

CROSSING THE STYX: THE AFTERLIFE OF THE AFTERLIFE

by Margaret Drabble

Shades from the underworld walk in unexpected places in contemporary culture, and of late I've been encountering them everywhere. New moons are still named after old gods. The International Astronomical Union approves this practice and discourages astronomers from calling asteroids after their pets or their wives. Pluto's moon, discovered in 1978, was named Charon, and on All Souls Eve 2005, I heard that the discovery of two new moons of Pluto had just been announced. They have not yet been named. (Pluto is called Pluto because he is the darkest, smallest, and most remote of the planets – not really a planet at all, some have always said, and indeed in 2006 he was demoted.) Astrophysicists, positing the existence of spectral stellar bodies, have given them names such as Vulcan and Nemesis – Vulcan is an unseen and hypothetical planet, Nemesis an imaginary and deadly twin to our sun.

The names of ships echo classical themes. Erebus and Terror, last seen in Baffin Bay in August 1845, were all too aptly named, and Nelson was familiar with Agamemnon, Theseus, Medusa, and the French Pluton. Musicians are just as loyal to the classical: Charon is

also the name of a Finnish pop group, founded in 1992, Styx is an American pop group, Artemesia's Ashes is a Russian pop group, and Tartarus is an internet war game. Charon has also given his name to organizations like Charon Cemetery Management, which boasts that it has "user friendly software for the death care industry." The imagery of the ancient underworld has a long and adaptable afterlife.

And classical learning infiltrates contemporary literature in many ways. Detective and ghost stories frequently feature professors and detective-professors, epitaphs and inscriptions, Latin tags and Greek riddles. English writers of the Golden-age of detective fiction, like Dorothy Sayers and Margery Allingham, display a reader-flattering familiarity with the classics: the texts of Sayers are encrusted with epigraphs and quotations from Elizabethan and Jacobean literature and from Latin verse. In *Gaudy Night* (1935), her Oxford-based thriller, one of the clues is a poison-pen letter quoting Book 3.214-218 of the *Aeneid*, a passage about the Harpies, lines of which a full literal translation is never given, though it is easy enough from the context to pick up

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Shadow Government: HBO's Rome

by Alison Futrell

Since the box office success of *Gladiator* (2000), television networks have been trying to find a way to bring the glory and corruption of ancient Rome to the small screen. HBO's long-anticipated miniseries *Rome* (2005) succeeds hugely, presenting a richly visualized and sophisticated work that takes the ancient evidence seriously. Focusing on the period between 52 and 44 B.C., the series dramatizes the deterioration of the Republic into civil war and the establishment of autocracy under Caesar.



Fig. 1. Atia (Polly Walker) sits on the podium at Caesar's triumph with Antony (James Purefoy) in the background. *Rome*, episode 1.10 "Triumph," HBO, 2005.

From the opening credits, in which ancient mosaics and graffiti come to animated life, *Rome* is a feast for the eyes, a squalid, vivid reconstruction of the ancient ambience that has clearly paid much attention to the details of Roman material culture, as well as the small elements of social and political behavior. Best of all, the series offers a complex presentation of power relations in Rome, one in which class and the economics of empire shape competition on many levels. There is much emphasis on perception, on the management of public image to create legitimacy in the eyes of a targeted audience, whether that audience is

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a sense that these creatures are foul female monsters of unnatural habits. This poison pen letter is also a misleading clue in that it leads heroine Harriet Vane to pronounce, “I’m afraid we can’t suspect Emily or any of the scouts of expressing their feelings in Virgilian hexameters” (116) – a sentiment that neatly summarizes the social cachet or snob appeal of the Latin tag.

(At the end of this novel, addicts will recall, Lord Peter Wimsey proposes to Harriet in the words, *Placetne, magistra*, to which she replies *Placet*: this oblique approach added for us schoolgirls a deeper sexual thrill, all the more thrilling for being clothed, as Gibbon put it, in the decent obscurity of a learned language.)

One might have expected the connection between detective fiction and the classics to wane with the teaching of classics, but it persists, with great success, in novels like Donna Tartt’s *The Secret History* (1992), which achieved worldwide popularity and assumes a familiarity with Greek myth and Dionysian ecstasy. Carol Goodman’s *The Lake of Dead Languages* (2001) has a similar background of death and the schoolroom. And classical detective fiction isn’t wholly an English language obsession: in the year 2000, Cuban writer José Carlos Somoza published *The Athenian Murders* (originally in Spanish entitled *La Caverna de Las Ideas*, or *The Cave of Ideas*), which involves the mysterious death of one of Plato’s pupils, a plump detective called Heracles, and many scholarly jokes about textual misinterpretations, defective manuscripts, footnotes, and translator’s errors. The novel is presented as an authentic Greek text, written shortly after the Peloponnesian Wars, and baffled and delighted even those who knew the period.

Classicists have always been good code-breakers: at Bletchley Park, the centre of British intelligence during World War II, many Oxbridge dons were employed decoding messages about the movements of German submarines, and some of these also turned their attention to detective fiction – as did the poet Cecil Day-Lewis, translator of Virgil, writing as Nicholas Blake. On a higher plane of literary ambition we find Joyce’s *Ulysses*, with its reworking of Homer’s *Odyssey*, and its many linguistic games, puzzles, and devices. Homer and Virgil are and remain a rich source, sometimes hidden, sometimes

overtly displayed. Anthony Burgess’s first novel, *A Vision of Battlements*, written about 1949 but not published until 1965, and set in Gibraltar, is based on the journey of Aeneas – his hero is called Ennis, and Turnus becomes Turner – and in his foreword, Burgess owns, modestly, “The use of an epic framework, diminished and made comic, was not merely pedantic wantonness, nor was it solely a tribute to James Joyce; it was a tyro’s method of giving his story a backbone. . . .” Burgess, as a recent biography by Andrew Biswell revealed, was not a good Latin scholar:



*Classical learning
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at Manchester University he passed his courses in English, History, and French, but failed the subsidiary but compulsory General Latin paper. He was granted a respectable Upper Second class degree in his Finals, thanks to the grace of a *viva* (an oral examination, or interview) – so we know that his Virgil came to him in translation, and courtesy of the inspiration of Joyce.

The tradition continues: the South African born novelist Lynn Freed uses the Demeter-Persephone myth in *House of Women* (2002), a lyrical, female exploration of the story. Here, a daughter struggles to free herself from her over-protective mother, only to find herself trapped in another form of hell and sexual subjugation with her husband, the “Syrian,” whose name is Naim – an unusually anti-maternal interpretation of the myth and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. How, one wonders, would this strike a reader who did not recognise the source? Which sources are familiar to contemporary readers, and why?

A brief aside here about the editing of the 1985 edition of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* and our policy for including entries on Greek and Roman authors. The original *Oxford Companion*, edited by Paul Harvey, appeared in 1932, when male middle-

class, public-school-educated readers were far more likely to have had a classical education than now. (Latin remained an entrance requirement for the older universities until well after my day.) Harvey’s first edition was full of references to myth and fable – references which we reduced to save space for contemporary writers. But here was a dilemma. Because classical allusions were less current, that did not mean that a reference book could omit them, for one of the reasons why we need reference books is to inform ourselves about the things that our culture may have forgotten. So we aimed to include those major names that are woven through the fabric of English Literature and to try, where possible, to relate them to their influence, their major translators, and their history in the English-speaking world. We also included brief definitions of terms such as Hellenistic and Augustan, and we cross-referred to the Horatian Ode. These were not easy links or decisions (Senecan drama and Lucan are not very elegantly connected), and we were aware that while you can look up Ovid anywhere, it is not so easy to find the provenance of legendary figure Hermes Trismegistus.

The selection of classical entries was overseen by Dr. Robert Bolgar, editor of *Classical Influences on European Culture, A.D. 1500-1700* (1976), whom I never met, though I enjoyed our copious correspondence. I had one letter from him, which has given me much thought over the decades, about the survival of literature. He said that while he could speculate with reasonable confidence about which classical authors would still be familiar in two or three hundred years, at least as names and in translation, he could not begin to imagine what the human race, if it survived, would be reading in two to three thousand years.

Let us now plunge into the “underworld” of composition. When I began writing fiction I had just left university and was eager to enter what I naively thought of as the real world. Almost by chance, I hit on a chatty, first person, girlish narrative voice, which served me well through several novels. This was a voice that tried to hide erudition, to refrain from too much quotation, and to wear its learning lightly. *Ars est celare artem* was my motto. But I succeeded, perhaps, too well, and in recent years, I have felt the need for a greater connection with literary sources and structures.

In my novel *The Peppered Moth* (2000), I made conscious use of the Demeter-Persephone story, in my attempt to reach my dead mother. In writing about my mother, I felt that I was indeed crossing the Styx of hatred and ill-will and entering an underworld in search of reconciliation and enlightenment. As I say at the end of the novel, I don't think I found them. The shade of my mother is still waiting somewhere across the river.

Writing that novel was difficult, and when I began the next, *The Seven Sisters* (2002), I needed to look elsewhere. I remember thinking that if I used the conceit of a Reading Group studying Virgil I could give myself the pleasant task of re-reading the *Aeneid* and re-acquainting myself with a familiar but largely forgotten story – a task from which I could surely find sustenance. From this project, my novel took shape, and I found myself reworking the underworld myth in a lighter vein. My Virgil class sets off on a largely happy voyage in the wake of Aeneas and enjoys a splendid meal on the bird-infested shore of Lake Avernus.

Novels develop themselves and tell stories that their authors do not intend. I had intended, in *The Seven Sisters*, to describe the lasting joys of reading and to sing the praises of intellectual companionship. But I had not consciously set out to recreate a yearning for the schoolroom, or a nostalgia for the experience of Latin lessons. This backward-looking desire emerged of its own accord, as I revisited old texts and memories. It has since occurred to me that for many of us whose lives have not maintained a continuous contact with classical studies, the recollection of those old struggles with a dead language encapsulates, paradoxically, the spirit of youthful enquiry. Remembering the class room and the set texts, remembering Mrs. Jerrold or Mr. Crocker Harris – these memories convey us into our own past. Unkind critics may read regression into these sentimental journeys: others may see them as a return to an unsullied source.

For women in particular, the study of classics has had a symbolic and polemic significance. For centuries, most girls were denied what their brothers often saw as a mixed blessing – the dubious privilege of learning Latin and Greek. In George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Maggie Tulliver is jealous of her brother Tom's access to learning; she has an eagerness for knowledge which he, a practical outdoor boy, completely lacks.

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Book Review: *The Shadow Thieves*

by Sally Davis

Anne Ursu. *The Cronus Chronicles, Book I: The Shadow Thieves*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers (<http://www.simonsays.com>), 2006. Pp. 424. Hardcover \$16.95. ISBN 1-4169-0587-1.

After two prize-winning adult novels, Anne Ursu has written her first book for children (ages 9-12+). Interweaving Greek mythology with irresistible characters and a lively plot line, she delivers a sure winner for middle-school readers. The writing is snappy and informal: Ursu has been very successful in echoing the conversational tone of children that age. Her protagonists are Charlotte and her cousin Zee. The villain, Philonecron, is a power-hungry underworld rebel who commands an army of thousands and schemes to overthrow Hades. The naming of Philonecron (the corpse lover) heightens the suspense as we watch these characters act out their destinies. This additional level adds depth to the story and piques the reader's curiosity about the underlying mythology.

Charlotte is a funny, savvy, middle-schooler with red hair and freckles who "has no patience with twits or nerds"; her best friend is her foundling kitten Mew. When her English soccer-playing cousin, Zee, comes to live with her family, strange things begin to happen. A mysterious, incurable illness visits anyone whom Zee touches – something to do with missing shadows. . . . Charlotte, who usually finds school annoying and dull, gets a creepy new English teacher, Mr. Metos, who introduces an in-depth unit on the Underworld. The threads now come together: at the same time of Zee's arrival, Mr. Metos' lessons come to life, and Philonecron's minions begin to escape to the upper world and steal more shadows for his army. Charlotte and Zee must find a way to thwart Philonecron's *Shadow Thieves* and save their friends.

The heart of the story is when Charlotte and Zee pursue the thieves to the Underworld. It's not Lake Avernus in Cumae, not Taenarum in Laconia: the entrance to the Underworld is a nondescript door marked "No Admittance," hidden in plain sight, where vast crowds of people congregate – in the Mall!

The sights and sounds, the monsters and

ghosts are thoroughly Homeric and Virgilian. The dark journey takes them through black caves and tunnels where they are threatened by bats, rats, huge beetles, and live bird-skeletons. They are shocked to encounter Mr. Metos there, chained to a crag, like Prometheus, with blood on his stomach!

Charlotte is captured, then ferried by ragged, greasy Charon; she escapes, slips by Cerberus and the stinking pit of Tartarus, and heads for the Iron Gate of Hades' Palace. On to Demons, Hydras, Harpies, and the Giant Elm of False Dreams. The creepy descriptions of these Stygian depths will surely inspire our young readers to delve more deeply into the mythic underworld of the Greeks and Romans. When Charlotte finally arrives at Hades' black throne, he calls Charlotte by name. When she asks, "How do you know my name?" he responds, "I know everyone's name. You all belong to me."

