact, bear the like-

nesses of LeQuire's friends and family: Zeus is LeQuire's father; Hera his mother; and Helios rising from the eastern horizon is Kyu Yamamoto, LeQuire's assistant and the sculptor of the snaky King Erichthonius coiled within Athena's shield. Most intriguing of all is the face of Pandora, the first woman who brought all troubles and evils to the world. She is Andree, LeQuire's wife.

The creation of the Nashville Athena took eight years, a process prolonged by technical and financial setbacks. In 1988, LeQuire's studio burned to the ground, fortunately only after work had moved into the cella of the Parthenon itself, but the fire destroyed all preliminary studies for the statue. Athena's construction in the 1980's, as well as her recent gilding, had to be paid for entirely from private donations. The Nashville Athena was dedicated on May 21, 1990, in a public ceremony, not without its dissenters – a local preacher wore a sandwich board on which was written, "Idolatry comes to Nashville in the guise of art." But Pericles' embellishment of the Acropolis in the fifth century had also met with some disapproval – a critic complained that Pericles was dressing up Athens like a flashy courtesan.

The Nashville Athena stands today in the world's only full-scale replica of the Parthenon. It is a building that recreates the details and architectural refinements of the original, including the curvature of the horizontals and the inclination of the verticals. Its Athena, at forty-one feet, ten inches high, fills the space of the Parthenon's cella and helps the visitor understand the reason for the lavish scale of the original temple. Missing in the Nashville Parthenon, however, are the two windows recently recognized by Manolis Korres as part of the original building's provision for lighting the colossal Athena. But when the air is warm in Nashville, the cella doors are opened and permit modern viewers, like their ancient counterparts, to gaze upon the bright-eyed goddess who stands within.

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## Book Review: *Climbing Parnassus*

by Aaron W. Godfrey

Tracy Lee Simmons. *Climbing Parnassus: A New Apologia for Greek and Latin*. ISI Books (1-800-621-2736), 2002. Pp. xvii, 228. Hardcover \$24.95. ISBN 1-882926-73-0.

Until recent generations, a solid education in classical languages was essential for any fully-educated person. The classics, "a body of written works acting as passwords to culture with which all of the educated were expected to be familiar" (66), were the foundation of the humanities. The reading was not always easy and required discipline and hard work, but the study of classics, in the long run, paid off handsomely in later life.

Things have changed. The humanities have been expanded and redefined to include popular culture, MTV, movies, and commentaries on *The Sopranos* and Michael Jackson. Classics, and its languages Greek and Latin, are bravely holding on, but competition from these other areas is fierce, and the English underpinnings of the study of classics are faltering. In the past, grammar and syntax were reinforced especially through the diagramming of sentences and the rigorous drilling of parts of speech. Unfortunately, it is comparatively rare today to find a college or university student who still knows grammar and usage well. Other disciplines in the humanities and languages that require rigid preparation or extensive reading also suffer from low enrollments and are at risk of being discontinued because "they do not pay their way."

Tracy Lee Simmons, who has written for the *National Review*, has plunged into the fray on the side of classics. He has a solid classical education at his fingertips, and he is well read and cultivated in the old-fashioned way. Certainly his erudition is on display in *Climbing Parnassus*. But Tracy Lee Simmons, like the prophets Amos and Jeremiah, is an angry man. He rails against the "pragmatism" of most contemporary educational experiences, which respond to the question "What is it good for?" He considers the

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# “THERE AND BACK AGAIN” – ODYSSEUS AND BILBO BAGGINS

by Kenneth J. Reckford

The influence of the classics on J. R. R. Tolkien is a vast subject that has not received, nor is likely to receive, the care and attention it deserves. One reason for this is that the Northern influences on Tolkien’s imagination and writing are more immediate and more obvious than the Mediterranean ones. Tolkien, however, knew Homer directly from the Greek, and he could hardly have avoided showing Homeric influences now and then, whether conscious or unconscious. Although Homer’s *Odyssey* and Tolkien’s *The Hobbit* (1937) are much separated in time and place, it is possible (and desirable) to compare Odysseus, the main character of Homer’s *Odyssey*, to Bilbo Baggins, the main character of Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*. Both characters embark on the archetypal hero journey, and both encounter monstrous creatures during their adventures.

As Joseph Campbell showed in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), the pattern of adventure and return is found universally in myth, fairy tale, and folktale. The hero (or heroine) sets out on a quest; wins friends and allies; overcomes obstacles; fights powerful enemies; gains treasure and (often) a marriage; and returns home, to restore the kingdom and live happily ever after. That is the norm, give or take a few disasters.

The pattern of Homer’s *Odyssey* is archetypal: sea and land, adventure and return, exploration of strange lands, and restoration of the kingdom at home. Odysseus has a keen curiosity about people and places and a strong hunger for adventure, but what is most remarkable about him is his still stronger will to return to Ithaca and Penelope, fully accepting of his mortality. And he grows, not so much in skill and craft, which he clearly showed at Troy, as in patience, understanding, compassion, and human wisdom. He grows morally and spiritually, from the sacker of cities into the man who knows how to wait. He grows into the man who can warn the suitors about the morality implicit in mortality, a warning that they are too brash and blind to comprehend. He grows into the man who can rediscover and reclaim his several roles on Ithaca.

