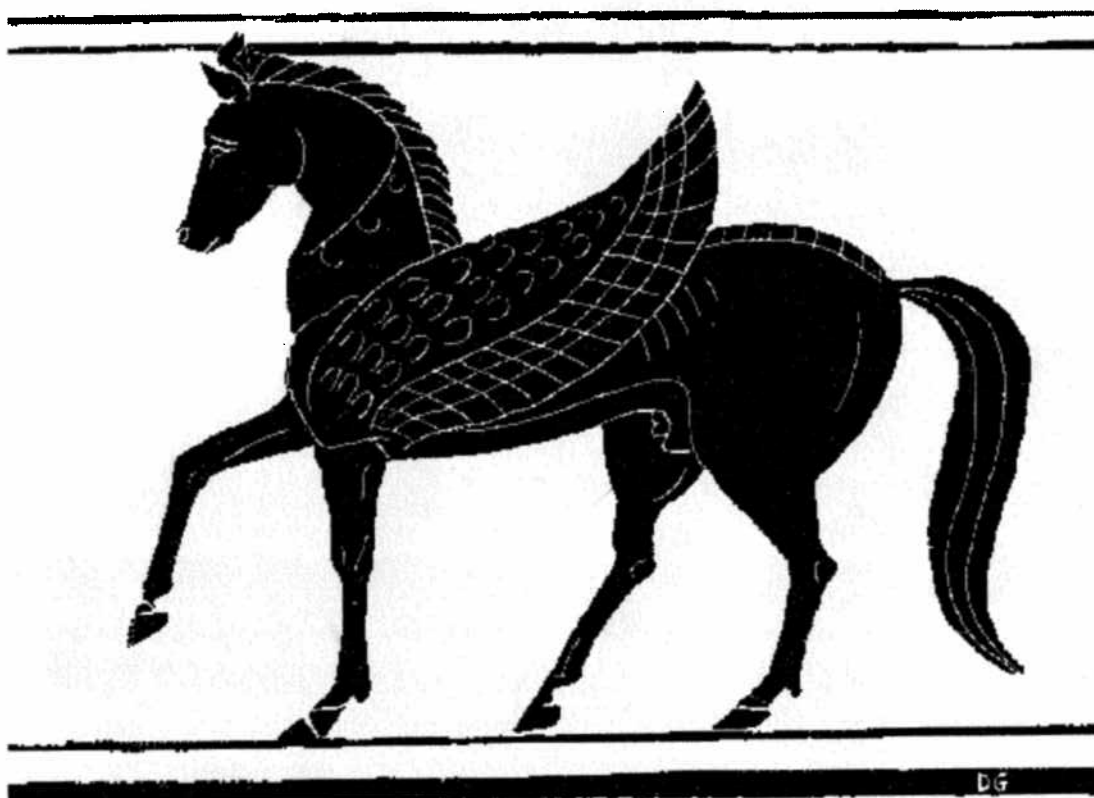


FOR LOAN
(TO POSTGRADS & STAFF)

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PEGASVS



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Report from the Head of Department

by John Wilkins

Conferences and Visiting Speakers

In September 1997, the Department held a conference in Exeter on *Athenaeus and his World*. This was the first major event held by the *Athenaeus* Project which is co-ordinated by David Braund and John Wilkins with support from Chris Gill and David Harvey. Publications of the project, in addition to the conference papers, will include an edition of medical authors found in *Athenaeus* and a selection of passages on dining drawn from *Athenaeus*.

Another September conference will be held here in Exeter again this year. The conference is entitled *An Alien Influence: the Role of Women in Creating Culture*. The organisers are Fiona McHardy and Eireann Marshall, from whom details may be obtained.

Among visiting speakers this year were Harold Tarrant (Newcastle, Australia) on Plato, Carole Newlands (UCLA) on Statius, and Eric Csapo (Toronto) on 'iconology' in the rituals of Dionysus.