The final battle between the forces of Hades, Thanatos, and Hypnos (with Charlotte and Zee as allies) against Philonecron and the *Shadow Thieves* ends in destruction: "a great crack splintered through the air – Philonecron's mouth opened, his eyes bugged . . . he tumbled backward, his bottom hitting the ground. . . . His feet started smoking, they burst into a blood-red flame. The fire traveled up his legs, and screaming, he propelled himself onto the litter – leaving a pile of ash where his legs had once been" (392).

This kind of gripping action, the lively and engaging characters, an intricate plot, and a fantastically atmospheric setting are bound to capture the imaginations of readers aged nine to twelve (and beyond). The way Ursu has placed the world of homework and soccer so close to the darkness of the Underworld creates a sense of apprehension and excitement. She succeeds in whetting the appetites of young readers for more of the story (Book II) – and for a deeper taste of ancient mythology.

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Shadow Government: HBO's *Rome*

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a badly-duped Brutus, believing Caesar's misinformation about troop morale in Gaul; or the troops themselves, following Caesar across the Rubicon when roused by the alleged manhandling of Antony by Pompey's minions; or the Senate, driven to fist-fights when Cicero surprisingly takes a pro-Pompey stance he has openly disavowed. While the corruption of power is an operating cliché for filmic Rome, here there is much nuancing of ambition. Characters discuss the implications of Caesar's new *sella curulis*, the consul's magisterial seat in the Curia, now provided with a back: Caesar declares it "much more comfortable"; for Cassius "it is a throne!" while Brutus demurs that "thrones are generally much more decorative. That is decidedly plain and chair-like" (episode 1.11, "The Spoils").

There is clear evidence throughout of the series' deliberate effort to break with some traditions of representation; creator Bruno Heller wanted to embed Rome within an ethical fabric that does not depend on Christian values. Although the publicity for the series emphasizes the subordination of morals to power, the audience is witness to strong connections drawn between polytheistic belief and behavior. Characters find solace in seeking the help of divinities; they casually interact with deities as they move through life; they experience the power of ritual: in "The Stolen Eagle," the opening episode of season one, Atia is drenched in bovine gore as she participates in the ritual of the *taurobolium*, hoping to ensure the safety of young Octavian.

Contemporary television tends to be uncomfortable with the "epic" value of antiquity, always concerned that a modern audience find some means to connect with the distant past. Focus on personal, even petty, motivations gives the grand themes of historical transformation an intimate scale. Heller and the production team acknowledge in the DVD commentary that they were determined as well to present an "everyman" perspective through the characters of Titus Pullo and Lucius Vorenus who serve as inadvertent catalysts for climactic moments in the Late Republic, creating a kind of *Forrest Gump* thread for the series.

They were also resolved to incorporate female characters in behind-the-scenes deal making, as key figures in Rome's "shadow government." Indeed, the dramatized feud between Atia and Servilia drives much of the action in the miniseries, powering developments on the "home front" and eventually leading to the assassination of Julius Caesar.

Heller, on the official Web site, rightly claims a historical basis for this emphasis on women as dramatic agents, pointing to the absence of male elites during conquest and civil war in the later Republic and to the deterioration of institutions that traditionally excluded women from the political sphere. Some of the actions of *Rome's* female characters are consistent with the customary roles documented especially for elite matrons. Women act as representatives of their families; among the patricians, this duty has a fairly explicit political significance. Atia is recruited by Caesar to renew the marital alliance between the Julian family and Pompey, following the death of Julia. Atia hosts a secret meeting of members of the senatorial Old Guard, the moderates, and Antony as Caesar's agent. Less traditional, perhaps, is Atia acting as patron during the tension of Caesar's impending arrival. Her morning *salutatio*, the regular "open house" that was a major venue for the operation of patron-client relations, is crowded with frightened businessmen from whom she extracts financial pledges in exchange for the guarantee of Julian protection in the days after the crossing of the Rubicon.

How does this shadow government operate? These clandestine rulers use the same techniques of manipulation deployed by their male counterparts. Atia shapes popular feeling with graffiti, creating public pressure on Caesar to end his relationship with Servilia. This maneuver has the secondary effect of pushing him to pursue a showdown with the Senate. Servilia's sponsorship of graffiti and pamphlets for public dis-



Fig. 2. Servilia (Lindsay Duncan) lies in the street after an attack by Atia's henchmen. *Rome*, episode 1.9 "Utica," HBO, 2005.

tribution creates an atmosphere redolent of the possibility of tyrannicide.

What are the aims of *Rome's* female rulers? On one level, maternal ambition of a traditional type fuels their efforts. This ambition is overtly connected to family duty by Servilia, who encourages Brutus to become politically engaged in emulation of the high standards in achievement set by his Junian ancestors for five hundred years. Power and status, guaranteed by public recognition, are also feminine goals, although a distinction is made here between power and politics. Atia claims (episode 1.12, "The Kalends of February") that "politics is for the men" but is very sensitive to the performance of status: who attends her dinner parties, who is seen by her side at public ceremonies – all the visible symbols of privilege (see Fig. 1). Atia's initial actions against Servilia are motivated by jealous fear that her romantic relationship with Caesar endangers Atia's status as the new first lady of Rome. Outwardly, however, Atia rails against Caesar's neglect of the Republic's best interests. Servilia conceives her vengeance initially for personal reasons: politics has caused her intense pain, as Caesar coldly justified his cutting off their relationship by claiming that he "must do what is right for the Republic" (episode 1.5, "The Ram Has Touched the Wall"). Servilia's motivation only becomes political after she, and her family through her, suffers a devastating loss of status in the shifting balance of power in Rome. This shift in purpose is demonstrated at the end of the first season's ninth episode, "Utica," when Atia's minions destroy the outward signs of Servilia's status in a public assault. Half-naked and screaming, her slaves lying

dead beside her ruined litter, Servilia is rendered quite visibly powerless (see Fig. 2). Her recovery begins when she claims an ideological motivation for her ruthless efforts to destroy Caesar; now it is she who defends the best interests of the Republic. Servilia brings intense pressure to bear on her son Brutus to fulfill his duty to his family and to Rome by taking action against the tyrant. She assembles the conspiracy against Caesar, guiding the cabal throughout the planning process, reminding them of the crucial support of the people, and making the critical connections to enable them to carry out the assassination. And it is she who, in the pre-dawn hours of the Ides, invokes the ancestors of the Junii to help Brutus in his honorable task: "Let his arm be strong, let his aim be true, and let his heart be filled with sacred rage" (episode 1.12, "The Kalends of February").

The flames behind the ancestral masks flicker in a sudden gust of wind but do not die out.

The eighth episode of the first season, "Caesarion" (the Cleopatra episode), was the last to be filmed and, in many ways, sets an interesting direction for season two. The choices made by Heller, director Steve Shill, and the production design team were meant to establish Egypt as an utterly alien culture. In combination with the series' demonstrated interest in depicting the manipulation of popular will, this representation of Egypt lays the ground work for an exploration of the contemporary construction of the Cleopatra legend as propaganda, a perspective that would certainly separate Rome's Cleopatra from the substantial corpus of previously filmed Cleopatras. Typically, cinematic treatments of the Egyptian queen buy into the pro-Octavian stance of

the major primary evidence, which emphasizes seduction and sentiment as key factors shaping the goals and motivations of Antony and Cleopatra, thus legitimizing Octavian's leadership as representative of the traditional devotion to responsible authority of the Roman male. Rome has already established the Octavian character as an articulate deconstructionist of covert political operations, capable of making explicit sneaky schemes to win the hearts and minds of the people. At the very least, one might expect the second season to heighten the usual highly-gendered spin on the Second Triumvirate by foregrounding the complex layers of power held by Rome's female characters.

The final scenes of "Caesarion" offer a foreshadowing of the proscriptions that start, historically, in 43 B.C. Cicero worries that the death of Caesar might give "that bastard Antony" free license in Rome. Antony then justifies Cicero's concerns by forcing him to his knees, promising, should Cicero ever sway from his support of the regime, to "cut off these soft pink hands and nail them to the Senate door." The interaction hints at the increasing darkness of Roman politics that we can anticipate from the second season, which is likely to continue with an ever more shadowy government. This is, after all, a time when surviving source material is littered with female agents, a time when historical women are literally and symbolically acknowledged in the rhetoric and monuments of Roman power. Indeed, it is the prominence of Atia and Servilia in the months following Caesar's assassination that likely inspired Rome's creators to select these women to drive their intriguing dramatization of the past. Atia's daughter Octavia and Cleopatra, traditional rivals for Antony's affections, are poised to emerge from the shadows in the twilight of Rome's Republic.

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Rome in Prime Time: Panel on HBO's *Rome* at the Annual Meeting of the American Philological Association in San Diego

Sponsored by the Committee on Outreach

Like *Gladiator* (2000) and *Troy* (2004), HBO's series *Rome*, which first aired in Fall 2005, has influenced contemporary audiences' understanding of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Organized by Mary-Kay Gamel (University of California, Santa Cruz), the panel, which takes place on Friday, January 5, 2007, from 8:30-11:00 a.m. in Marina Ballroom G, will address various aspects of the series. The speakers are Kristina Milnor (Barnard College) on "Do You Have an Ubuian Dictionary?" or What I Learned as a Consultant for HBO's *Rome*," Holly Haynes (The College of New Jersey) on "*Rome*'s Opening Titles and the Triumphal *Tituli* of the Late Republic," Robert Gurval (UCLA) on "Cast(igat)ing Cleopatra: HBO's *Rome* and an Egyptian Queen for the 21st Century," Gregory Daugherty (Randolph-Macon College) on "Titus Pullo of the Thirteenth," and Alison Futrell (University of Arizona) on "Not Some Cheap Murder: Caesar's Assassination." The respondent is Sandra Joshel (University of Washington). In anticipation of the second season, which will air in early 2007, we hope you will join the discussion!



Fig. 3. Titus Pullo (Ray Stevenson), on the left, with Lucius Vorenus (Kevin McKidd). Rome, episode 1.7 "Pharsalus," HBO, 2005.

WHAT'S NEW IN ANCIENT ROMAN MAGIC: RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

by Christopher A. Faraone

Like many sub-fields in ancient history and classics, the sub-field of ancient magic is often dramatically advanced by new archaeological discoveries. And, in fact, in the late 1990's and the early years of this millennium, archaeologists working on sites uncovered by new construction in downtown Mainz in Germany and in the Piazza Euclid in Rome discovered intriguing new caches of "voodoo dolls" and curses that greatly advance our knowledge of local practices in the western Roman Empire, which hitherto were generally thought to imitate closely Greek cursing rites. The site under the Piazza Euclid revealed some of the most elaborate third-fourth century A.D. magical devices ever discovered: human effigies shaped from wax or flour and then imprisoned within a nested series of three lead canisters – much like those famous Russian nesting dolls – and lead curse tablets rolled up and placed like wicks in unburned clay lamps. The curse tablets from Mainz, on the other hand, securely dated between A.D. 70 and 130, are among the earliest curse texts in Latin. These tablets were found in a shared sanctuary of Isis and the Magna Mater and provide us with important early evidence for the cult, because they invoke or make mention of the Mater, her self-castrating attendants (the *galli*), and various cult items, such as the withering tree of Attis and the sacred *cistae* of the goddess, ritual baskets that contained secret symbols of her cult. They also reveal Latin cursing formulae that use hitherto unattested magical analogies of inversion and dissolution that seem little influenced by Greek models. These two sites, then, one from the German periphery of the empire and the other from its very center, provide interesting new data on the relationship between cursing rituals and female deities (the Magna Mater and Anna Perenna) as well as an important contrast between "homegrown" Roman forms of magic and later forms of the so-called international magic that are more heavily influenced by Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish rituals and formulae.

The Fountain of Anna Perenna in Rome

In the year 2000, Dr. Marina Piranomonte, a director of the Soprinten-

denza Archeologica di Roma, and her team of archaeologists excavated a fountain inadvertently uncovered by workmen digging the foundations of a new parking garage under the Piazza Euclid, a spot near the ancient Via Flaminia just south of the Milvian Bridge. There were two surprises. The first was an altar and two inscriptions from the second century A.D., which attest to the rebuilding and dedication of the fountain "to the nymphs of Anna Perenna." Roman literary sources have a lot to say about a sanctuary of Anna Perenna near the Tiber River, where at an annual festival, men and woman drank excessively, sang ribald songs in makeshift huts, and prayed to live as many years as the number of cups of wine they drank on that day. But despite this well-documented bacchanal, Ovid (*Fasti* 3.523-696) makes it abundantly clear that Anna was a water nymph, whose name means something like "perennial flow," and historians have long suspected that she was closely connected with fertility. These suspicions were, in fact, confirmed by the cultic items found in the holding tank of the fountain: pinecones, eggs, and a small cultic cauldron of hammered copper, the first two of which point to a fertility cult.

A second surprise was waiting in the holding tank of the fountain: a series of human effigies (carefully enclosed in lead canisters) and lead curse tablets that suggest the fountain had been the site of cursing rituals. Because these effigies were triply sealed in lead and then submerged in water and mud, they have survived antiquity in amazingly good condition and offer us many new insights into

the variety of materials that might be used to construct a "voodoo doll." Indeed, prior to the discoveries in the fountain of Anna Perenna, only metal or clay examples survived outside of Egypt. And thanks to a fingerprint inadvertently left while vigorously screwing down the lid of one of the lead canisters, the archaeologists – with the help of forensic experts in the Italian police force – are fairly certain that this magician was a woman. It is, moreover, most probable that this Roman magician created most of the other "voodoo dolls" found in the well, for she seems to have used a similar technique for each ensemble: a single hand-molded figure of wax placed in a series of nested lead canisters.