As part of his hero journey, however,

Odysseus must overcome obstacles. His encounter with the Cyclops Polyphemus, told in Book 9 of the *Odyssey*, is his first great adventure after leaving Troy. Odysseus lands on an island. He crosses over to the mainland with twelve men. He finds sheep, goats, and cheeses near a great cave, where he waits around, though his men urge him to leave. And sure enough, a monster comes, the huge one-eyed Cyclops who drives his sheep into the cave and closes it with a great slab of rock. Polyphemus sees the Greeks, bashes two of them against the cave wall, and eats them. Odysseus appeals to civilized custom and the gods, but the Cyclops pays no attention. So, the next day, after Polyphemus eats breakfast and goes out, Odysseus shapes, heats, and hides a long, pointed stake. That evening, he gets the Cyclops drunk at supper on unmixed wine he happens to have brought along. The Cyclops is pleased. He asks Odysseus his name, is told (prudently, now), “Noman,” and offers “Noman” a present – to be eaten last. Then he falls asleep, dribbling bits of manflesh mixed with wine. Odysseus reheats the stake, and he and four others bore out the Cyclops’ eye. The next day, Odysseus escapes, after concealing his men and himself under great rams that the blind Cyclops, unsuspecting, leads out to pasture. They put to sea again and escape.

In this episode, Odysseus displays cleverness, quick thinking under stress, and bold, appropriate action. Still, he was foolish to get caught in the first place; and afterwards, from his boat, he taunts the Cyclops and almost gets himself and his men killed. By giving away his real name as he sails away, he gives Polyphemus the information he needs to pray that his father, the sea-god Poseidon, take vengeance upon Odysseus. Poseidon will thus become his implacable enemy. Odysseus may have the marks of a competent hero in this story, but morally and spiritually he still has a long way to go.

The story of Bilbo Baggins is also archetypal. Bilbo sets out on a quest, albeit reluctantly and half-asleep and without his pocket-handkerchief, and he joins the dwarves, who come gradually to like, respect, and admire him. He meets difficulties and overcomes them,

first with the help of Gandalf, the kindly wizard, but then increasingly on his own: under the Misty Mountains, in Mirkwood, and (as best he can) at the Lonely Mountain. He encounters evil: most tragically, in the hearts of dwarves. He survives, after accomplishing much (as Gandalf had predicted), and he returns home to reclaim his house and property from the Sackville-Bagginses. He returns with gold and silver, fine armor, and a little ring that helps you disappear when the wrong sort of people cross your path. A trivial bit of magic, but nice to have.



**Fig. 4. Two Escapes: By Ram, by Barrel. Illustration by Patrick Wynne. Reproduced by permission from *Mythlore* 53 (Spring 1988), 5.**

With Bilbo Baggins and the three trolls – and this is Bilbo’s first real adventure – we find ourselves in a Cyclops-like world tempered with comic reassurances. For, if the trolls are scary (and Tolkien’s drawings of those scaly, brutish creatures in their firelit clearing in the woods remind me that I was justifiably scared when I was eight years old), they are also very silly in the way they talk and act. (They would seem even sillier if Tolkien were reading to us as he read to his children, imitating the Cockney accents and brutish language of Bert, Tom, and William.) They drink pretty heavily, too, and the beer muddles what few wits they have, preparing them for defeat. That is funny, as well as Homeric. Yet, unlike the Cyclops, the trolls never get to eat anybody on this occasion. They talk, indeed argue, a lot about roasting, boiling, or just plain squashing their prisoners, but they never do.

Bilbo, unlike Odysseus, does not visit the trolls through his own rashness or idle curiosity. He is sent to “burgle,” and he makes a half-decent try. A magic



purse gives him away. And, being an honest hobbit, he can't quite manage to conceal the truth. Deception and trickery, like burglary, are not native accomplishments of a Baggins. He does manage to alert Thorin, the chief dwarf, who

jumped forward to the fire, before they could leap on him. He caught up a big branch all on fire at one end; and Bert got that end in his eye before he could step aside. That put him out of the battle for a bit . . .

But that is as much violence as we get. No boring out of eyes, just a few burns and bruises to put the trolls out of temper. They capture the dwarves, but Gandalf tricks them into arguing until dawn, when they are turned to stone – an effective, non-violent solution.

Tolkien echoes the Cyclops scene twice more in *The Hobbit*. The first echo is when Bilbo rescues the dwarves from the Elvenking's dungeons, putting them into empty return-barrels to be poled up the Long Lake to Laketown. But this time something goes wrong. Odysseus had tied each of his men beneath a central ram of three that he had bound together. Then he put himself beneath the greatest ram of all (a symbol, surely, of his *machismo*), clung to its fleece, and waited for morning to escape. Similarly, Bilbo packs the dwarves into barrels – but he is not quite Odysseus:

It was just at this point that Bilbo suddenly discovered the weak point in his plan . . . Of course he was not in a barrel himself, nor was there anyone to pack him in, even if there had been a chance!

Still, Bilbo manages. He rides his barrel. He is available, when the time comes, to help the not-quite-grateful dwarves out of their barrels. And the worst result, for now, is that he gets a bad cold.

Later, though, in the second echo of the Cyclops scene, Bilbo makes a mistake rather like Odysseus. Dragons are tricky and dangerous, and the invisible hobbit rashly boasts to the dragon Smaug. He gives too much away – about the lucky number (he has thirteen friends) and about barrel-riding. Smaug almost kills him because Bilbo has been careless. And Smaug is aroused against the Lake-men, who must have helped the barrel-rider. All this leads to Smaug's wrath and his eventual death – for which, respectively,

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## Book Review: *Climbing Parnassus*

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emphasis on training or “useful knowledge” unfortunate and believes it neglects the education of a complete human being.

Simmons asserts (157) that “education is not a preparation for making a living but for living.” Nowadays, courses and curricula live or die based on utility and popularity and whether they “pay for themselves” with adequate enrollment. Many school and college administrators seem quite uninterested in the intrinsic educational merit of courses or curricula that are under-enrolled and are ready to reduce costs by retrenching or shrinking such courses or programs. Simmons reaffirms that the path to knowledge, and ultimately wisdom, is not achieved by entertainment but by rigorous work and by learning what the past has taught. Nor is it adequate to teach what translators say was written. It is necessary to tackle the works in the original Latin and Greek. For it is in even a modest mastery of these languages that minds and memory are trained and that students learn, at the same time, to think critically and independently. Of course, Latin and Greek are not the only means of doing this, but other rigid disciplines that serve the same purpose also suffer from modest enrollments. Parenthetically, I might remark that better entry-level jobs are open to those graduates with majors in English, philosophy, and languages than in the softer disciplines.