Publications

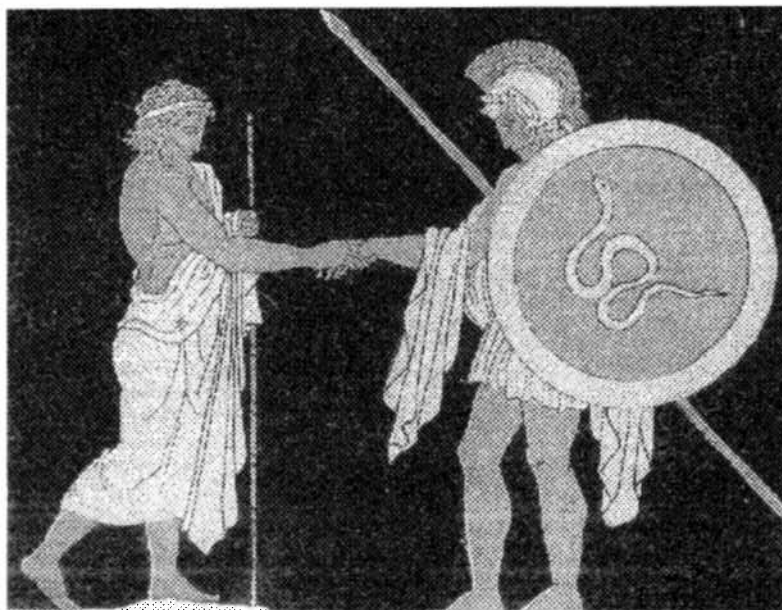
Once again the members of the department have kept the presses busy. Peter Wiseman's latest book, *Roman Drama and Roman History* is about to appear from the University of Exeter Press. John Marr's historical commentary, *Plutarch's Life of Themistocles*, is soon to come out from Aris and Phillips, and Alan Griffin's commentary on Ovid *Metamorphoses* 11 is shortly to appear as supplementary volumes of *Hermathena*.

Other News

There have been major developments this year. We have a new Latinist in the Department, Dr Emma Gee, who works on Ovid and astronomy. She gives the department a much needed scientific profile and is offering an option on Ancient Science to third-year students. Emma replaces Matthew Leigh who has gone to St. Anne's College, Oxford. Meanwhile, Eireann Marshall is currently on maternity leave for her baby who is due in March.

A new post has been created in Ancient History to reflect the strength of student recruitment in that area. Our complement of permanent staff now rises to ten. We have also received funding from the A.G. Leventis Foundation for a postgraduate studentship in the Department. Fees and maintenance will be paid for three years' research. This is a wonderful boost to our postgraduate community which now numbers nearly thirty.

These developments have come in a year when the university faces major problems of funding and restructuring. The Department has been favoured by the university because of its high research rating, but other departments have been less fortunate. Departments will cease to exist officially from August 1st. Classics and Ancient History is being merged with Theology into a new School of Classics and Theology with Norman Postlethwaite as Head of School. The two departments are resolved on co-operation, but separate identities, for the foreseeable future.



Staff Research Projects

compiled by Richard Seaford

David Braund

I am currently working on a book about Scythians and Amazons, to which end I shall be researching in Athens at Easter.

Emma Gee

I have just completed my Ph.D. at Cambridge, on ancient astronomy, particularly as it is incarnate in the *Fasti* of Ovid. My current project is the conversion of my thesis into a Cambridge Classical Monograph.

This will be followed by a scholarly edition of and commentary on the *Aratea* of Cicero, not just bad poetry but an important translation of the work of the Hellenistic astronomical didactic poet Aratus into Latin.

Chris Gill

I have recently completed a new translation of Plato's *Symposium* for Penguin Classics.

Presently, I am working on a book entitled *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought* to be published with Oxford University Press.

[Chris has been awarded the Runciman Prize for his book *Epic, Tragedy, and Philosophy: the Self in Dialogue* (OUP, 1996).]

John Marr

My recent research interest has been in the field of Greek history and politics during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. I have been working on articles on the causes of the Peloponnesian War and the text and arguments of the "Old Oligarch".

But my major research project is an edition of Plutarch's *Life of Themistocles* for Aris and Phillips. This will comprise an introduction, bibliography, text, facing page translation, and commentary concentrating on historical issues. The book is due to be published this year, and will be the first English language edition of the *Themistocles* to include all the above within one volume.

Eireann Marshall

I am working now on the final version of my doctoral thesis on *Constructing the Barbarian in Ancient Libya*. After submission, I shall be working on a volume of classical art, which is entitled *Messages from the Past: Representation in Antiquity*.

The volume will focus on the process of viewing and explore the idea that images are "messages" which can be read in a variety of ways.

I am also working on several other research projects, the most important of which is the publication of the proceedings of the Pollution conference held here in Exeter in 1995.