The elaborate preparation of these devices clearly points to a professional witch. The lead canister with the fingerprint, for example, was the innermost of three (see Fig. 4) and was inscribed on its outside surface with the figure of a man wearing a helmet and cuirass with the names of the Egyptian gods Seth and Mnu added on to the left of him and the name Decentia to the right. Inside was found a wax effigy of a human figure (presumably of the victim – its gender is uncertain) face to face with a wax serpent, whose open mouth threatens. These two figurines are bound together by a thin metal band at the shoulders, by a metal tablet inscribed with magical characters and wrapped around the lower body, and by nails inserted at the navel and the feet. Another of the effigies from the fountain was a male modeled from wax, which had the bone of a small animal inserted down into its head and through its body. Its feet were modeled with the rest of the body and then at the end carefully severed, presumably as part of the magical operation designed to prevent the victim from walking or using his feet. A third example was molded from pure beeswax and had Greek letters inscribed all over its body. It was sealed in its canister with a piece of parchment (now crumbled) that presumably had been inscribed.

Seven figurines survive thanks to their leaden canisters: five of them depicted men, one a woman, and one is of uncertain sex. Three had small bones inserted down into the top of the head, and one of these bones is inscribed with tiny and



Fig. 4. Roma. Museo Nazionale Romano. Lead canisters from the Fountain of Anna Perenna, Inv. No. 475549. Photo courtesy Dr. Marina Piranomonte, Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma.

still illegible Latin letters. The bones are, in fact, unique among the magical devices from the ancient Mediterranean basin, and until we decipher the text inscribed on the one mentioned above, it is difficult to say whether they aimed (like the nails in the other figurine) at binding or disabling the person or whether they were designed to name the victim. Three of the effigies were placed into their canisters upside down, and a similar inversion is implied by the name “Leontius” inscribed upside down on the outside surface of the innermost of three concentric containers. This kind of magical analogy is as yet unattested in Greek magic, but parallels from other Latin magical texts (including the ones from Mainz discussed below) suggest that the goal of this inversion was to disorient the victim.

In the same fountain, archaeologists also found lead curse tablets of the more usual type, which were inscribed simply with their victims’ names. Of special note, however, are a handful of inscribed lead and copper tablets that had been rolled up and inserted into the mouth of unburned clay lamps, as if they were lamp wicks. Although badly corroded, some of the lead examples have been unrolled and read. One, for example, is inscribed on one side with a male figure labeled both on his body and above his head with the name “Antonius.” Another lamp held three very small lead tablets, each apparently designed to curse a man described as “Victor, whom Sexta bore,” a common way to identify the victim more securely and avoid the confusion with other men of the same name. The most elaborately produced tablet deciphered so far, however, had been deposited directly into the waters of the holding tank. This tablet (see Fig. 5) was apparently engraved in two separate stages: first the figures, designs, and magical symbols were laid out carefully on the roughly square tablet, and then the Latin text was added, in some places squeezed in between the designs.

The generally circular design of the tablet is created by the bodies and heads of four snakelike animals, two converging towards the middle of the upper margin and two others, in mirror reflection to the first two, converging upside down towards the middle of the lower margin. At the center of the tablet surrounded by another diamond shape there is a small cartoon-like figure who is perhaps meant to represent the victim. Five magical symbols (letter-shapes with little ringlets placed on their

extremities) are placed above the design and seven below. On either side of the diamond-shaped lozenge we find two vaguely circular figures, one labeled *dextru* (“right”) and the other *sinestru* (“left”). The curse-text itself suggests that these circular figures represent the eyes of the victim, who is to be blinded:

O sacred, holy FUSAPAERIS and *angeli*, because I ask and beg you <by> your great *virtus*, take away, completely take away the eye, the right one and left one of Sura, who was born from an accursed womb. May this happen, I ask and beg you <by> your great *virtus*.

Because this curse is initially addressed to some plural feminine deities, the editor is probably correct in assuming that the third word in the first line (FUSAPAERIS) and the term *angeli* both describe the nymphs who live in the fountain and who are apparently called upon to take away the eyesight of a man named Sura.

This curse, along with the elaborate design with the converging snakes and elaborate magical symbols, was presumably copied from a magical handbook. With its deferential tone (“I ask, I beg”) and the piling up of titles (“O sacred, holy FUSAPAERIS”), it seems to resemble a form of cursing called “prayers for justice” that was popular throughout the Roman Empire. Such curses usually invoke deities as judges to punish an enemy of the author, who is alleged to have committed crimes and misdeeds. The other texts and the “voodoo dolls” from the fountain of Anna Perenna, however, are closer in form and intent to the less complicated binding curses, which seek to restrain, confuse, or nail down rivals or enemies by binding, inverting, or imprisoning their effigies or names in a more straightforward form of sympathetic magic.

The Sanctuary of Magna Mater in Mainz

The lead tablets from the sanctuary of Magna Mater in Mainz also show both forms of cursing, but here the prayers for justice appear in far greater numbers. This illustrates a well-established connection between prayers for justice and powerful female deities, like the Magna Mater, an Anatolian goddess, who was originally brought to Rome in 204 B.C. but maintained her eastern rites and attendants. The Mainz curse tablets were found in 1999-2000 along with three “voodoo dolls,” when an



Fig. 5. Roma. Museo Nazionale Romano. Lead tablet from the Fountain of Anna Perenna, Inv. No. 475567. Photo courtesy Dr. Marina Piranomonte, Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma.

older block of buildings in the commercial center of the city was demolished to make way for new construction. A group of archaeologists, led by Dr. Marion Witteyer, excavated the area and discovered a sanctuary dedicated (as inscriptions show) to both Isis and the Magna Mater. Most of the lead tablets were deposited between A.D. 70 and 130 in pits used for the burnt sacrifice of animals. Soon after that date, the pits were carefully covered with rows of roof tiles and abandoned. Melted and partially melted lead tablets were also found in these pits, suggesting that fire played a crucial role in the magical rites – a fact that is corroborated by the following text, which seems to refer to some kind of fiery ritual (translation by J. Blänsdorf):

I hand over (to you), and, observing all ritual form, ask that you require from Publius Curtius and Piperion the return of the goods that have been entrusted to them. Also . . . Placida and Sacra, her daughter: may their limbs melt, just as this lead is to melt, so that [thereby] death shall come upon them.

Here the petitioner asks a divinity, presumably the Magna Mater, to force Publius Curtius and Piperion to return property that had been deposited with them, but he or she also performs a ritual of sympathetic magic designed to make Placida and Sacra melt “just as this lead is melting,” clearly a reference to the heat of the fire-pit in which this tablet was found.

The three “voodoo dolls” recovered from other spots in the sanctuary were all molded roughly from clay and badly fired. Two poorly preserved examples

A Pair of Pieces from Book Four of "The Gardens of Flora Baum"

by Julia Budenz

IRIS

December 14, 2003

Il. 15.168-173

I raise my gaze from page to pane.
The same snow flies beneath the rush
And push of North Wind, from Clear Sky
Born loud wild child. Shall I not see
The messenger, herself a god,
Between great god and great god fly?

DIARY OF FLORA BAUM

December 15, 2003

Consualia

It has been done and better done,
they said.
Has it been done in this millennium,
I countered, and been done thus,
unprovoked,
Unwilled as unexpected, totally
Unforced by me, upon me wholly forced?
I did not will the storm that whitened
windows,
The tempest that came tapping on the
glass,
Blasting down Massachusetts Avenue,
Paving a path of candor in the dark.
I had been deep in lines of signs, scenes,
sounds.
The words I read came true when I
looked up.
If sleet could tap, could not the goddess
rap,
Leaving for me the marvel of her mark?

Julia Budenz was born in New York City and lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Since 1969 she has been writing a poem in five books entitled "The Gardens of Flora Baum," which is now about 1,800 pages in length. All of Books One and Two, most of Book Three, and parts of Books Four and Five have been completed, and numerous portions have been published in journals, anthologies, and separate volumes.

WHAT'S NEW IN ANCIENT ROMAN MAGIC: RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

continued from page 7

were discovered in a second century A.D. well, where they had been deposited when it was still in use as a well. The third, however, is nicely preserved: it had been placed in the uppermost layer of a garbage ditch along with a small rolled-up lead curse tablet and a small pot that can be dated to the second century A.D. All three items were then carefully covered with hay. The effigy itself is not inscribed, but the lead tablet seems to have been a label of sorts, as it contains only the name "Trutmo Florus, son of Clitmo," who is presumably the object of the curse. The names of both father and son are Celtic, but the son seems to have adopted "Florus" as a second, Roman name. Prior to firing, the doll had been pierced by a thin nail or needle in a half dozen places, including the eye, throat, chest, stomach, and anus. Presumably one goal of the magical operation was to pin down or inhibit these parts of the victim's body. After it was fired, however, the image was carefully broken in half and laid down with one half facing upwards and the other facing downwards, in an attempt, no doubt, to confound the victim by mixing him up, much the same as the inverted "voodoo dolls" from the fountain of Anna Perenna.

It is the lead curse tablets from Mainz that provide the most insight into the magical rituals performed there; inscribed by different persons of greatly varied literacy and handwriting, they offer us an excellent cross-section of the needs and goals of the people who visited the sanctuary. One of the best-preserved examples provides another good example of a prayer for justice (translation by J. Blänsdorf):

I entreat you, Mistress Mater Magna, to take revenge for me regarding the goods of Florus, my husband, of which Ulattius Severus has defrauded me. Just as I write this in reverse, so may everything be reversed for him, whatever he does, whatever he attempts. As salt (melts in) water, so may it happen to him. In the matter of his theft from me of the goods of Florus, my husband, I entreat you, Mistress Mater Magna, to take revenge for me about it.

In this text, the wife or widow of a man named Florus pleads for the goddess to take revenge on a man who has stolen some of her husband's property. And as

in the curse against Publius Cutius and Piperion, the author has two parallel strategies: she asks the goddess to intervene directly and take revenge, but she also uses two wish formulas that could also work independently, one based on the analogy of reversed letters and the other on melting salt. In her actual execution of the tablet, however, the wife of Ulattius apparently forgot to reverse the letters!

This is not the case with the next curse (translation by J. Blänsdorf):

In this tablet I set down inverted Quintus, who leads his life to a bad end. Just as the *galli* or the priests of Bellona castrate or cut themselves so his good name, reputation, ability should be cut off. Just as they are not numbered among men, so let he not be either. Just as he cheated me, so may holy Mater Magna cheat him and reject everything. Just as the tree will wither in the sanctuary, so may reputation, good name, fortune, ability to act wither in his case. I hand him over to you, Atthis [Attis], Lord, so that you may revenge me upon him, so that within a year (may) turn . . . his death . . .

Like the preceding example, this prayer for justice was apparently placed before the Magna Mater and her consort Attis and uses a variety of devices to achieve its end. The most remarkable are a series of unique magical similes that are drawn from the worship of the Magna Mater. The *galli* are the priests of the goddess, who along with the priests of the goddess Bellona, ritually castrated themselves when they became priests. Their castration provides a model for the desired action of the prayer: so, too, may his good name, reputation, ability be cut off. The next simile – "just as the tree will wither in the sanctuary" – likewise uses an annual temple ritual as a focus for punishment: each year, a live tree was carried into the temple compound and allowed to wither and die. This prayer, unlike the one made by the wife of Ulattius, seems directed primarily to Attis, the goddess' consort, who alone is directly asked to intervene. This may, in fact, have been a matter of gender, for as the editor points out, this tablet was written in classical Latin by an individual with considerable education, who uses legal terms and constructions and the stylistic devices of Roman

rhetoric. It was likely, then, that he was a man.

These recent discoveries of so-called “black magic” at Mainz and Rome add much valuable information about how magic was practiced “on the ground” during the Roman Empire. The materials from Mainz are especially helpful, because they are dated so precisely between A.D. 70 and 130. Thus they are the earliest examples of curse tablets inscribed in Latin, and it is worth noting that they use magical analogies that probably reflect forms of local Roman or Western European magic that is still untouched by the Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish influences that characterize the “international style” of magic found elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin at this time. There is, moreover, no sign of the professional magician at work in Mainz. The three “voodoo dolls” were crudely fashioned from clay and badly fired, and the variations in the handwriting, spelling, and grammar of the inscribed tablets show clearly that they were inscribed by a number of individuals. The materials retrieved from the fountain of Anna Perenna, on the other hand, date at least two centuries later and show clear signs of the “international style”: the names of Egyptian gods Seth and Mnu, mysterious magical symbols, and the nonsensical use of Greek letters. The close similarities in the preparation of the effigies and their triply-nested containers point to the work of a professional magician, who was probably working from a handbook.

Further Reading and Information

The Anna Perenna Curses:

M. Piranomonte, “Religion and Magic at Rome: The Fountain of Anna Perenna,” and J. Blänsdorf, “Types and Texts of the Lead Tablets of Anna Perenna,” in R. Gordon and F. Marco, eds., *Magical Practice in the Latin West: Papers from the International Conference held at the University of Zaragoza, 30th Sept. - 1st Oct. 2005*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World (Leiden 2006), forthcoming.