Perhaps Simmons's most intriguing observations deal with the problem of the aesthetic, or appreciation, that “touches upon the spiritual in our nature” (196). This appreciation embodies those intangible but critical qualities called “taste and style,” which he assumes are governed by objective standards that can be well formed by the study of Greek and Latin. He also makes a compelling argument for Latin prose composition (162-64), which may send chills up the spines of those who initially slogged through *Bradley's Arnold* but realized much later the benefits it brought.

Simmons will find support, on the one hand, from believers who will applaud his jeremiads. On the other hand, he does not seem aware of the anguish of dedicated teachers who struggle daily with recalcitrant students who seem to be time servers,

rather than athirst for the Castalian Spring. He tends to be intemperate in his criticism of the schools (237-42) and does not always direct his attention to the root cause of the problem: a curriculum watered down to meet the needs of consumer students who resist the rigors that the study of the classics imposes.

Simmons quotes from an impressive collection of sources, which unfortunately are not precisely documented; the lack of footnotes in the book makes additional reading nearly impossible. He sees through the American “weakness for new gospels” and the intellectual tyranny of some professional organizations which demonstrate the adage that “the newest is always the most quickly dated” (3). Simmons has produced a noble, eloquent apologia for classical languages, but *Climbing Parnassus* just misses the summit.

**Aaron W. Godfrey** has taught Latin and been director of the classics minor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook for the past thirty-eight years. He also served for several years as the director of placement for the university. Concerned with bridging the gap between secondary and higher education, he has been an active member in the Classical Association of the Atlantic States. He is also active in the Classical Association of the Empire State and is the editor of its newsletter.

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## Film Review: *Clash of the Titans* (1981)

by Robert J. Lenardon

The Warner re-release of *Clash of the Titans* on DVD (2002) in an all new digital transfer allows us to see and hear this visually stunning and exciting MGM movie at home, as never before; language options are English and French, with a choice of subtitles in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, Bahasa, Thai, and Korean.

Two special features are to be treasured: "A Conversation with Ray Harryhausen," the renowned creator of the special visual effects for the film, and a "Map of Myths and Monsters Gallery," in which he makes fascinating observations about his creations. Harryhausen's obsession with the unusual began, he tells us, at a very early age and he prefers, for the creation of fantasy, the more romantic past to the future, with its rocket ships and explosions. He describes his determination to see mythological creatures realized fully on the screen. He also speaks with gratitude and pride of his powerful influence on legions of young people growing up, not least of all those who have become outstanding film professionals, such as George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. His own words sum up the man and his movies, especially his last and perhaps best movie, *Clash of the Titans*: "The cinema was made for fantasy . . . it gives you a feeling of wonder . . . Adults like fantasy as well as children."

The screenwriter is Beverly Cross, also a playwright. Because of his keen interest in Greek mythology, he wanted to do a movie about Perseus, and he incorporated scenes designed by Harryhausen into his script. The result is an intelligent transformation of the legend that preserves its major episodes, while enriching it with additional characters and incidents to create a coherent and dramatic piece. Cross and Harryhausen had worked together on *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), which rightfully became a critical and popular success. Many critics have not been so kind to *Clash of the Titans*. Some are insensitive to its script and its stylistic concept as a magical, artful fable or complain (as they did not do before) about the stop-motion techniques of

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## ON GOOD TEACHING

by Randall Nichols

Whenever I am asked why I became a high school classics teacher, I remember three professors from my undergraduate days at the University of California at Santa Cruz: John Lynch, Mary-Kay Gamel, and Gary Miles. The excellence of their teaching drew me to classics. They encouraged me along the way, and their educational beliefs and practices have influenced mine.

In the fall of 1977, my life was changed by a course in elementary Greek or, to be more exact, my life was changed by Professor John Lynch. I had declared a major in mathematics, which I enjoyed, but I enrolled in Greek for the sole purpose of being able to read the Greek New Testament.

I approached the study of Greek with trepidation. Since my natural abilities were more mathematical than verbal, foreign languages were outside my comfort zone. My most difficult subject in high school had been French. The cumulative nature of foreign language study had taken me by surprise. High-school French had been a painful lesson in the difference between short-term and long-term memorization. When I told my French teacher that I wanted to study Greek, she rolled her eyes, sighed deeply, and warned me that Greek would be far more difficult than French.

On my first day in Greek class, I found myself surrounded by students well versed in the humanities, most of whom had already studied Latin. To a previously unsuccessful foreign language student, the syllabus was daunting. We would cover our introductory textbook (Chase and Phillips) at the rate of two lessons per week. Elementary grammar would be completed in twenty weeks, followed by ten weeks of reading Plato. There would be weekly quizzes, but our performance each quarter would be assessed primarily by a three-hour exam. My instinctive trust and confidence in the instructor overcame my initial urge to drop the course.

Both my unexpected success in Greek and my fond memories of that class attest to the effectiveness of John Lynch's remarkable teaching. He made learning easier by his thorough preparation, clear expectations, and pleasantly engaging style. He set high standards, but he did everything in his power to help students reach them. His compassion and occasional forgiveness were consistent with his steady guidance of our efforts to learn

Greek. The mention of his name all these years later evokes strong emotions. Above all, there is gratitude for the solid foundation and confidence he gave me in Greek, but there is also affection for his kindness. My classmates and I always wanted to know more about the erudite, unassuming, and private man we so admired. When we learned that he was making visits to a nursing home, we concluded that he had an ailing relative. We later found out that he was volunteering his time to teach Greek to the patients. He encouraged us to do likewise. He arranged for his students to teach Greek to senior citizens. It was in those Saturday morning sessions with deeply appreciative senior citizens that I first experienced the rewards of teaching.