Norman Postlethwaite

My current research topics are:

a) a study of the role of Zeus the Dying God in the religion of Bronze Age Crete, and possible evidence for it in the poems of Homer.

b) a study of the final scene of the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18, on which it may be possible to identify the representation of the *geranos*, the dance which Theseus and Ariadne danced after the death of the Minotaur; also the significance of the Shield scene for other parts of the poem.

c) a preliminary survey of non-verbal communication, particularly face and hand gesture, in the *Iliad*.

Richard Seaford

I am engaged on a major project on the effects of the development of money on early Greek culture (especially tragedy and philosophy). This has involved me in inquiring whether money existed in the Ancient Near East (answer: no. The Greeks were the first people to use what we think of as money). A first instalment, entitled "Tragic Money", will appear in the next issue of *JHS*.

John Wilkins

I am in the final stages of my study of food and eating in the fragments of Greek comedy. This book, *The Wise Men at Dinner: Food, Comedy and Athenaeus*, will be completed over the summer.

The next project is an edition of Galen's *de alimentorum facultatibus*, a neglected text which is of the greatest interest to those working on the role of food in history. This edition will be my first detailed study of a medical author and will lead on to another monograph on Galen, Oppian and Athenaeus, Greek authors of the Roman imperial period who wrote about food and biology in wide-ranging ways.

Peter Wiseman

My new book, *Roman Drama and Roman History*, published in April 1998, is concerned among other things with the idea that drama may have been a major element in the creation of the Romans' idea of their own past before the creation of Roman literary historiography about 200 B.C. Also I have an article appearing in the next *Greece and Rome* on "Roman Republic, Year One" - an analysis not of

real history, but of the foundation legends of the Republic - and a chapter in a forthcoming book on Caesar as a historian, arguing for *de bello Gallico* as a serial publication for the common people of Rome.

In general, I continue to be interested in Roman history and mythology, and the ways they overlapped in the stories the Romans told about themselves.

Dissertations 1997

The following dissertations were completed in the Department of Classics and Ancient History during 1997:

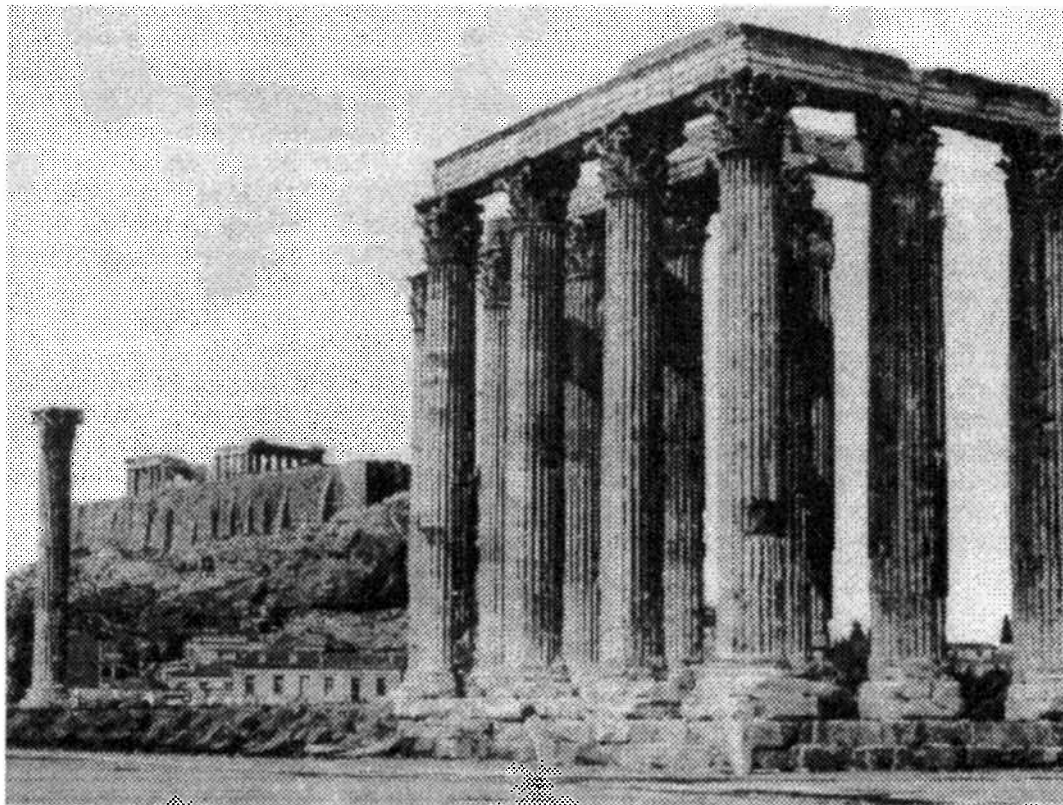
MA in Roman Myth and History:

Hannah Carrington - "The Nymphs of Latium"

Melanie Young - "*Devotio*: Roman Legends of Self-Sacrifice"

PhD:

Michael Hodgkinson - "Licinius Macer and the Historiography of the Early Republic"
(subject to confirmation by Faculty and Senate)



The 22nd Jackson Knight Memorial Lecture
Roman History since Rostovtzeff, With or Without Images
by Richard Brilliant

In the preface to M. Rostovtzeff's magisterial work, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, first published in 1926, this great historian of Antiquity wrote:

I regret that I have been unable in this volume to deal with the third aspect of the same development - the spiritual, intellectual and artistic life of the empire. Without a thorough treatment of those sides of life the picture must be clearly one-sided and incomplete...Such an exposition must find a place in a work which aims at presenting a complete picture of the Roman Empire...The fact is that the spiritual, intellectual and artistic life of the Empire developed along the same lines as its economic life...

The illustrations (80 in number with extensive accompanying commentary) which I have added to the text are not intended to amuse or please the reader. They are an essential part of the book, as essential, in fact, as are the notes and the quotations from the large store of archaeological evidence which for a student of social and economic life is as important and as indispensable as the written evidence.

Yet, almost forty years later, A.H.M. Jones published his *The Later Roman Empire 284 - 602* (1964) in two massive volumes, containing 1461 pages of text and not a single illustration. Despite Rostovtzeff's well-known precedent and despite the abundant visual material for the period readily available in collections of artworks, archaeological artefacts, and photographs, Jones failed to resort to illustrations, even as ancillary supplements to his ample text whose supporting apparatus criticus suggests scholarly thoroughness. Perhaps, Jones' volumes might have been shorter had he included images, not passively as complementary citations but as integral parts of his arguments, images of works of art and architecture no less implicated in Late Roman culture than the written sources on which he so exclusively depended. Shades of Edward Gibbon, who at least was moved to write by the ruins of the Roman Forum!

But Jones and his dependency on the word, his logocentric attitude about the

historian's task, are not isolated in the recent historiography of Antiquity. Erich S. Gruen's important study, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (1984) offer the reader 751 pages of authoritative text unrelieved by a single illustration; Elizabeth Rawson's, *Roman Culture and Society* (1991), a collection of her previously published papers 598 pages long, has one illustration, a frontispiece photograph of Rawson herself; even the last essay, "The Antiquarian Tradition; Spoils and Representations of Foreign Armour", originally published in 1990, has no illustrations; and Peter Green's *Alexander to Actium. The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (1990) contains 908 pages of text, 30 maps and 217 black and white illustrations with brief captions - mostly tired examples - but an informative list of illustrations is lacking despite chapters entitled "Early Hellenistic Art" and "Late Hellenistic Art", whilst he gave ample room to a long chronology, genealogical tables, extensive notes, bibliography and an index. Even for Green, it would appear that illustrations, and *a fortiori* the material objects to which they refer, play a secondary role in his reconstruction of Hellenistic history, if that.

Once again Rostovtzeff's claim that all the surviving evidence of the ancient past should be marshalled by the historian seems to have gone unremarked. In his well-illustrated, *The Social And Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (1941, Second impression 1952), Rostovtzeff clearly stated his ecumenical position in the preface:

As regards the material used in the treatment of my subject, I have tried not to confine myself to written sources, but also to utilise to the utmost the archaeological and numismatic testimony...The illustrations are not intended to amuse the reader and to console him for the dryness of the text and notes. They form an important constituent of my work. It was no easy task to select from the thousands of objects stored in museums and from the hundreds of extant ruins of ancient buildings and towns the most typical and instructive...I have endeavoured to keep a fair balance between the two groups of monu-

ments: the sculptures, paintings, mosaics and ruins of ancient settlements which reflect ancient life, and those which illustrate the economic activity of the Hellenistic world, especially in the field of industry.