Many of these items are on display in the Epigraphical Museum at Rome (across from Termini Station).

The Curses from Mainz:

J. Blänsdorf, “The Curse Tablets from the Sanctuary of Isis and Magna Mater in Mainz,” and M. Witteyer, “Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls from Mainz. The Archaeological Evidence for Magical Practices in the Sanctuary of

National Endowment for the Humanities Grants \$650,000 to American Philological Association to Build Endowment for Classics Research and Teaching

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded to the American Philological Association (APA) a challenge grant of \$650,000 to build an Endowment for Classics Research and Teaching. The endowment will ensure the continued operation of the American Office of *l'Année philologique*, the bibliographic database used by classicists throughout the world as a research tool.

The grant supports not only the advancement of sophisticated and accessible research and teaching resources in classics, but also the development of the next generation of inspired teachers of classics and classical languages at all levels. The grant reviewers, according to NEH Chairman Bruce Cole, “noted that the American Office of *l'Année philologique* serves a world-wide constituency that goes far beyond the field of classics into other areas of the humanities. Panelists also praised the American Philological Association for designing a challenge grant program that will accommodate future developments in educational technologies.” In this time of rapid technological change, the endowment will be a flexible tool, providing essential scholarly and teaching resources to all classicists, whatever those needs are and whenever they arise.

The APA will collaborate with other forward-looking technological projects in classics to create and support The American Center for Classics Research and Teaching on the base of the American Office. Anticipated projects of the Center will include the development of programs that support the next generation of classics teachers and scholars, such as summer institutes, study/travel opportunities, innovative educational initiatives, and research and publication support; a digital portal providing sophisticated, accessible classics content from a variety of digital sources; and public programming that brings the best and most compelling classics scholarship to communities.

The APA will create a special section on its web site (www.apaclassics.org) to include information about the Endowment, plans for the American Center, and the Campaign. We will be communicating frequently with our colleague organizations throughout the classics field as we move forward with this campaign. We are eager for everyone’s ideas and participation as we take this important step for classics. Further information is available from:

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Isis and Magna Mater,” “Proceedings of the Symposium on Professional Sorcerers and their Wares in Imperial Rome (November 12, 2004, Rome)” in *MHNH: Revista Internacional de Investigación sobre Magia y Astrología Antiguas* 5 (2005), 11-26 and 105-124.

J. Blänsdorf, “Magical Methods in the *Defixiones* from the Sanctuary of Isis and Mater Magna in Mainz,” in R. Gordon and F. Marco, eds., *Magical Practice in the Latin West: Papers from the International Conference held at the University of Zaragoza, 30th Sept. - 1st Oct. 2005*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World (Leiden 2006), forthcoming.

Items from the Sacred Site of Isis – Magna Mater are on display in Mainz in

the presentation area called the Taberna Archaeologica.

Christopher A. Faraone is the Frank C. and Gertrude M. Springer Professor of Classics and Humanities at the University of Chicago. He is co-editor (with D. Dodd) of Initiation in Ancient Greek Rituals and Narratives: New Critical Perspectives (2003) and (with L. McClure) of Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World (2005), and author of Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual (1992) and Ancient Greek Love Magic (1999). He has just completed a book on archaic Greek elegy.

IT WAS THEIR DESTINY: ROMAN POWER AND IMPERIAL SELF-ESTEEM

by Carl Rubino

At the climactic moment of *Return of the Jedi* (1983), the last film of George Lucas' original *Star Wars* trilogy, the Emperor utters some telling words to Luke Skywalker. "It is your destiny," he says, meaning that the young man is fated to serve the Empire and its Emperor (who, I like to think, resembles no one more than Tiberius as the historian Tacitus imagined him). Others in the film – Luke's father Darth Vader, the Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi, and his tutor Yoda – also speak of his destiny. Luke Skywalker, the hero of the trilogy, is clearly someone who is haunted by destiny.

"It is your destiny." Like Luke, young men and boys of the Roman ruling class must have heard much the same words from their fathers, grandfathers, teachers, and, perhaps especially, from their mothers, since the notion of destiny played an essential role in their lives and the lives of their families. Their destiny, like that of their ancestors before them, was to serve and advance the fortunes of Rome and its ruling class.

Destiny (*fatum*), Roman destiny in particular, is the central theme of the great Roman epic, Vergil's *Aeneid*, written during the years 29-19 B.C., in the period following the political transformation of Rome engineered by the emperor Augustus. Like Luke, Aeneas, the poem's hero, is also someone who is burdened by destiny. Indeed, Aeneas is characterized in this way as early as the poem's second line, where he is described as *fato profugus*, "an exile by destiny." At one of the epic's climactic moments, near the end of the pageant of Roman heroes that Aeneas is privileged to witness during his underworld journey, his father informs him of his mission as a Roman (*Aeneid* 6.851-853):

Your mission, Roman, is to rule the world.
These will be your arts: to establish peace,
To spare the humbled, and to conquer the proud.

(translated by Stanley Lombardo, 2005)

The Romans, the most powerful people on earth, are destined to be rulers of the earth. Anchises' words echo those spoken

earlier in the poem by Jupiter, the king and father of gods and men: for the Romans, Jupiter says, he has "set no limits in time and space" and has given them "eternal empire, world without end" (*Aeneid* 1.278-279).

Vergil thus presents an idealized version of the message that had been repeated to elite Roman males since the early days of the Republic. Young men of the Roman ruling class and those aspiring to join it were expected to internalize the notion that it was their duty to win glory in the service of Rome and its imperial longings.

There are, however, some lines of Horace (*Odes* 3.6.17-20 and 45-48), written during the very years in which his friend Vergil was at work on the *Aeneid*, that seem to brand the Romans as failures:

Ours is a lineage that knows not the law:
marriages, children, hearths defiled,
And from this very source come all catastrophes,
vanquishing our people and our very earth.

And a bit further on, at the poem's end:

What has Time left intact? Lesser than their own,
our parents bore children lesser still,
and ours are lesser still than we, and theirs
than they. And theirs again than they . . .

(translated by Richard Howard, 2002)

These lines suggest that the Romans were not good enough to fulfill their exalted destiny, even though they thought it inexorable. Although they were the masters of many peoples, the Romans are condemned for being profoundly unworthy of their appointed role. All throughout his "Roman Odes" (3.1-6), Horace reminds his readers how much better things were back in the distant past when Romans, then supremely virtuous, struggled and succeeded, defeating Carthage, the mortal foe, and making Rome the dominant force in the Mediterranean world (a message also conveyed by the historian Sallust in his accounts of the war with Jugurtha and the conspiracy of Catiline). But perhaps these unhappy thoughts

were expressed most poignantly at the end of the next century, when Rome was reaching the apex of its imperial power, by Tacitus, who was writing about the Britons and the Germans and their inevitable subjugation at the hands of Rome. These people, Tacitus implies more than once, possess the very virtues that once marked the Romans. The Chauca, whom he describes as "the noblest people of Germany," are noted for their uprightness: "Untouched by greed or lawless ambition, they dwell in quiet seclusion, never provoking a war, never robbing or plundering their neighbors" (*Germania* 35). Among the Germans, Tacitus observes, the "marriage code . . . is strict, and no feature of their morality deserves higher praise." German women "live uncorrupted by the temptations of public shows or the excitements of banquets," and "no one in Germany finds vice amusing, or calls it 'up-to-date' to seduce and be seduced" (18-19). Harold Mattingly, whose translation of the *Germania* and *Agricola* (1970) I am using here, sums it up well: "Tacitus unmistakably contrasts the virtues of the Germans, which recall the uncorrupted morals of old Rome, with the degeneracy of the empire" (Introduction, 25).

Tacitus is startlingly frank about the failings of his generation:

We have indeed set up a record of subservience. Rome of old explored the utmost limits of freedom; we have plumbed the depths of slavery, robbed as we are . . . even of the right to exchange ideas in conversation. We should have lost our memories as well as our tongues had it been as easy to forget as to be silent. (*Agricola* 2)

The *Agricola*, as Mattingly notes, is marked by "belief in Rome, in Roman destiny, and in the Roman ways and standards of life," but there is also "a note of tragedy in the thought that this ideal has to live in an unfriendly world, in conditions which make it impossible for it to achieve perfection" (Introduction, 17-18). I would venture a bit further: Tacitus is haunted by the sense that the Romans will never be able to live up to their imperial mission.

At the same time, Tacitus can be brutally unsentimental about the fact

that the Britons and Germans alike are doomed to subjugation. Telling the story of a German tribe that was nearly annihilated by its neighbors, he notes that the Romans were permitted to witness the slaughter:

More than 60,000 were killed, not by Roman swords or javelins, but – more splendid still – as a spectacle before our delighted eyes. Long, I pray, may foreign nations persist, if not in loving us, at least in hating one another; for destiny is driving our empire upon its appointed path, and fortune can bestow on us no better gift than discord among our foes. (*Germania* 33)

Although the insensitivity and cruelty of such sentiments may seem shocking to us, they clearly demonstrate how superior the Romans felt to nations and ethnic groups less fortunate than themselves.

Tacitus' observations about the Britons and Germans bring to mind the writings of Thomas Jefferson, who echoes Rousseau in being sentimental and idealistic about the "savages" both of them felt were doomed by the inexorable advance of European civilization. Jefferson, whose *Notes on the State of Virginia* exhibit a kind of melancholic idealism about Native Americans (note his replies to Queries 6 and 11), could also be ruthless in insisting that they accept the inevitability of their subjugation. Writing to William Henry Harrison, the territorial governor of Ohio, Jefferson, here speaking as President of the United States, offers the following:

our settlements will gradually circumscribe and approach the Indians, and they will in time either incorporate with us as citizens of the United States, or remove beyond the Mississippi. The former is certainly the termination of their history most happy for themselves; but, in the whole course of this, it is essential to cultivate their love. As to their fear, we presume that our strength and their weakness is now so visible that they must see we have only to shut our hand to crush them, and that all our liberalities to them proceed from motives of pure humanity only. Should any tribe be fool-hardy enough to take up the hatchet at any time, the seizing the whole country of that tribe, and driving them across the Mississippi, as the only condition of peace, would be an example to others, and a furtherance of our final consolidation. (*Writings*, ed. by Merrill D. Peterson, 1984, 1118-1119.)

As the historian Joseph Ellis puts it,
continued on page 19

Did You Know...

Sir Elton John's middle name is Hercules. Born Reginald Dwight, John changed his name in 1967. He chose Hercules, not because of the Greek hero, but because of a horse named Hercules in the British comedy series *Steptoe and Son* (the model for the American comedy series *Sanford and Son*).

In the movie ***Akeelah and the Bee***, Akeelah succeeds because she is urged by a college professor (Laurence Fishburne) to study Latin, Greek, and French (see Fig. 6). In the words of one review, the movie "makes studying Latin-root flashcards seem like a cool after-school activity"! For the importance of Latin and Greek at the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee, see Judith Hallett's article in issue 4.1 of *Amphora* (archived at www.apaclassics.org/outreach/amphora/2005/Amphora4.1.pdf).



Fig. 6. English professor Dr. Larabee (Laurence Fishburne) coaches Akeelah in *Akeelah and the Bee* (Lions Gate Films, 2006).

Charles Mingus, one of the great American jazz artists, entitled his 1959 album (recently re-mastered and re-released) *Mingus Ah Um*, a play on the *-us, -a, -um* vocabulary listing of first and second declension Latin adjectives.

The Mask of Atreus, by A. J. Hartley, is a murder mystery connecting Atreus and Nazis. The story, which begins in a museum in Atlanta, is a disturbing look at the black market through a fictionalized account of the journey of the treasures that Heinrich Schliemann removed from the site of Troy and the rumors concerning the fate of Hitler's body.

C. Jack Ellis, mayor of Macon, Georgia, declared September 9 to be "**William Sanders Scarborough Day**" to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of his death. Scarborough (1852-1926) was author of a Classical Greek textbook *First Lessons in Greek* (1881), president of Wilberforce University, and the third African American member of the APA. For more about Professor Scarborough, see *The Autobiography of William Sanders Scarborough: An American Journey From Slavery to Scholarship* (2004), edited by Professor Michele Valerie Ronnick (Wayne State University). On November 2, 2006, Mayor Ellis presented Professor Ronnick with the key to the city at the Georgia Literary Festival.

APA SPEAKERS BUREAU

The APA maintains a roster of enthusiastic speakers who are available to address a wide variety of audiences – civic groups, professional societies, library and other reading groups, middle schools and secondary schools, junior and senior colleges, universities, and many other organizations.

The Speakers Bureau can be found by going to the APA Web site at www.apaclassics.org and clicking on Outreach, listed on the left hand side of the screen of the home page. Under Outreach, you will find the Speakers Bureau. The Bureau lists e-mail addresses of dozens of speakers as well as descriptions of the talks they are prepared to give. A glance through the topics described there will make clear the breadth of presentations that are available, from Medical Practices in Pompeii and the Roman Empire to Women's Letters from Ancient Egypt.