As I took more courses in the classics, I learned that other members of the department shared John Lynch's view of challenging, but humane, education. I recently gained a whole new perspective on teaching when I ran across the first paper I ever wrote for a classics course. May such an incriminating document never fall into the hands of my own students! As a young student who had not written many papers in high school, I thought my paper was satisfactory but, as an experienced teacher, it pains me to read it now. I will try to make my future comments on students' papers as merciful, judicious, and instructive as Professor Mary-Kay Gamel's were on mine. She has provided me with a model of how to guide and encourage the student inexperienced in literary interpretation. With John Lynch, Mary-Kay Gamel, and Gary Miles, my advisor, I never had to worry about being humiliated in class, even when called upon to translate. Once I was freed from the paralysis of fear, I succeeded and gained confidence in the study of the classics.

I began the study of Greek and Latin late in my degree program, and so I completed the major in classics with the minimal number of courses and with an emphasis in Greek. I told Professor Miles that I did not have adequate preparation to become a Latin teacher. He assured me that one learns most by teaching and that my education was just beginning and not ending. His wise advice encouraged me to try the vocation that today I would not trade for any other.

Occasionally I say to my students, "May your children be just like you," and then the classroom becomes silent as they ponder whether this is a blessing or a

curse. I suffer from a form of the curse. My students have educational goals as narrowly defined as mine were when I arrived in Santa Cruz. Many students enroll in Latin to improve their SAT scores. They take the Advanced Placement courses to earn college credit and, as they say, “to get the foreign language requirement out of the way.” I will do my best to help them achieve these goals, but I hope they will leave my classes with a life-long fascination with the ancient world, with an appreciation of the classical tradition, and with a love of learning. I must remember that I did not begin the study of Greek because I loved the classics, but I learned to love the classics by taking Greek under an inspiring teacher.

In their great processions, the Romans carried the images of their ancestors; in their memory, they carried the words and deeds of those who had gone before them. The Romans looked to their past for models of the qualities they admired. I believe this can serve as a metaphor for the student-teacher relationship. We carry vivid images of our teachers. We spent long hours listening to them and studying their interactions with our peers. Few aspects of a teacher’s personality escape the notice of attentive students.

For over twenty years, I have carried in my memory the images of my classics professors at the University of California at Santa Cruz. When I think of the power of those images, I wonder what kind of image I am forming in the lives of my students. When my former students recall words or deeds in the classroom that were particularly meaningful to them, I often have no recollection of these seemingly insignificant events. It is humbling to think of the power that we wield, for better or for worse, in the lives of our students. I intend to provide my students with challenging and rigorous training, but I hope the image that I fashion will convey the patience, kindness, and respect that I experienced from John Lynch, Mary-Kay Gamel, and Gary Miles. Such images have the power to change a student’s life. They have changed mine.

*Randall Nichols teaches Latin and Greek at The Westminster Schools of Augusta, Georgia. He made these remarks upon receiving the 2002 Eunice Kraft Award for Excellence in Secondary School Teaching from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South. His students routinely place out of the first two years of Latin and Greek in college. Some of his former students are currently majoring in Latin, Greek, or classics at Furman University, Harvard University, the University of Georgia, and the University of Virginia.*

## Film Review: *Clash of the Titans* (1981)

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Harryhausen, which now seem, they claim, quaint and old-fashioned after the first *Star Wars* (1977) with its new digital technology. The art and vision of Ray Harryhausen have their own *raison d’être*, and they can never be invalidated by technical innovations. Fortunately, *Clash of the Titans* has turned out to be an extremely popular movie, and perceptive students can take a special delight in the insights that come only with a knowledge of Greek and Roman mythology.

The director is Desmond Davis, who began his career as a cinematographer, a fact very much evident in his work. Cross, Harryhausen, and Davis are unanimous and consistent in their purpose and style. It is as though a lovely book of a child’s fable has been brought to cinematic life, with its direct and moving text, beautiful illustrations of the prince and princess, and depictions of monsters that terrify and delight.

The music, so stirring and heroic, meltingly romantic, and eerily atmospheric, powerfully enhances this tale’s thrilling action and touching sentiment. The composer Laurence Rosenthal has written scores for some ninety-six films, two nominated for Academy Awards. This must be one of his best.

The acting has the aura of the restrained passion in a storybook. The cast is predominantly British. “Who else could play Zeus but Laurence Olivier?” Harryhausen asks. “He has the authority, even though he was quite ill at the time . . . They were all beautifully cast.” Claire Bloom is Hera; Thetis, Maggie Smith. Cassiopeia, the boastful mother of Andromeda, is no other than Siân Phillips (the deadly Livia of *I, Claudius*). Two of the male leads, however, are American. Burgess Meredith, a distinguished veteran, blends kindly wisdom and whimsy in his depiction of Ammon, the poet and playwright who befriends Perseus. Harry Hamlin, early in his career, plays Perseus. He is perfect for the role because of his handsome looks and vibrant youth, and he radiates vulnerability and strength. Maybe he has done better in his varied career (his role on television in *L.A. Law* being perhaps his best known), but certainly he has done much worse. Judi Bowker, the heroine Andromeda, also projects the

beauty of youth, along with the innocence of a fairy-tale princess.

Many are the pleasures in this movie. The artistically conceived winged horse Pegasus is exhilarating in flight; the last shot of him on a rocky height captures the beauty of a painting. The monster Calibos (an invented son of Thetis and treacherous opponent of Perseus) appears fittingly grotesque, with a tail and cloven hoof. He is depicted by an animated action figure and also played effectively by a real actor (Neil McCarthy), the two skillfully blended in the action. Bubo (the Latin word for owl), a mechanical duplicate of Athena’s owl, fashioned by Hephaestus, and a loveable and amusing helpmate, makes us realize that, like Siegfried, only Perseus can understand the language of a bird.