Rostovtzeff was fully aware that the objects he illustrated did not, could not, speak for themselves (*res ipsae non loquantur*) but needed to be contextualised effectively in a social environment and properly interpreted as instruments of its expression. His perceptive commentaries

on the illustrations did not exhaust themselves in description, that ekphrastic reversion which can defeat itself in sterile circularity (all too common!). Rather, he used the images as points of reference or orientation, as factors in a responsive, or interactive relationship between various makers and consumers, or as material embodiments of cultural values, attitudes and customs maintained by different levels of ancient society, often unrepresented by texts.

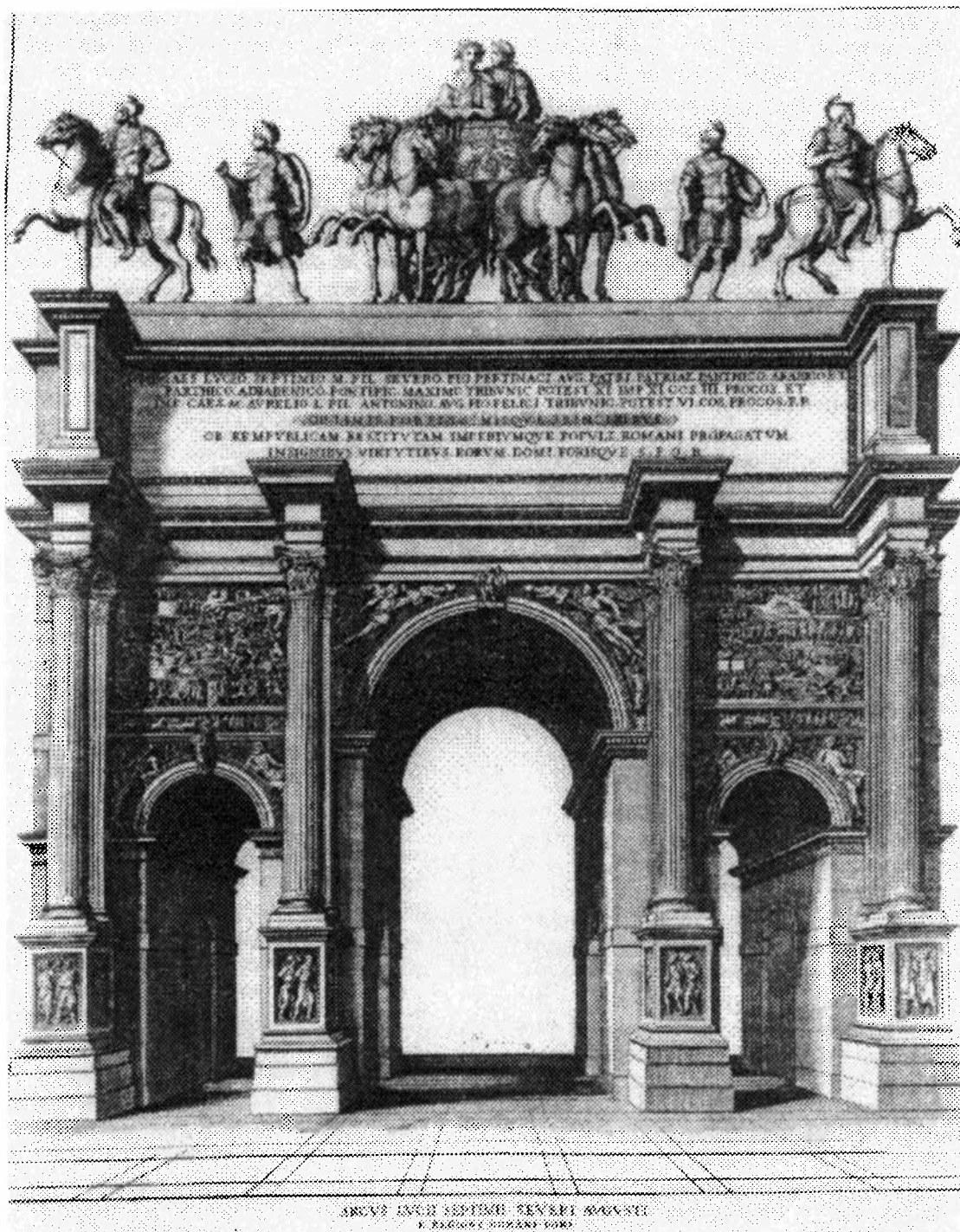


Fig. 1 The Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum, after P.S. Bartoli, *Triumphalis arcus* (1690) (?) f. 7.