The Reimagined Getty Villa

by Mary Louise Hart

The Getty Villa in Malibu, California, reopened on January 28, 2006 after undergoing nine years of renovation by the Boston architectural firm of Machado and Silvetti and the reinstallation of the antiquities collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

The collections, buildings, and programs of the new Villa site support its mission as a center for the study of ancient Greek, Roman, and Etruscan culture. The Villa building housing the antiquities collection lies at the heart of the site (see Fig. 7). Originally opened to the public in 1974, J. Paul Getty's Villa is a replica in plan of the first-century Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum, which was buried by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in A.D. 79. The Malibu site was initially designed and built to display and store the entirety of Getty's collections. Antiquities filled the ground floor, while sculpture, paintings, decorative arts, manuscripts, and photography were installed in light-protected period rooms on the upper floor. In 1997, the post-antique collections were moved to their new home in the galleries of The Getty Center in Los Angeles.

At the Getty Villa in Malibu, new and expansive light-filled galleries are now installed exclusively with the antiquities collection (see Fig. 8). Inside, walls were removed, and windows and ceilings were opened to the sun and views of the Santa Monica Mountains and Pacific Ocean. In order to provide maximum flexibility for the display of the variety of artifacts contained in the galleries, which range from heavy marbles to delicate glass, new walls were braced with art-support systems. The designs of intricate terrazzo floors incorporate seismically protective anchor points for isolator-base pedestals supporting marble statuary and display vitrines.

The antiquities collection is now installed thematically. On the ground floor, the large gallery *Dionysos and the Theater*, with its dramatic Pompeian-red Venetian plaster walls, flanks the Atrium, together with the gallery devoted to Gods and Goddesses, which is plastered in Olympian blue. The *cubicula*, small rooms surrounding the Atrium that are modeled after Roman bedrooms, are installed with cases devoted to

terracotta, marble, silver, bronze, and glass artifacts. The refurbished and lavish *Room of Colored Marbles*, original to the 1974 Villa, approximates in its decoration the opulent marble rooms that were fashionable in luxury villas such as the Villa dei Papiri and holds the Getty's collection of ancient metalwork. This small room adjoins the Basilica, another patterned-marble room designed after Roman architectural plans and installed with marble sculpture. Two galleries – *Mythological Heroes* and *Stories of the Trojan War* – are also located on the ground floor, as are two educational galleries. The *Timescape Room* introduces visitors to the styles and chronologies of antiquity, and the *Family Forum* provides learning activities for families.

The *Temple of Herakles* lies on axis with the Inner and Outer Peristyles (see Fig. 9). The renovation of this small circular gallery included replacing the 1974 dome in order to create, in effect, a miniature Pantheon. The room, with its intricate circular pavement in Numidian yellow and dark gray Lucullan marble (copied from the original Villa dei Papiri) and its new dome, was originally intended to display Mr. Getty's prized acquisition, the Lansdowne Herakles. After over a decade spent in the Getty's conservation labs followed by display at the Getty Center in Los Angeles during the Villa's renovation, Herakles has finally come home.

The most remarkable visible change to the Villa building itself was the construction of a large staircase at the east side of the building. Replacing what had been gal-

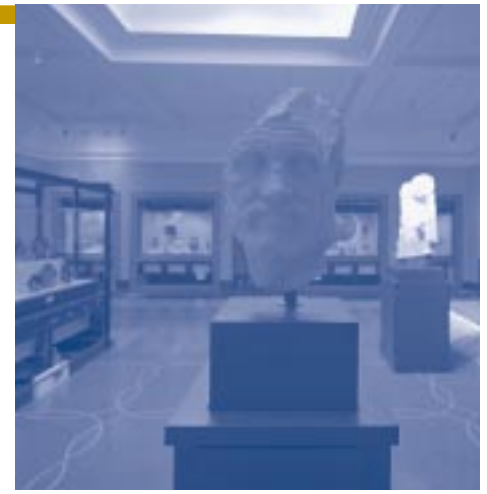


Fig. 8. Men in Antiquity gallery in the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Villa in Malibu. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © 2005 Richard Ross with the courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

leries on both floors, the wide staircase of carved Spanish *amarillo Triana* marble provides an impressive ascent to the new upper floor, framing a view of the East Garden on the east-west axis of the Villa. Visitors ascending the staircase arrive at a second floor, which has been completely reconceived from its former design and installation. Everything is new: the terrazzo floors, the skylights, the wood-framed windows with views of the nearby mountains and the Inner Peristyle below, the Getty Guide interactive resource room, and the reading room with its view to the Outer Peristyle and Pacific Ocean, in addition to installations of ancient art. The prehistoric collections are installed in the permanent gallery adjacent to the marble staircase. The major galleries on this floor are *Ath-*



Fig. 7. The Outer Peristyle at the reimagined Getty Villa in Malibu, California, September 8, 2005. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © 2005 Richard Ross with the courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

letes, Men in Antiquity, and Women and Children in Antiquity, which together include some of the most important sculptural installations in the museum's collection. There is also a small gallery containing Egyptian artifacts and, overlooking the ocean, an intimate room where visitors can closely examine selected small objects from the Villa's collections of bronzes, gems, coins, ambers, and ivories, as well as Attic vase fragments – this is the smallest and the most densely installed gallery in the museum. Two wings of the corridor encircling the Inner Peristyle gallery have been installed with *Animals and Funerary Sculpture*; the other two connecting corridors adjoin Changing Exhibition galleries on the north and east sides of the building.

Because the Villa's gallery spaces open onto the outdoors as well as other galleries, visitors are often inspired to move outside by an alluring fountain, garden, or view. On the upper floor, bronze doors open onto balconies providing dramatic views of the Outer Peristyle, Pacific Ocean, and plaza area. Ground floor galleries on the east, south, and west sides provide access to redesigned and newly replanted gardens. The East Garden is a favorite of visitors, with its plantings of acanthus and sycamore trees and its large shell and mosaic fountain copied from one discovered in the House of the Large Fountain in Pompeii. Garden views of the Inner and Outer Peristyles have become emblematic of the Villa; these garden spaces have always been favorite strolling places for visitors, as they were for the original inhabitants of the Villa dei Papiri. They have been reinstalled with bronze replicas of the original garden sculptures now in the collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples. The illusionistic wall paintings of the north wall of the Outer Peristyle have been repainted to conform to the changed requirements of these new spaces.

The entrance to the Villa, originally located at the far end of the Outer Peristyle, has been shifted to the historically-accurate Roman entrance at the Atrium. The visitor reaches this entrance after walking along a high path framing architectural and garden views between plantings of oleander and olive trees. The idea that the Villa could be perceived as an artifact to be viewed from above, like the ruins at Herculaneum, is a concept the architects developed during the



Fig. 9. Temple of Herakles gallery, with alternating triangles of Numidian yellow and africano or dark gray Lucullan marble, at the Getty Villa in Malibu, September 29, 2005. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © 2005 Richard Ross with the courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

design process. The Villa's new front door is faced by the semi-circular Lawrence and Barbara Fleischman Theater, where ancient plays are produced each year (see Fig. 10).

A suite of new buildings and facilities was incorporated into the overall site design to improve the visitor's experience at the Villa. An Entry Pavilion has been built adjacent to a new parking structure. Here, visitors begin their ascent to the Museum Path by means of stairs or elevators that take them through a terrain constructed of levels of banded concrete, aggregate, and alabaster, recalling the strata of an excavation. The walk along the path provides views of the Villa and its Herb Garden below. The first view of the combined architectural program comes at the end of this path, which leads visitors to the upper tier of the Fleischman Theater.



Fig. 10. View of the J. Paul Getty Museum and the new outdoor classic theater at the Getty Villa. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © 2005 Richard Ross with the courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust. © 2006 J. Paul Getty Trust.

From this point, visitors can descend to the Museum and its new Store and Auditorium. The Café, which provides views of the Villa and Pacific Ocean, lies at the top tier of theater seats. Just beyond it, a small campus of three interconnected buildings was constructed in order to incorporate conservation labs, offices used for scholarly programming, and the UCLA/Getty Conservation Institute Masters Program in the Conservation of Ethnographic and Archaeological Material. J. Paul Getty's 1946 Spanish-style Ranch House has been transformed into curatorial and scholars' offices and is the home of the Getty Research Institute's Villa Scholars Program. Scholarly and curatorial research is supported by a 15,000-volume library.

Through exhibitions, conservation, scholarship, research, and public programs, the reimagined Getty Villa serves a varied audience interested in the arts and cultures of ancient Greece, Rome, and Etruria. Admission to the Villa is always free, and information about tickets, hours, and events may be found on the Getty Villa Web site at <http://www.getty.edu/visit>.

Mary Louise Hart (mhart@getty.edu) is Assistant Curator of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum Villa. Dr. Hart, an art historian, specializes in ancient Athenian vase painting and iconography. Since joining the museum in 1997, she has also become a specialist in ancient and contemporary theater, developing the Getty Villa's program for the performance of ancient Greek and Roman drama. A co-curator of the recent "Colors of Clay" exhibition, she is currently curating the exhibition, "The Art of Ancient Greek Theater," which will open at the Getty Villa in the summer of 2008.

CROSSING THE STYX: THE AFTERLIFE OF THE AFTERLIFE

continued from page 3

Poor Tom, described by his teacher as “rather a rough cub,” is appalled by Latin Grammar and Euclid. When his clever little sister goes to see him at Mr. Stelling’s small establishment, she tells him she will help him with his Euclid, to which he retorts:

“You help me, you silly little thing! . . . I should like to see you doing one of my lessons! Why, I learn Latin too! Girls never learn such things. They’re too silly.”

“I know what Latin is very well,” said Maggie confidently. “Latin’s a language. There are Latin words in the dictionary. There’s bonus, a gift.”

“Now, you’re just wrong there, Miss Maggie!” said Tom, secretly astonished. “You think you’re very wise. But ‘bonus’ means good, as it happens – bonus, bona, bonum.”

“Well, that’s no reason why it shouldn’t mean ‘gift,’” said Maggie stoutly. “It may mean several things – almost every word does.”

Virginia Woolf, like Maggie Tulliver, was also jealous of her brothers and their university education and struggled competitively to learn Greek and Latin, attending lectures at King’s College London, then studying privately with tutor Janet Case, with whom she read Aeschylus: writing to a friend in February 1905, Woolf boasts, “I have taken a plunge into tough Greek, and that has so much attraction for me – Heaven knows why – that I don’t want to do anything else. I am really rather good at Greek.” The legendary Jane Harrison (1850–1928), lecturer in classical archaeology at Newnham College, Cambridge, appears briefly in *A Room of One’s Own*, and the sparrows that sing to poor Septimus in *Mrs. Dalloway* sing in Greek, in “voices prolonged and piercing in Greek words, from trees in the meadow of life beyond a river where the dead walk, how there is no death . . .” The teaching of classics was a feminist issue, an issue of family politics, family dynamics.

The role and status of the classics teacher in contemporary fiction raise yet more questions. In my novel, *The Ice Age* (1977), I was trying to capture the gloomy, displaced mood of post-imperial Britain after the oil crisis of 1973, and I discover that I have there created a semi-tragic character, a poet and teacher of classics called Linton, who feels he has been washed up in a drying pond. It is an unflattering portrait: Linton, once

“a bright boy, a pretty boy, a scholar, a poet and a classicist . . . married to a pretty girl, with pretty children, slender, with curling tendrils of vine about his classic forehead” has grown plump, bitter, and censorious, and spends his time berating his old friends about falling standards in the academic world and the menace of trendy school teachers, and beat poets, and pub poets, and (what we would now call) performance poets. He believed there is “an anti-clerical conspiracy, an intellectual-lobby in high and low places in the educational world”: his students, he says, have been “appallingly badly taught . . . none of them had any solid grounding in grammar, none of them could write a prose . . . they had all been corrupted by vague ‘classical studies’ and thought that if they knew a few Greek myths and could recognise a piece of Ovid or Homer and make some approximate sense of it, that that would do. . . . Poor Linton had had the historical misfortune to be gifted in a dying skill, and to have been insufficiently aware of the shrinking domain of his own subject. . . .”

And there is more analysis along these lines. This is an unsympathetic portrait, seen through the eyes of an old friend who has pursued a much riskier career in the property market, and come badly unstuck. Looking at Linton again now, nearly thirty years later, after decades more of changing classical stud-

ies, I may have a different perspective. I now feel that our physical, classroom experience of learning a “dead” language, combined with our continuing reading of history and poetry in translation – “that battered old purple Penguin Tacitus” – form together a layer that lies beneath our experience of the contemporary world and helps to structure our memory of who we are, as individuals and as members of the tribe. From this subterranean lake, from this collective unconscious, we continue to receive messages and images and metaphors, many of which still belong to a common store of memory, although we may not always be aware of their source. (The meaning of my use of the Golden Bough in my novel *The Seven Sisters* had to be explained to me by a reader at a literary festival – I hadn’t realised what I was doing with this image until she told me, and indeed I resisted her interpretation indignantly at the time.)

We may enter this underworld of imagery, as we may enter the world of Christian imagery, to renew ourselves and to rediscover forgotten meanings. The underworld of the Greek and Romans and the Christian underworld were majestically combined in Dante’s *Inferno* and remain entangled today: the poet Peter Redgrove asks “where was the boatman and his gliding punt?” in his poem “Lazarus and the Sea,” and we all recognise Charon even if we do not know his name.

That “boatman with his gliding punt” remains a potent (and universal?) image. He appears, circling Pluto in the night skies, in tragic and in comic mode in *The Frogs* of Aristophanes and *The Invention of Love* by Tom Stoppard, in Conrad and in Hardy, in detective stories and ghost stories, in crossword puzzles and trade names and sculptures and paintings – he and his crew are part of our story.