It is Bubo who leads Perseus to the shrine of the three Stygian witches. These are the Graeae of the original legend but given typically imaginative touches. They are old, wise, and have only one eye among them but also resemble the witches in *Macbeth*, with their cauldron here of human flesh. Bubo cleverly seizes their eye for Perseus, who in this version must win the knowledge that he can defeat the invulnerable sea monster to which Andromeda is to be sacrificed, only by turning it to stone with the head of Medusa.

Perseus finds Medusa’s home (actually the temple at Paestum), located on the Isle of the Dead at the edge of the world, and this unforgettable scene illuminates the creative imagination of this film at its best. He crosses the Styx, the river of death, after giving a coin to Charon (a shrouded skeleton), and kills Dioskilos, a dog with only two-heads (a shock, but a Cerberus with three heads was technically too clumsy to handle). Medusa, demonic in look as serpents writhe in her hair, glides menacingly on her serpentine body with its threatening rattlesnake’s tail. The encounter is one of unbearably chilling suspense. It ends with Perseus triumphantly holding aloft Medusa’s severed head, in a stance reminiscent of the famous statue by Cellini. Thus, added to Perseus’ heroic achievements is the greatest one of all, the conquest of death.

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## Book Review: *The Sappho Companion*

by Diane J. Rayor

Margaret Reynolds, ed. *The Sappho Companion*. St. Martin's Press (1-800-221-7945), 2000. Pp. 422. Hardcover \$27.95. ISBN 0-31223924-6.

**T**he *Sappho Companion* is a fascinating collection of writings inspired by Sappho, the late seventh-century B.C.E. Greek poet from the island of Lesbos. It is also an important addition to current scholarship on the reception of Sappho throughout the centuries, such as *Fictions of Sappho, 1546-1937* (1989) by Joan DeJean, *Re-Reading Sappho: Reception and Transmission* edited by Ellen Greene (1996), and *Victorian Sappho* (1999) by Yopie Prins. Margaret Reynolds displays the shifting image of Sappho in roughly one hundred poems and prose pieces from antiquity to the end of the twentieth century. As Reynolds says, "The details of Sappho's story make her various and adaptable, depending on the concerns of the historical moment" (7). The fragmentary and beautiful remains of Sappho's poetry, Sappho's sexuality, her status "as 'the first' woman poet" (196), the lack of reliable biographical information about her, and the fiction of her death by suicide have inspired the creation of new Sapphos based on the makers' own agendas.

The general introduction sets a casual, non-scholarly tone. The first chapter includes twenty-four of the extant Greek fragments, each followed by as many as nine English translations – the earliest, Sir Philip Sidney's 1554 version of Sappho's Fragment 31 and, the most recent, Robert Chandler's 1998 translation of Fragment 102. The fourteen subsequent chapters chronologically organize works from the Roman writers Catullus and Ovid to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, H. D., Virginia Woolf, and Ruth Padel (1999). These works are of varying artistic quality, and often stem more from the idea of Sappho and her imagined life than from her actual fragments. Each one, however, vividly illuminates attitudes towards Sappho in the author's time and place. The introductions to the chapters – with provocative titles such as "The Tenth

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# MOUNT OLYMPUS

by Ourania Molyviati

**M**ount Olympus is well known to people around the world as the home of the ancient Greek gods. It is also well known to scientists for its many peculiarities. Located in northern Greece on the border of Pieria and Thessaly, Olympus rises over the Gulf of Thermaikos and the plain of Thessaly. Homer describes Olympus as *πολυδεϊράς*, "having many summits" (*Iliad* 1.499 and 5.754); *πολύπτυχος*, "having many plateaus" (*Iliad* 8.411); and *νιφόεις*, "covered with snow" (*Iliad* 18.616). These descriptions are reflected in reality because Olympus is actually a group of plateaus, yawning chasms that trap the clouds, and lower alpine peaks that rise almost 2,900 meters. The etymology of the name "Olympus" may also reflect its appearance. One conjecture is that it derives from the adjective *όλολαμπής*, "shining." This is a reasonable possibility because Olympus gleams even in the summer sun, and the winter snow there has a rare shining beauty hard to find in other alpine landscapes.

It is not accidental that Olympus became the home of Zeus, the last of the Greek sky gods. Its undulating and steep surface, on the one hand, and the sea at its border, on the other, create abrupt weather phenomena – thunderstorms, hail, and fog – that astonish and terrify. These weather phenomena were probably the cause of certain epithets of Zeus like "thundering," "covered with dark clouds," "holding the thunderbolt," "throwing thunderbolts like spears," "dwelling in the clouds," "cloud gatherer," "giving birth to rain," "breezy," and "snow white." These epithets of Zeus reflect the unsettled weather of Olympus.

How well did the ancient Greeks and Romans actually know Olympus? As the preceding epithets indicate and Plutarch notes (*Life of Aemilius Paullus* 15), the ancients were aware of the many summits and plateaus of the mountain. There are also testimonies that a cult center of Zeus existed on Olympus. Gaius Julius Solinus, writing at the beginning of the third century A.D., notes the presence of an altar. St. Augustine, writing in the fourth century A.D., and John Philoponos, a grammarian of the sixth century A.D., claim that people who climbed Olympus to perform sacrifices in honor of Zeus found inscriptions from the previous year's sacrifices.