Even the great Theodor Mommsen, whose vision of Antiquity was as broad, if more detailed and systematic than Rostovtzeff's, and who was both a social and institutional historian of Rome, failed to see the "big picture" in visual terms. Surely his editorship of the *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum* was a triumph of German positivist scholarship. Still, Mommsen seemed to consider the inscriptions almost as disembodied entities, existing in some mental space of his own and of the ancient Romans, although he acknowledged their nature as public documents. In the *Corpus* Mommsen assembled, categorised and connected the inscriptions as if they were separable from the monuments on which they were inscribed; the texts appeared in isolation, unaffected either by the immediate circumstances of their exposition or by the responses elicited from the members of the Roman public who encountered them positioned on their way, looked at them, and, if adequately educated, read them too. Although Mommsen and his successors were careful to locate the inscriptions topographically, the visual and psychological properties of their specific place-

ment in the public space - where they often competed for attention - were peripheral to their primary concern for the recording of texts. Yet inscriptions in plain sight, even when modest, resemble billboards, advertisements or sign posts asserting their total visibility even more than their supposed legibility.

Roman inscriptions are affixed to larger objects; they are situated in time and place, dependent on their ostensible purpose and contemporary relevance, even if their expression, their statements may be formulaic; and they are usually limited to certain types of functions - dedications, state monuments, decrees and tombal commemoratives, such as those encountered in large numbers on the Via Appia, on the roads leading away from Pompeii or Ostia or near Roman frontier fortifications. Inscriptions have also been crafted by stone masons, either well or badly, and they are subject to alteration (the Attic inscription on the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum, Fig. 1), or deliberate, if pious misrepresentation (e.g. the architrave reference to Agrippa on Hadrian's Pantheon in Rome), or other damaging fates.

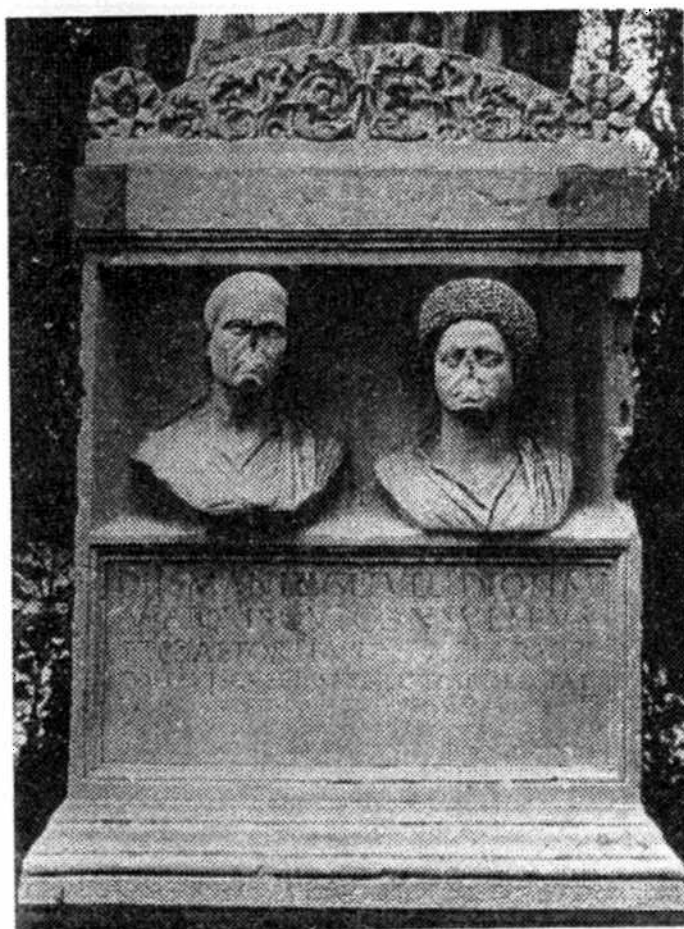


Fig.2 Funerary altar of Lucius Tullius Diotimus and Britlla Festa, early second century C.E., Villa Borghese, Rome; photo, the author.