Margaret Drabble is a novelist and critic, author of seventeen novels, most recently The Sea Lady (2006). She edited the Fifth and Sixth editions of The Oxford Companion to English Literature (1985, 2000). She is married to biographer Michael Holroyd and lives in London and West Somerset. A version of this article was delivered at the meeting of the American Philological Association in Montreal on January 6, 2006.

Coming in Future Issues of *Amphora*

Orbis grammaticus

The Minoan Tsunami

Hunting the Lithuanian Bison

Greco-Buddhist Treasures

The Hopi Myth *Field Mouse Goes to War*

Re-reading Laura Riding

The Art Infusion Project at the U. S. Mint

The Colony of Augusta Emerita in Roman Lusitania

Book Review: *Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis*

by Matthew McGowan

Peter Needham, trans. *Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis*, by J. K. Rowling. Bloomsbury Publishing (<http://www.bloomsbury.com>), 2003. Pp. 249. Hardcover \$21.95. ISBN 1-58234-825-1.

In the preface to his Latin version of *Robinson Crusoe* (*Rebilibi Crusonis Annales*, 1884), Francis William Newman wrote, “no accuracy of reading small portions of Latin will ever be so effective as extensive reading; and to make extensive reading possible to the many, the style ought to be very easy and the matter attractive.” Newman – younger brother of Cardinal John Henry Newman – had been professor of classics at University College, London, where to his displeasure he came to note that “the mode of teaching Latin has become less and less effective in proportion as it has been made more and more scientific.” Hence he offered Latin readers of the late nineteenth century an elegant translation of Daniel Defoe’s desert island classic as a pedagogical tool, *ad pueros discendos*, according to his title.

I do not know whether Peter Needham laments the current mode of Latin instruction in Great Britain, but he now offers to the twenty-first century’s readers an easy and efficient Latin translation of the first book in the best-selling children’s series of the last decade, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*. At two hundred and forty-nine pages, this book readily qualifies as extensive reading in Latin, and there can be no doubt that its subject matter will be attractive to the world’s myriad *Harry Potter* fans.

In an interview with the *Daily Telegraph* (London, 12/3/2001), Needham himself referred to the task of translating *Harry Potter* as “an ideal job for an old bloke in retirement.” As it happens, this old bloke retired after more than thirty years of teaching classics at Eton, which has made him an ideal candidate for rendering into Latin a story that draws so heavily on the British boarding school experience. Over three decades in public school have given Need-



Fig. 11. Professor Albus Dumbledore (Richard Harris) samples some *Fabae Alberti Botti Omnium Saporum* (Bertie Bott’s Every Flavour Beans) in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* (Warner Brothers, 2001), the film adaptation of J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997).

ham plenty of practice in Latin prose composition and, equally important in view of this particular undertaking, also furnished him with a refined sense of the cadence of adolescent speech. His learning and sensitivity for his young readers’ needs are in evidence on every page of this charming little book, which, to my mind, improves upon the original. For if I have to read about slugs (*limaces*), toads (*bufones*), cauldrons (*lebetes*), vampires (*sanguisugii*), werewolves (*versipelles*), and even troll buggers (*muci trollosi*), I’d prefer to do so in Latin.

Full disclosure: I am not a fan of *Harry Potter*. I was born about a decade too early, and the first book – *pace puerorum* – left me underwhelmed. Nevertheless, I can see how the fantasy world of Hogwarts (*Schola Hogvartensis*), with its mix of magic and mystery, appeals to less-hardened sensibilities as in fact Narnia and *Star Wars* once enraptured my own. I also see the immediate benefit of translating a book so wildly popular among the next generation of Latin readers, many of whom will be able to tackle Needham’s eminently readable translation after two years of solid language instruction.

Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis should be of interest to Latin instructors for two

main reasons: first, a large number of today’s students are already familiar with the story and will derive pleasure from being able to read it in Latin; second, the delight these students take from it will give them confidence in reading longer texts. I suppose I could make the same point about the English original: just as J. K. Rowling has inspired children (of all ages) to read more, Needham’s translation is designed to do this for Latin. It may even be succeeding: the second installment, *Harrius Potter et Camera Secretorum* (*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*), will appear in December 2006.

Before *Harrius*, Needham had published a Latin version of *Paddington Bear* (*Ursus nomine Paddington*, 1999) and thus already belonged to a growing number of translators keen on making popular European and American children’s literature available in Latin. The current wave – if we can call it that – succeeds an illustrious set of translations from the sixties including *Winnie ille Pu* (Alexander Lenard, 1960), *Regulus* (Auguste Haury, 1961), and *Alicia in Terra Mirabili* (Clive Harcourt Carruthers, 1964). The present translation has the distinct merit of being easier to read than those.

This is not to say that Needham’s Latin lacks elegance, but the style of *Harrius* is straightforward and neat without being overly repetitive or simply macaronic. In this regard, it cleaves closely to the original and is neither classical nor medieval and has no clearly identifiable periodic tinge. Still, it manages to feel like Latin, and this is the book’s most important achievement.

There are even some pleasant surprises in *Harrius*. For example, the use of *diribitorium* (75) for “ticket dispenser” is an inspired choice that improves on the original “barrier.” Moreover, Needham has rendered Rowling’s simplistic rhymes into tidy elegiac couplets, including the inscription on the Gringotts bank (58), the Hogwarts hymn (103), and the song of the “Sorting Hat” (*Petasus Distribuens*, 95-96). I cannot fault him for maintaining English idioms in Latin: for example, “she’s a nightmare” becomes *est incubo*, where *monstrum* would be more idiomatic; “to the fork in the road” becomes *ad furcam semitae*, where the Latin word is *bivium*. This depends

PLATO'S SYMPOSIUM: A FILMMAKER'S PERSPECTIVE

by Michael Wurth

I remember my experience as an undergraduate sitting in a French class, excited about being exposed to the work of Victor Hugo in his native tongue. We were to read selections from *Les Misérables*, and I was looking forward to not only improving my French but improving my own writing in the process. I suffered at the time from the naive idea that most young writing students have: that a brilliant author's "literariness" might rub off if I studied (or copied) it thoroughly enough.

Then, at the bottom of the introductory page, I saw a small footnote. It's been too many years for me to remember the exact wording, but it went something like this: "to assist the student, Victor Hugo's rich vocabulary and style have been simplified."

I was incensed. I was supposed to be reading Hugo. What the heck was this? Was it "literary" at all? Could we even call it Hugo's? Was it the French equivalent of a picture book for the obtuse foreigners who couldn't be counted on to follow Hugo's lapidary style? I had been tutoring my fellow students on e. e. cummings, Henry James, and Thomas Pynchon. I wasn't intimidated by stylistic pieces. I had the patience for it. But what exactly was this text?

My Master's thesis at Indiana University was a translation of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus*. While examining other translations, and with the help of my mentor, Professor Eugene Eoyang, I had encountered what I still consider to be a crucial flaw in most translation analysis. Too many times, a translation falls somewhere between two extremes along a spectrum: either a translation is too literal, which robs the target language's reader of the literary riches of the original text, or the translation is sadly lacking in accuracy because the translator took the "spirit" of the text and overlooked literal meanings in the source language. In extreme examples of the former case, the translation can be so encumbered by its need for accuracy that it becomes nearly impenetrable (see Vladimir Nabokov's English translation of *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* by Aleksandr Pushkin, for example). In the latter case, the text might wind up being something wonderful in its own right, but it might also be too casual about the details

of the source text to be called an actual translation (see the translations of Stephen Mitchell, for example). This dichotomy makes for a self-perpetuating industry. Any translation with spirit can be shown to be inaccurate, and any "accurate" translation can be shown to be too lacking in spirit.

This stalemate is especially true in film. Seeing how the film *Troy* (2004) was skewered in some quarters was painful to me. It hurt to see that many reviewers, instead of using the film as a point of entry to the beauty of Homer's text, were rejecting it for its inaccuracies. For my own part, I was mystified that the producers removed the gods from the picture altogether, but I had to admit it was quite a task to take western civilization's greatest epic and place it in three hours of celluloid. The fact that a studio was willing to take a chance on it thrilled me. I was so happy to see the film made because I thought it would give teachers a chance to get young people excited about Achilles' pride, about Hector's valor, about the weakness of Helen's heart, and about the cunning of Odysseus' mind. I hoped that after exposing students to the film, lovers of classics could then mold that excitement into accurate knowledge using Homer's text.

Troy tried to condense an epic into three hours. Plato's *Symposium* would be easier to film, since it is merely one evening's conversation as recounted by someone who was there. The current political environment, however, would make it a challenging text to present to young people, even on film. To add to this difficulty, Plato, even in the most dexterous translation, is difficult to enjoy. But a lot of that is his fault. The early dialogues are almost insufferable in the way the characters interact with Socrates. Most of his interlocutors have no characterization at all and are limited to such insightful dialogue as "Yes, Socrates." "Oh, you're right, Socrates." "I never thought of it that way, Socrates." These weren't characters; these were shells; these were straw men. As a student I didn't have a word for my discomfort: once I started working professionally in film, I found the technical term: *bad writing*. The early dialogues, however philosophically enlightening, could have been much more effective if

Plato were a better writer at the time.

But somehow, in the *Symposium*, Plato seems to have found his pen. The characters are real: they breathe, they have their own points of view, and they are just inches away from confronting each other as we'd see in a Brazilian soap opera. Reading Percy Bysshe Shelley's translation (*The Banquet*) again, a few years ago, I realized that Agathon's winning of the playwriting prize had to have made Aristophanes extremely jealous. Why didn't Plato run with that? And Eryximachus' self-absorbed answer about the nature of love indicated a character who saw life only in terms of his own medical experience. Why not call him on that? I saw Alcibiades not just as a frustrated politician, angry that Socrates wouldn't sleep with him: I saw Plato, angry at his mentor Socrates, incensed that he could be so distant with Plato yet be so popular with others. Was that true? Did Socrates not make Plato feel special enough? I couldn't be the only one who saw this. In fact, as I would learn later, the scholar Gregory Vlastos had asked many of these questions and addressed Socrates' failure as a man many years ago, to a largely muted response. Too much of the scholarship of Socrates resembles hagiography, and a modern psychoanalytic approach of the greatest thinker in occidental history is still taboo for many of us. But perhaps most importantly, I saw that Plato's argument that the purest love was the one found between very young men and older ones would be explosive; to say the least, it would be problematic in education today.

This was enough for me to try my own translation of the text in preparation for filming it. Being fully aware of the spectrum of judgments regarding translation, I decided to follow my own beliefs. To me, there are three kinds of translation: the kind that serves the reader who will never read the source text and has no desire to; the kind that serves best the reader who has some knowledge of the source text and wants to understand it better; and the kind that serves the reader who is expert in the source text and wants to interact with it at a deeper level – a translation that gives a new way of looking at the text. Can one adaptation serve every expectation? Of course not. But it was my money, and no studio executive was lingering around telling me to make it more violent or sexy; so I could try it my own way.

This is how I approached the filming of Plato's *Symposium*. Plato had already laid out the conflicts that Hollywood scriptwriters are taught to create. All



Fig. 12. The cast in Michael Wurth's film *The Symposium* (Scriptwise Partners LLC, 2003) discuss the meaning of love.

that was needed was a little push, and the drama would emerge from the philosophy. I rented a house with an incredible view on the Hawaiian island of Oahu and lived together with the cast and crew for the three weeks of shooting (see Fig. 12). We'd film until 4 a.m., drink until 7 a.m., and start over the next day at 6 p.m. sharp. We fell in love with each other during the shoot, in almost every sense Plato describes. We had a wonderful time making the film.

I felt any dialogue about love without a feminine viewpoint was irrelevant, so I took Aristophanes and Eryximachus and made them female. I gave to Aristophanes the latent jealousy I could intuit reading Plato's text. And depicting Eryximachus and Agathon as husband and wife, with an infidelity looming over their marriage, I thought would be an excellent way to explain Agathon's rather simplistic (almost feeble) attempt to define love in Plato's text and give beginning students a point of entrance into the film – viewers would be far more captivated by an affair about to be exposed than by seven intellectuals talking about love. Dialogues, by their nature, only tell. Here, I could show a friction that Plato never directly articulated, and by doing so, get students who otherwise would nod off in the first fifteen minutes to stay with us.

Is my filmed version of the *Symposium* a mere Hollywood dumbing-down of one of our culture's most important texts, or is it a translation that can give insight into what Plato was saying? Or, perhaps most honestly, was my adaptation just my way of saying through film what I've thought since first reading Plato's *Symposium* in translation in high school: Socrates was a "horse's ass" who bullied other people with his command of rhetoric while rarely exposing opinions of his own? Does that mean I have to provide the asterisk at the beginning of the film, indicating that Plato's rich language has been simplified in order to help the student? Not at all.

This isn't a bad textbook teaching watered-down Plato.