More information about ancient knowledge of Olympus and its surrounding villages comes through archaeology. Archaeologists date the first Greek settlement in Thessaly to around 3,000 B.C. Marcel Kurz, the Swiss engineer hired by the Greek Ministry of Agriculture to map the peaks, climbed Olympus in 1919 and stated in his 1923 book *Le Mont Olympe, Thessalie* that 50 meters south of Scholio, one of the highest peaks, he found stones from ancient buildings. Helmut Scheffel, who climbed Olympus in 1923, stated that at a height of 2,900 meters, at the peak of St. Antony (Kastro), he found remains of an altar and hundreds of clay pieces. Evidence for the existence of a cult center dedicated to Zeus on St. Antony came to light in 1961. At that time Professors B. Kuriazopoulos and G. Livadas of the Department of Physics and Mathematics at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki began work on establishing a meteorological station on St. Antony. They reported in an article in 1967 that they found pieces of stone inscriptions and columns, pieces from clay vessels, iron nails, numerous coins, bones, and the remains of organic substances from sacrifices of goats and sheep. Pieces from black-colored vessels and *lecythoi* were dated to the third century B.C. Some of the coins found were dated to the third century B.C. and others to the fourth century A.D. Among the inscribed columns, one read *Όλυμπίω*, "to the Olympian." K. I. Galles reported, in 1982, the discovery of two bronze statues and pieces from marble statues.

Olympus also occupies an important place in the history of the region. In 480 B.C., Xerxes used a path, called the "upper path" by Herodotus, to transfer his army from Pieria to Thessaly. Three centuries later, in the years 171-69 B.C., Olympus and the army of King Perseus protected southern Greece from the Roman invasion. In 169 B.C., however, the Romans passed over the mountain on a steep path and camped south of modern Litochoro, a village at the foot of Olympus. In 168 B.C., the Romans invaded the narrows of Petra and surrounded Perseus at the village of Dion. He retreated to Pydna where he was defeated. Olympus even played an important role in a later invasion of Greece. In 1374-75, when the Ottoman Turks invaded Greece, Olympus served



**Fig. 5. A view of the peak Stefani (in the middle ground), July 21, 2002. Ourania Molyviati is fourth from the left.**

as a shelter for the *kleftes*, armed Greek men who fought against the Turks. A modern Greek folk song celebrates Olympus and the *kleftes*:

Ἐγὼ μὲν ὁ γέρον Ὀλυμπος στὸν κόσμον  
ξακουσμένος,  
Ἔχω σαράντα δυὸ κορφές κ' ἐξήντα  
δυὸ βρυσσοῦλες.  
Κάθε κορφὴ καὶ φλάμπουρο, κάθε  
κλαδί καὶ κλέφτης.

I am old Olympus famous all over the world.  
I have forty-two summits and sixty-two springs.  
Every peak and a flag, every branch and a *kleftis*.

While archaeology and history can help us to understand better the habitation around Olympus and the visits of ancient devotees, there is also much to be learned from actually climbing Olympus. In 1913, Christos Kakalos, a local guide, led climbers from Geneva to Myticas (Pantheon), which, at 2,918 meters, is the highest peak of Olympus. This is the first time in recorded history that climbers made it to the top. I myself had quite an experience climbing to the top of Olympus last summer. On the morning of July 20, 2002, a group of eight amateur climbers set off in a minivan with our guide Dimitris and drove for one-and-a-half hours from Thessaloniki to Litochoro, at the foot of Olympus. We then drove for fifteen minutes to Prionia, which means “Saw” and is named after the camp of woodcutters there in the first decades of the twentieth century (see Fig. 6). Prionia is a valley at an altitude of 1,100 meters set amid mountains rich in vegetation and graced with the River Enipeus flowing through. Here begins a path that leads to the first shelter, Spilios Agapitos (named after a Greek climber), which is about three hours away from Prionia at an altitude of 2,100 meters. People from all over the world, young and old, take the path to

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## Book Review: *The Sappho Companion*

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Muse,” “Wanton Sapphoics” [*sic*], “Daughter of de Sade,” “The New Woman,” and “Swingers and Sisters” – succinctly illuminate the context of the writings and illustrations that follow. I enjoyed skipping around, contrasting Letitia Elizabeth Landon’s suicidal Sappho (1824), inspired by a “literary mix-up” (71), with Eavan Boland’s rich epiphany of Sappho as the mother of her modern daughters (1990), perhaps loosely based on fragments 1 and 132.

The book’s shortcomings are in the first chapter, which includes the fragments of Sappho’s poetry. The information in this chapter on the survival of the fragments is quite good (18-20), but when Reynolds unequivocally states that “none of [Sappho’s] work was ever written down” (16), the fragments appear even more tenuous than they are. Rather than only composing her songs for performance, Sappho herself may have written them down, as Eva Stehle argues in *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece* (1997, 310-17). The introduction to this chapter has a few other minor annoyances, such as unsupported claims of Sappho’s influence on Madonna’s “Like a Virgin” or other modern lyrics with “Sapphic” images (moon, apple, bee), and a vague reference to “some critics” (22). This is the only part of the book where I longed for footnotes.

Most critically, I wish that Reynolds had provided one accurate, more literal translation of each fragment in the first chapter directly after the Greek. This could have been her own clear translation, any other accurate verse translation, or even the prose translation by David Campbell from the Loeb Classical Library (1982) – any translation that would neither add nor subtract images present in the surviving Greek. Unfortunately, Reynolds provides no adequate translation for fragments 55, 94, 96, and 131. For each of the other twenty fragments, one of the several translations included does the job, but the Greekless reader has no way of identifying it.

The great strength of the book, however, lies in the quantity and variety of work inspired by the few surviving fragments of Sappho’s poetry and the story of the poet that they – and later sources – seem to tell, the useful organization combining chronolo-

gy and agenda, and the introductions to the chapters. Reynolds skillfully weaves together the changing story of reactions to – and recreations of – Sappho. In each chapter, we see how “different interested parties jostle one another, competing for possession of Sappho’s image. At the same time as Sappho was condemned in pornographic literature and belittled in heroic and Napoleonic fictions, she was being applauded and admired in women’s circles” (195). Sometimes, these “interested parties” appear to separate by gender. On the one hand, “from the late eighteenth century one standard way to condemn a strong woman was to whisper about what she did with other women” (128). On the other hand, “when Mary Robinson [1758-1800] chose to write about Sappho in terms of the sublime, she was making a case for the rights of all capable, intelligent and ambitious women” (153). Sappho was used by men to denounce women and by women to support a community of women.