If my audiences' reactions so far are any indication, the film has been a success. By success I do not mean that the film defies the two-sided spectrum of translation analysis. I mean that if a student has no interest in philosophy, Plato's *Symposium* as filmed generally gets them interested enough to ask about Plato. If a student has some interest in philosophy, our film can show personifications of the actual arguments in the text: real, living people with real concerns beyond defining love: people they can identify with, visual characters that make the arcane literary translations more accessible. And an expert in Plato's text will be able to see the *Symposium* in a different way: as a legitimate effort in dramatic writing instead of, as one colleague has told me, merely as "the dialogue where the theory of forms is first articulated." There's too much drama in the text for this to be an accident. I think Plato was saying something far deeper than simply defining the forms. I believe Plato was talking to his dead mentor Socrates, and saying a great deal to him. This is what a translation of a classic text – in print or in film – should be: a point of departure. And I hope we've done enough to achieve that.

Michael Wurth (Michael@scriptwise.com) holds an M.A. in Comparative Literature from Indiana University, with a concentration on translation theory. His film The Symposium is available with full academic license at <http://www.scriptwise.com> and <http://www.amazon.com>. His new film Sunday Wind, about the tragic fate of three Hawaiian civilians during the Pearl Harbor attacks, has just won two awards: the Dream Digital Award at the Hawaii International Film Festival and the Visionary Filmmaker Award at the MauiFest Film Festival.

Book Review: *Harrus Potter et Philosophi Lapis*

continued from page 15

again on Needham's awareness of his readers' needs, for whom such one-to-one renderings will be more easily understandable.

On the whole, the Latin is reliable and the text free from typographical errors. Inevitably, the nuance of certain characters' phraseology, for example, Hagrid's west-country dialect or Dumbledore's wizard-speak (see Fig. 11), gets lost in the Latin. In addition, I cannot explain the presence of the rarer feminine form of *finis* (e.g., 125, 135) or why Needham uses *quippe* with the adverbial *qui* instead of the more common explanatory relative (e.g., 211, 244).

In sum, although I can think of no place for *Harrus* in the Latin curriculum, it is perfectly suitable for a Latin club's reading group and might be cannily deployed in spoken Latin sessions. There students could act out some of the more well-known scenes from the book (and movie) such as the "Mirror of Erised" (*Speculum Erisedii*) or "The Man with Two Faces" (*Vir Duobus Vultibus*). My own experience has shown that students who try to speak the language tend to learn more: active Latin makes learning more efficient and, ultimately, more enjoyable. So too with the book under review: the pleasure of reading with ease makes *Harrus Potter et Philosophi Lapis* an effective tool for learning Latin, and for that Peter Needham is to be commended.

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Book Review: *The Lock, The Key, and The Door in the Wall*

by James S. Ruebel

Benita Kane Jaro. *The Lock*. Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers (<http://www.bolchazy.com>), 2002. Pp. 280. Paperback \$19.95. ISBN 0-86516-535-1.

Benita Kane Jaro. *The Key*. Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers (<http://www.bolchazy.com>), 2002. Pp. 280. Paperback \$19.95. ISBN 0-86516-534-3.

Benita Kane Jaro. *The Door in the Wall*. Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers (<http://www.bolchazy.com>), 2002. Pp. 280. Paperback \$19.95. ISBN 0-86516-533-5.

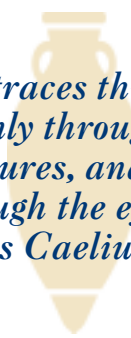
By bundling these three novels together, Jaro stakes her claim to an interpretive literary trilogy of the closing years of the Roman Republic. She traces this story from 62 B.C. to 48 B.C. mainly through the adventures, and largely through the eyes, of Marcus Caelius Rufus, who is the protagonist as well as the usual narrator. On the whole, she has created a subtle, dark, ambivalent, and thoughtful set of interlocking stories.

The original publication date (1988) suggests that *Key* should perhaps be read first; but there is much to be said for beginning with *Lock* (evidently the last book written), where Caelius is still a young man.

Lock is the only tale not told directly by Caelius; in fact, while the narrator is an omniscient third person, the point of view is mainly that of a surprisingly sympathetic Cicero, who appears here in the most persuasively favorable fictional characterization that I know of. He acts neither pompous nor pretentious. While many novels of the period emphasize his vacillation (perhaps fear) or self-aggrandizement, Jaro's Cicero is courageous, warm, and clever, a man trying to be an honest and serious politician in an age of increasing corruption. The events of the novel form a classic ring: we begin at the Bona Dea trial in the shadow of Pompey's return from the East, where Clodius is prosecuted for spying on the rites; we conclude at the trial of Milo, where Cicero defends Milo for the slaying of Clodius along the Appian Way near a shrine of the Bona Dea, and Pom-

pey seems on the verge of dictatorship.

The important characters of the trilogy are all introduced and fleshed out: Publius Clodius Pulcher, Clodia Metelli, Caesar, Pompey, and Catullus. Caelius himself is impulsive and naive, an admirer and protégé of Cicero. He is a friend of Catullus, whose featured role in *Key* is foreshadowed. The central events of *Lock* are political (when they do not hone in on Caelius' personal life), and the tone is, in general, upbeat: the darker episodes and revelations of later books, many of them contemporaneous, are on the perimeter of the action. Sexual perversity, which becomes a symbol in the trilogy of a deeper moral decay of the Roman order, remains here on the surface or ambiguous.



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The historical events are, of course, slanted for novelistic purposes. The greatest liberty is the suggestion that Caelius and Cicero were implicated in advance in the murder of Clodius, about which Jaro is defensive enough to include a justification that both demurs and defends: "I have deliberately distorted what we know. . . . It is no more than conjecture – I think a plausible one – that they may have been involved in the way I have suggested" (*Lock*, 268).

Key is a bold experiment. On the one hand, the narrator is Caelius, reflecting upon what to tell Catullus' father about his dead son. On the other hand, the narrator steps outside the first-person bounds of what anyone other than Catullus could possibly have known or seen. This interplay of omniscience and Caelius' own narration is effective. The book follows the autobiographical clues of Catullus' poems with cre-

ative insight, sometimes through action that reflects the poems and sometimes through action on which poems are brought in explicitly to comment. The complexity of Catullus' character and of his relationship with "Lesbia" (who is, in this book, Clodia Metelli) and our Caelius, who is immortalized in Poem 58 (*Caeli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa*), is well drawn. His alienation from his own society, his struggles to articulate that alienation and to maintain ordinary relationships with close friends animate the tale. Personally, I am not a fan of the autobiographical reading of Catullus' poems, but *Key* gives us a nuanced and sensitive exploration of a life otherwise impossible to recover.

The representation of social disorder in sexual deviation becomes more pronounced than in *Lock*. And the choice of material in Catullus is abundant: adultery, homoeroticism, incest, and everywhere betrayal, regardless of the original pairing. That Clodia, a Roman patrician with powerful and wealthy relatives, could find herself living in squalor, as she does here, is yet another symbolic reflection of the degeneracy of the society from which she comes.

In *Door*, the mood is dark. The story opens in 48 B.C. with Caelius having taken control of Thurii as the civil war between Pompey and Caesar has reached a climax; Pompey has been defeated and Caelius awaits the arrival of Caesar's men. He is performing the function his rank demands, but he has no understanding of why or on whose behalf he is doing so. So, bemused, he sits down to write a report as he waits and decides what to do.

Caelius describes his life in Rome in vivid terms, a dissipated romp beginning – as is thematic of the trilogy – with the Bona Dea sacrilege, here portrayed as a drunken lark in which not only Clodius but Catullus and Caelius were complicit. The figure of Caesar looms in the background, becoming increasingly dominant and increasingly the focus of Caelius' interest and loyalty. Caelius finally turns against Caesar after a particularly unpleasant abuse of personal loyalty and real power. Having cast his lot

with Pompey, he has lost all hope after Pharsalus.

Jaro's Caesar is complex: as is rarely the case, one sees how he attracted followers with his brilliance and was able to lead in the most difficult situations; yet his character is venal, utterly ambitious, and ruthless. Pompey seems thoroughly realistic: a somewhat obtuse man of obscure motivation other than his own glory, a fine general, and no match for Caesar as a politician.

In view of Jaro's thorough knowledge of Caelius' letters to Cicero, I was surprised that she did not use the famous letter (*Fam.* 8.14) where the real Caelius gives Cicero his forecast of what he sees as an imminent civil war. Perhaps the tone was too light ("if it could be put on without danger, Fortune would be arranging a great and interesting show") or too calculating ("when it has come to war and the camp, we must follow the stronger side, and the better choice is what is safer") for her character, though Caelius' dilemma about whom to follow reflected the sentiment among many in late 50 B.C.

In *Door*, the sexual motif achieves resolution. While sexual liberty is rife in the story, Caesar's forcible seduction of Caelius in his command tent represents not only Caelius' personal turning point but epitomizes the internal corruption of leaders of Caelius' society, perhaps also representative of Rome herself. The trilogy ends with a despondent Caelius preparing to ride out to meet Caesar's troops.

All in all, Jaro has forged a layered and provocative reflection on the fifteen years from the Bona Dea scandal to the death of Caelius.

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IT WAS THEIR DESTINY: ROMAN POWER AND IMPERIAL SELF-ESTEEM

continued from page 11

there was no place in Jefferson's imagination "for an American society of diverse cultures in which Native Americans lived alongside whites while retaining their own Indian values" (*American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, 1998, 240). Furthermore, in spite of Jefferson's statements about cultivating love and acting from "motives of pure humanity," he must have been well aware that, in reality, such sentiments did not prevail in the treatment of Native Americans, any more than they did in the treatment of African American slaves. Like Tacitus, Jefferson was haunted by the notion that Americans were unworthy of their mission. Six years before his death he wrote the following:

I regret that I am now to die in the belief, that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be, that I live not to weep over it. (*Writings*, 1434-1435)

Jefferson was thinking about slavery when he wrote that: as Ellis emphasizes (314-326), the issue of how to deal with the undeniable injustice of slavery made him fear for the future of the nation he had helped to found.

As a teacher, I have discovered that the issues of destiny and unworthiness often seem directly relevant, since my students can become quite engaged with them. Many students in American schools, colleges, and universities, especially at private colleges such as the one at which I teach, have been brought up to believe that they are destined for success, and this destiny often weighs heavily on them. Are they really good enough to get the grades required? Will they ever be able to do what seems to be expected of them, reaching and even surpassing the level of achievement – and income – attained by their parents?

Moreover, Tacitus' observations about Roman destiny and the early inhabitants of Britain and Germany, taken together with Jefferson's conflicted thoughts about the fate of Native Americans, make teaching Roman literature and civilization especially challenging in a world that now seems total-

ly dominated by the military and economic power of the United States. Thus, I ask my students to examine the notion, put forth in the 1840's, that the United States had a "manifest destiny" to expand westward, as many thought it did. Once the students become engaged, the questions multiply. Does America have a destiny today? If so, can Americans live up to the obligations it imposes upon them? Is America making good use of its enormous wealth and power?

Once again, then, the experience of the Romans has given us a fruitful way of examining the conditions of political and social life today. In this case, their message comes down to us in the form of an unsettling interrogation. Like the Romans in the time of Sallust, Vergil, Horace, and Tacitus, we find ourselves asking questions about our destiny – about what it is and whether we are worthy of it.

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Richard Howard's translation of Horace, Odes 3.6 may be found in J. D. McClatchy (ed.), *Horace, The Odes: New Translations by Contemporary Poets* (2002).

For more on Star Wars and Roman destiny, see Margaret Malamud, "Patriarchy and Pietas in the Star Wars Trilogy," *Amphora* 3.1 (Spring 2004), which is available at <http://www.apaclassics.org/outreach/amphora/TOCAmphora.html>, and Martin M. Winkler, "Star Wars and the Roman Empire," in *Classical Myth and Culture in the Cinema* (2001).

Book Review: *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold*

by James B. Rives

C. S. Lewis. *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold*. Harcourt (www.HarcourtBooks.com), 1956. Pp. 313. Paperback \$14.00. ISBN 0-15-690436-5.

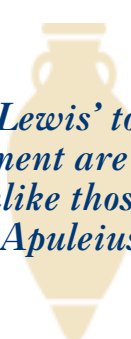
Not many people associate C. S. Lewis with classical myth. A few, perhaps, are familiar with his studies of medieval and Renaissance literature; many more know him as a popular Christian apologist, and most, of course, as the author of the children's books set in the imaginary world of Narnia. As for myth, his interests, like those of his friend J. R. R. Tolkien, seem to have focused primarily on the Germanic tradition, as is apparent in his portrayal of Narnia as a sort of medieval fairyland. But like other men of his generation (he was born in 1898), his education included from the start a good deal of Latin and Greek, and he eventually took a First Class degree at Oxford in classics. It is thus not surprising that figures from classical myth pop up in the Narnia books: dryads, Chiron-like centaurs, and even, in *Prince Caspian* (1951), Bacchus and Silenus.

But *Till We Have Faces* is his only work in which classical myth has a central rather than a peripheral role; perhaps coincidentally, it is also his least known work of fiction. As the title proclaims, it is "a myth retold," and the myth in question is that of Cupid and Psyche as found in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. One might reasonably suppose that there could hardly be two writers with such differing sensibilities as Apuleius and C. S. Lewis, yet Lewis manages to transform Apuleius' story in a way that is not only effective but also surprisingly appropriate.

The changes that Lewis makes to the actual storyline are few but significant. First, of Psyche's two older sisters, who in the original are alike in their beauty and envy, only one is beautiful; the other is ugly and loves Psyche deeply. She alone goes to mourn Psyche and discovers that she is still alive. Secondly, whereas in Apuleius' version it is the experience of Psyche's luxurious palace that sparks the sisters' envy, in Lewis' version the sister is unable to see the palace at all. When she persuades Psyche to spy on her husband, then, it is not

through spite but a kind of jealous protectiveness.