In short, although readers must be cautious when dealing with the translations in the first chapter of the book, they will, nevertheless, find *The Sappho Companion* to be an invaluable history of Sappho’s metamorphoses over the centuries. It makes for delightful random reading that is full of surprises and pleasures.

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**Fig. 6. Extract of Mt. Olympus 1:25.000 map, Topo25 series of ANAVASI editions. Anavasi Maps & Guides, Athens, Greece. Used by permission of Penelope Matsouka and Triantafyllos Adamakopoulos. Copyright ANAVASI editions, 2003.**

the first shelter. The path runs up amid forests of pine, beech, and black-pine trees. As we were approaching the shelter, the trees gave way to a more rocky landscape with flowery bushes, oregano bushes, and fewer black-pine trees. A sudden rainstorm that broke out when we were about half way to the shelter soaked us to the bone. Once we arrived there, a big fire burning in the fireplace and vegetable soup warmed us up. After a short break, we got up to continue our journey to the top.

Three different paths lead to Mytikas. The longest and easiest one is a two-hour climb straight to the peak. A shorter but steeper path leads straight to the peak in about an hour. A third path runs through the Plateau of the Muses, named after the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, to the shelter of Yiosos Apostolides, at an altitude of 2,760 meters. We had arranged to spend the night at this shelter near the summit and so chose this third route. The shelter takes its name from the climber who founded it; he was killed accidentally by a rolling rock as he was approaching the peak of Mytikas. The path to the shelter is rocky, narrow, and steep. Half way to the shelter, we saw a dry riverbed and met climbers who warned us of sudden hailstorms. After two hours of climbing through a region called Mikra Kazania, “Small Pots,” we reached the Plateau of the Muses. From there, our ascent to the shelter was fairly easy, except that

we were all terribly tired. After walking through the Plateau of the Muses for an hour, we finally reached the shelter at dusk. Outside the shelter, on this July night, the temperature was about 15 degrees Celsius.

Next morning, we took the path straight to the peak of Mytikas. While on our way, we saw the region called Megala Kazania, “Big Pots,” which contains big holes covered with clouds coming up from the depths. We saw the peak Stefani, which is also known as the Throne of Zeus (see Fig. 5). We reached the final path to Mytikas after half an hour of climbing. This path to Mytikas is an hour’s climb, 80 meters long, rocky, and steep. Once at the top, we found a yearbook waiting for those who had made it to the top to sign. And what a marvel we beheld for ourselves. We saw stretched out below us the whole region of Pieria up to Chalkidiki, the Gulf of Thermaikos, and the Aegean Sea.

In ancient times, Olympus was celebrated in poetry by Homer. In modern times, it was celebrated in painting by Vasilios Ithakisios, a painter from Lesbos who spent twenty years (1927-47) in a cave on Olympus creating over 500 paintings of the mountain. But there is nothing like climbing Olympus to experience for oneself this proud and enchanting place that emits a sense of power and freedom, serenity and strength.

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## Book Review: The Love-Artist

by Mary C. English

Jane Alison. *The Love-Artist*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux (1-888-330-8477), 2001. Pp. 242. Paper \$13.00. ISBN 0-312-42006-4.

Using *Tristia* 2.207 (“Two offenses ruined me: a poem and an error”) and the sole surviving fragment of Ovid’s lost *Medea* (“I gave you your life. Now you’re wondering – will I take it, too?”), Jane Alison creates, in her debut novel, a stirring historical tale about Ovid’s final days in Rome and the events leading to his exile in A.D. 8.

Readers familiar with the poet’s *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria*, and *Metamorphoses* will enjoy how subtly Alison interweaves these texts into her narrative. Alison’s Ovid often refers to his failed love affair with the beguiling Corinna, a woman who grew increasingly dissatisfied with being a constant source of his poetic inspiration; he smiles at the success that the *Ars Amatoria* achieved when Augustus forced him to burn the manuscript publicly because of its salacious content; and he repeatedly compares his present circumstances to those suffered by Pygmalion, Erisichthon, Io, Pasiphae, Myrrha, and Galatea. Alison also captures Ovid’s determination to achieve lasting fame through his literature. As the story unfolds, Ovid frequently remarks upon the legacy of the venerable poets Horace and Vergil, who had sung the emperor’s praises and attained immortal glory in the process. Ovid, too, yearns for such stature, but it is unclear to him whether his controversial poems can outlive the emperor’s strong desire to suppress them.

At the outset of the novel (which is rich in period detail), Ovid is flush from the excitement of completing his *Metamorphoses*. Awaiting the reaction of both the public and the emperor to his new epic, he journeys to the Black Sea in order to escape the pressures of the Roman literary world. There he encounters Xenia, whom some consider a magical healer, others an enchanting witch. Xenia has read contraband copies of Ovid’s amatory poems (clear evidence that Ovid’s popularity has



spread to the far reaches of the empire) and immediately decides to capture his attention. Ovid is likewise drawn to Xenia because he senses a presence within her that captures the mythological attributes of the heroines featured in his *Metamorphoses*. As their passionate affair escalates, Xenia reveals to Ovid the secrets of her “witchcraft” and, as he grows to understand her power to transform lives, he notes the similarity of their work. Ovid realizes that he must invite Xenia to Rome. She becomes his muse, the inspiration for a new work that she predicts will be Ovid’s most successful creation to date.

*Alison not only shapes her novel with historical accuracy and literary fidelity, but she also captures the spirit of Ovid.*

Upon their return to the city, Ovid receives the patronage of Augustus’ granddaughter Julia, a woman devoted to retaining control of her personal life (despite the interference of her influential family) and committed to exposing the hypocrisy of the principate’s heavy-handed morality campaign. Julia refuses to bear an heir to succeed Augustus and circumvents every attempt to secure her pregnancy. Her latest plan to thwart her family’s intentions involves Ovid. As he recites to Julia the passages of his latest creation about the seductive powers of a female sorceress, Julia recognizes the full potential of her patronage over this work. The situation grows more volatile when Xenia becomes pregnant with Ovid’s child and when her jealousy over the time Ovid is spending with Julia noticeably increases. Xenia’s sense of betrayal begins to parallel Medea’s reaction to Jason’s transgressions. Is Ovid manipulating the situation to generate source material for his poem? Is Julia the mastermind behind events? Will Xenia, when pushed beyond her limits, destroy her child to punish Ovid for luring her away from her homeland? Ever confident, Ovid firmly believes that he can balance the demands of these two women against the driving

force of his artistic ambition. Eventually, however, when the soldiers escort him to Ostia for transport to exile in Tomis, Ovid realizes the folly of his arrogance.

With *The Love-Artist*, Alison joins the ranks of other contemporary writers and artists exploring the modernity of Ovid’s works: David Malouf, whose novel *An Imaginary Life* (1978) investigates what happens to the sophisticated Ovid once he is forced through exile to live among people who actually believe in their mythologies; Christoph Ransmayr, whose novel *The Last World* (English translation, 1990) chronicles the story of a young man who travels to a frontier town at the edge of a decaying empire in search of Ovid and his lost manuscripts; Michael Hofmann and James Lasdun, whose *After Ovid: New Metamorphoses* (1995) compiles the work of many contemporary poets who have used the characters of the *Metamorphoses* as inspiration for their verse; and, most recently, Mary Zimmerman, whose *Metamorphoses* (2002) has brought Ovid’s epic alive on the Broadway stage. Alison not only shapes her novel with historical accuracy and literary fidelity, but she also captures the spirit of Ovid – her tale is at once lyrical, romantic, playful, and a touch sinister.

*The Love-Artist* should appeal to those seeking insights into the Roman literary world of the early empire, and it is a perfect complement to courses at all levels that approach the ancient world through modern fiction.

**Mary C. English** (Ph.D. 1999, Boston University) is an Assistant Professor of Classics and General Humanities at Montclair State University in New Jersey and Coordinator of her department’s classical language programs. Her research interests include the comedy of Aristophanes and Latin love elegy.

## ODYSSEUS AND BILBO BAGGINS

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Bilbo must share both blame and credit. “Never laugh at live dragons,” as the proverb will say.

Bilbo’s encounter with the trolls marks the beginning of his slow climb toward heroism. In contrast, Odysseus’ victory over the Cyclops already shows his resourcefulness and his ability to get out of a tight spot. Yet it was Odysseus’ fault that he got into the Cyclops’ cave in the first place, that six of his men were eaten, and that Poseidon was mortally offended. If Bilbo has too little confidence (for this comes only with experience), then Odysseus has too much confidence, or the wrong sort. Odysseus, too, has to grow up, morally and spiritually, in order to become the hero he was meant to be – through experience and effort and the help (or opposition) of powerful gods.

*The Hobbit* is a children’s story. As such, it differs enormously from Homeric epic – and, indeed, from Tolkien’s later “epic fantasy novel,” *The Lord of the Rings* (1954/55) – in style, in scope, and in significance. Yet, the themes, methods, and deep insights of fairy tale are not, in the end, altogether so different from those of epic (see Fig. 4). The two genres influence and interpenetrate each other. Odysseus wanders off the known map into a world of fantasy, beauty, and terror. Bilbo Baggins walks over the edge of the children’s story into a larger, potentially epic-sized world and plays his part in it – a part far larger than he or Gandalf, or even their creator, realized at the time. The hobbit still has obvious limitations as a hero. He never subdues a troll or kills a dragon. Yet he does remarkably well, and that, as Tolkien might have said, is encouraging.

**Kenneth J. Reckford** received his A.B. and Ph.D. from Harvard University and taught there for three years. Since 1960, he has taught Greek and Latin literature, mostly poetry and drama, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he is Kenan Professor of Classics. He has published books on Horace and Aristophanes, has co-translated Euripides’ *Hecuba* and *Electra* (with Janet Lembke), and is currently writing a book about the Roman satirist Persius. An ardent Tolkien fan, he teaches a popular undergraduate course on “The Heroic Journey” (from the *Odyssey* to *The Lord of the Rings*).

## Film Review: *Clash of the Titans* continued from page 11

Yet another addition is made to the familiar, traditional motifs of the legend: Andromeda's suitors must answer a riddle and, if they fail, be burned alive. Moreover, the movie introduces the mighty Greek themes of god, fate, and free will. Zeus and the other deities on Olympus control the lives of the protagonists by symbolically manipulating or crushing clay figurines, representations that they can hold in their hands. Nevertheless, Zeus commands his beloved son Perseus to take control of his own life: "Find and fulfill your destiny."

In the end, Perseus rescues the enchained Andromeda from the terrifying sea monster, in this retelling, the Kraken of Norse legend (ingeniously drawn from Tenyson's haunting poem "The Kraken"). The finale showing the constellations with a glittering, delicate beauty (like a glass menagerie in the sky) epitomizes the emotional power of this film. Zeus assures us that Perseus and Andromeda will be happy together forever after and, to perpetuate the story of his courage, Perseus will be set among the stars and constellations, along with lovely Andromeda, noble Pegasus, and even vain Cassiopeia.

So enjoy this great entertainment, a magical fantasy for everyone, from innocent child to jaded philosopher.

**Robert J. Lenardon** is Professor Emeritus of Classics at The Ohio State University. He is the author of a biography, *The Saga of Themistocles*, and co-author (with Mark P. O. Morford) of *Classical Mythology*, now in its seventh edition. For the academic year 2001-02, he was Visiting Distinguished Scholar and Professor in Residence at the University of Louisville, where he taught courses on the impact of Greek and Roman mythology on music, dance, and film; he is writing a book devoted to aspects of this vast subject.

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