But if Lewis was relatively sparing in the changes he made to the storyline, his tone and treatment are utterly unlike those of Apuleius: his novel has none of the fairytale quality, none of the tongue-in-cheek humor, and none of the ironic distancing that characterize the original. The tone is instead earnest, even somber, lacking the glibness that can creep into some of Lewis' work. He also adopts the somewhat startling device of a first-person narration, telling the story in the persona of Psyche's loving elder sister. This is startling not only for the very different perspective on the story that it provides but also because Lewis' somewhat distant depictions of women in his earlier fiction would not lead one to expect that he would try writing in a woman's voice. Although his success is debatable, the attempt itself is intriguing, and perhaps connected with the fact that he was working on the novel in the same year that he was getting to know his future wife, apparently the first woman whom he took seriously as an equal.



C. S. Lewis' tone and treatment are utterly unlike those of Apuleius.

There is much here to interest a classicist. Lewis sets the novel in a barbarian land on the far distant periphery of the "Greeklands," as the characters call them, and tries to imagine how such people might have viewed Greek culture. One of the main characters is a Greek slave who acts as a tutor for Psyche and her sisters and eventually, thanks to his typically Greek cleverness, becomes an important counselor to the king. He also presents Hellenization in progress: in the latter part of the book, the priest of the main cult (that of

Ungit, whom the Greek equates with Aphrodite) not only imports an anthropomorphic image to supplement the unshaped stone that originally represented the goddess, but also learns to expound the cult in terms of physical allegory.

Allegory is in fact a central feature of the novel as a whole, and one of the most impressive things about it is the skill with which Lewis, whose most important scholarly work was precisely a study of allegory, has developed it. Most scholars would probably agree that Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche is, on some level, an allegory of the soul's union with the divine, although they would certainly disagree on his purpose in devising it: the ease with which Apuleius' novel as a whole allows for multiple and conflicting interpretations is one of its most salient characteristics. Lewis not only preserves this allegorical dimension of the tale, although transforming it into Christian terms, but also retains its complexity: it is no easier to provide a simple set of one-to-one equivalences for the characters and events of his novel than for those of the Apuleian original.

Although the intensely religious sensibility of its ending may not appeal to all readers, this book certainly deserves to be much better known than it is. Classicists will enjoy Lewis' imaginative presentation of Greek culture from the outside; more importantly, they will appreciate his ability to translate the Cupid and Psyche story into a very different cultural and religious milieu and thereby, astonishingly, render it even stranger and more richly resonant than the original. In that respect, it represents a feat of transformation worthy of Apuleius himself.

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Ask A Classicist

Q What influence did Latin and Greek have on T. E. Lawrence?

A T. E. Lawrence (1888-1935) was a medievalist by training, but he is best known today for his campaigns, as Lawrence of Arabia (see Fig. 13), against the Ottoman Turks during the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918.

Like other English boys of his time whose parents aimed to give them a proper education, he studied Latin and Greek at school, and he continued to read both languages after his graduation from Oxford in 1910. Of the two ancient languages, Lawrence had a stronger affinity for Greek. He often refers in his writings to a small group of Greek authors: Homer, Herodotus, Aristophanes, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plato. During the desert war, he carried with him a Greek text of the comedies of Aristophanes, and he read Aristophanes' *Peace* "very gratefully, and without much technical trouble." He admired, in particular, the historian Herodotus, and his autobiographical account of his experiences during the Arab Revolt, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, is considered by some scholars to be a kind of Herodotean history. His admiration of Herodotus even found expression at Clouds Hill, his small, remote cottage in Dorsetshire (which is now open for visits). He had a stone lintel placed over the door of the cottage, and he himself carved on the lintel *οὐ φροντῖς* [sic], *ou phrontis*, "does not care." These are the well-known words, from the story told by Herodotus in *Histories* 6.126-130, of Hippocleides, the suitor who performed a shocking dance on a table and then said he did not care that he had danced away his marriage. (Many have speculated on the meaning of these words for understanding the complex personality and activities of Lawrence throughout his life.)

In 1927, after he had disappeared from public view and was serving in the Royal Air Force in India, Lawrence was invited, on the strength of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, to undertake a new translation of Homer's

Odyssey. This prose translation, which he published under the name T. E. Shaw, was generally well received and is still in print.

Lawrence was, like Odysseus, a "man of many ways." He loved to speed along English country roads on his Brough Superior motorcycles. He even gave them pet names: a favorite motorcycle was named Boanerges ("Sons of Thunder") after the Greek word Jesus used in the New Testament to describe the disciples James and John (Mark 3:17). It was on one of his motorcycles that Lawrence met his end. Speeding and not wearing a crash helmet, he swerved to avoid two boys on bicycles. He lost control, flew over the handlebars, and suffered fatal head injuries. He was buried in the village of Moreton.



Fig. 13. T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) after the First World War.

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- To give classics scholars and teachers the tools they need to preserve and extend their knowledge of classical civilization and to communicate that knowledge as widely as possible;
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THE WORLD OF NEO-LATIN

by Terence O. Tunberg

After the erosion of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century, Latin, though no one's vernacular tongue, continued to be used for about 1,200 years, and longer in some regions, as the language of the Western church and as the *lingua franca* of the learned classes. In the Renaissance, which had its origins in the Italian humanistic culture of the later fourteenth century, the segments of European society that used Latin were not very different from those of the preceding medieval centuries. Latin was still the language of church, academia, and some diplomacy. But in one respect, Renaissance or humanist Latin was distinct from Medieval Latin. Speaking very generally, the Latin vulgate and the works of the church fathers established Medieval Latin, while humanist Latin authors tried much more consistently to return to the norms and styles of ancient pagan Latin prose and poetry. This humanist Latin, which became the prevailing mode of Latin expression in northern Europe by about 1500, is often called "Neo-Latin" to distinguish it from the Latin of the Middle Ages.

The establishment of the pagan classical authors as the basis for Neo-Latin did not happen without controversy. In fact, pagan Latin literature of the period from the first century B.C. (or even the second century B.C, if we include Plautus and Terence) to the late second century A.D. embraces a very wide range of styles and a considerable variety of grammatical usage. Hence it is small wonder that disputes arose among leading humanists concerning which ancient authors were worthy of imitation and how thoroughly one should imitate a given model or models. Some advocated an eclectic approach to prose style (much like Seneca proposed in his letter 84) that sanctioned drawing together many elements of expression from various pagan authors. Others, especially in Italy, were proponents of Ciceronianism, the view that the best model for Latin prose was Cicero. This view was probably reinforced by close reading of the Roman authors themselves, for in the Latin literature of the empire it is almost a commonplace that Cicero was the supreme orator and that there had been a decline in eloquence after the late republic. Other Neo-Latin writers, and this group was perhaps the smallest,

created a difficult and *recherché* style by following the example of authors of the late second century, such as Apuleius and Gellius, and resuscitating rare words and expressions from early Latin. In practice, a sort of moderate Ciceronianism eventually prevailed, sanctioned by influential teachers such as Johannes Sturm (1507-1589) and Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560) and the educational practice of the Jesuit order. Although they followed in general the syntactical and stylistic norms of the classical authors, most writers of Neo-Latin prose readily employed vocabulary from Christian and Medieval Latin, when necessary, to describe more recent ideas or things, and sometimes entirely new words.

Perhaps the humanists' success in establishing the usage of the ancient pagan authors as the stylistic norm for the Latin of the Renaissance and the early-modern era brought an element of stability and uniformity to Neo-Latin, by comparison to some of the specialized types of Latin that had evolved in the late Middle Ages, especially in the fields of theology, philosophy, dialectic, and law. This establishment of norms, according to the late Professor Jozef IJsewijn of Leuven, Belgium, whose two-volume *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies* (Leuven, 1990 and 1998) is the most authoritative basic reference work for anyone interested in Neo-Latin literature, ensured Latin's role as an international language for several more centuries. This role for Latin persisted for a very long time, despite the inevitable growth and development of the vernacular languages associated with the greater popular literacy and the consolidation of national cultures characteristic of the early modern period.

Latin continued to be a language of public administration and documents in some areas of Europe. In Hungary, to cite an extreme case, Latin remained the official language of administration until the mid-nineteenth century – perhaps only in the Catholic Church did Latin persist even longer as an administrative medium. However, with the gradual spread of literacy in the national languages among the laity, vernaculars generally replaced Latin for public documents, though at different times in different places. At most European universities in the Renaissance, Latin persist-

ed for a longer time as the nearly universal language of academic lectures, disputations, examinations, administration, and publication, not only in what we would call classical studies, but in every field, including philosophy, law, medicine, and the natural sciences. This situation started to change during the seventeenth century, a period when philosophers, such as Descartes or Leibniz, began to use the vernacular languages more regularly. Yet even as late as the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, more Latin books were coming from the printing presses of Germany, to name one region for which some statistics exist, than vernacular ones. By the later sixteenth century, Neo-Latin came to dominate even in Scandinavia, and the period from the seventeenth to the early eighteenth centuries is often regarded as a sort of "Golden Age" of Latin writing in Sweden and Denmark. Neo-Latin was also a vehicle for expression in the colonies of the New World, especially before about 1740, though Neo-Latin texts produced in North and South America and Mexico have only recently begun to be examined by scholars.

Educated people in the late Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and beyond wrote in Latin so their works would reach an international audience. But Latin was also favored because it had the prestige acquired by more than a millennium of existence as the universal language of Western Christendom's intellectual elite. The very fact of writing in Latin would require an author to employ the *topoi*, literary forms, imagery, and allusions that were inseparable from this tradition, and the resulting work would become part of the Latin patrimony. Many a humanist noticed that Latin was relatively stable and unchanging, while the vernacular tongues were evolving and unstable. To many Renaissance intellectuals, therefore, especially before 1600, Latin seemed to be a more appropriate linguistic medium to ensure a work's survival for posterity than the vernacular languages.

As even a glance at IJsewijn's *Companion* makes clear, the quantity and variety of Neo-Latin (especially that produced before 1650) is so immense that no scholar could become an expert in more than a small part of it. Neo-Latin includes great masterpieces of Western literature, such as Thomas More's *Utopia* and Erasmus' *Laus stultitiae* (*Praise of Folly*), both read usually in translation by modern students in non-



Fig. 14. Erasmus of Rotterdam by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1523.

classical language courses (see Fig. 14). Neo-Latin also includes a great variety of less well known works that are of tremendous cultural significance, such as Lorenzo Valla's fifteenth-century declamation on the Donation of Constantine, or the monumental sixteenth-century history *De orbe novo*, by the Spanish bishop Sepulveda that chronicles the occupation of the West Indies and Mexico from Columbus to Cortés and raises disturbing issues pertaining to the encounters between Europeans and the indigenous peoples.

Philosophical, theological, and scientific works constitute a significant portion of Neo-Latin, but Neo-Latin literature also includes a vast amount of poetry, letters, histories, travel accounts, oratory, satire, and other genres. Neo-Latin drama, both tragedy and comedy, flourished in the Renaissance and was performed not merely in churches and uni-

versities, but at municipal festivals and in the courts of great potentates. Scholars are just beginning to appreciate the fact that an ample tradition of Latin fiction flourished in the Renaissance and early modern periods. To modern readers, the most well known representative of Neo-Latin fiction is probably More's *Utopia*, which is a purely prose text. But many Neo-Latin novels, such as the extremely popular and influential *Argenis* written by the Scottish humanist John Barclay at the beginning of the seventeenth century, are written in the Menippean style, characterized by prose mixed with verse interludes.

It is paradoxical that this tremendous and fundamental literary heritage has long remained on the periphery of modern scholarship and teaching. In departments of English, French, German, and

the other national languages and literatures, the primary focus, not unreasonably, is usually on texts written in the national languages. Scholars in philosophy and history may sometimes study Neo-Latin texts for the information they might contain relative to these disciplines, but rather few scholars in these disciplines are primarily Latinists. Who would be better equipped to study and teach Neo-Latin texts than the teachers and professors of Latin? If students of Latin see themselves exclusively as students of the Roman (and Hellenistic) world, then Neo-Latin is certainly outside their purview. But if Latinists conceive of their task as potentially embracing the Latin literary tradition as a whole, then why not include Neo-Latin? Indeed, departments of Latin would have much to gain by awarding a larger role to Neo-Latin studies alongside the study of classical Latin (and the same arguments, of course, apply also to Medieval Latin). Neo-Latin could add vastly to the cultural content and centrality of Latin as a discipline in the context of the humanities as a whole, not only at the university level, but also in the high schools. The fuller assimilation of the more recent part of the Latin tradition into the orbit of conventional Latin studies would offer a much larger range of possibilities for cooperation and contacts in teaching and research among departments of classical languages and professors of other disciplines in the humanities. Finally, there remains an enormous amount to learn about Neo-Latin, and critical editions of many fundamental Neo-Latin works do not exist. This is scholarship for which a Latinist trained in classical Latin is extremely well prepared, and by undertaking such research, a Latinist can make considerable contributions to many disciplines at the same time.

In short, if more teachers and students of Latin involve themselves with Neo-Latin, the field of Latin studies becomes no less Latin, but more interdisciplinary, more multicultural, and more fundamental to the humanities in general.

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