However important the linguistic message of the inscription may have been, the inscription itself, carved in stone, painted on a smoothed surface or cast in bronze letters, existed as an appendage to a real object, often of great visual prominence in its own right. That object - monumental arch or grave stele, (Fig.2) - was the vehicle conveying a complex message, combining text and image to a viewer accustomed to such experiences but whose attention had been drawn to the particular exemplar. In addition, the inscription exists as a reserved visual field imposed on a larger visual field. To ignore the dependence of one upon the other is to misconstrue the force of the ensemble and to under-estimate the relative priority of the individual elements and the significance of the formal conventions of design at work.

The inscription-bearing object has a reality, a historical presence greater than the inscription alone because it preserves the presentness of its original function and the physicality of the thing actually seen in its place by ancient Romans. The *realia* of that object can only be partially conveyed by photographic or other figural representations, even elaborate reconstructions but, at least, the integrity of the original has not been compromised by the complete detachment of text from image. Of course, one must be selective and a few illustrative examples may serve to characterise an entire monumental repertory for the sake of economy. The scholar sensitive to the marriage of text and image should be able to determine how many reproductions are necessary to modify the illusion, so apparent on the printed pages of the *Corpus*, that inscriptions exist only in mental space and not in the world of ordinary experience.

The philological underpinnings of Classical scholarship have also imposed a prison-house of language on historical studies of a traditional nature. Indeed, the pre-emptive reliance on language preserved in ancient *written* texts of any kind seems to have deprived the study of Roman Antiquity of its immediacy. Orality and visual culture, embodying the everyday experience of the ancients, have too often been relegated to the province of "social history", as if the interactive nature of these forms of expression lacks evidentiary reliability. Paul Zanker's recent study, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (1988), made a valiant and successful effort to connect patron, programme, commission, monument, message and responsive public in a contin-

uum of action and reaction whose validity has been accepted precisely because he contextualised the Romans' visual experience so firmly in history. Similarly the spoken utterances of the Romans and their transitory, interactive patterns of behaviour have been rediscovered in a series of studies documenting the communicatory acts which defined, even established, the ancient social environment preserved in text and image: e.g. Andreas Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (1970, a reprinting of articles published in the 1930s); my own *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (1963); Sabine G. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (1981). Such works mediating between history and art history, represent, however, but a small fraction of the flood of studies on Roman social relations that continue to be devoid of images or references to them.

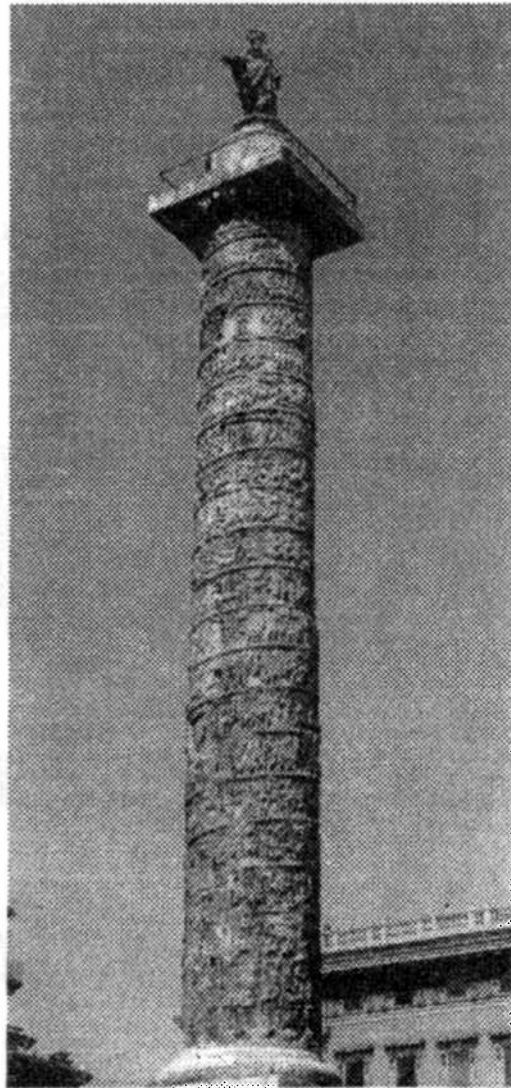


Fig.3 A view of the Column of Marcus Aurelius, Rome; photo, the author.

Nevertheless, the *testimonia* of Antiquity may take many shapes, but neither texts nor images are innocent of interpretation. The helical reliefs of the Columns of Trajan or Marcus Aurelius in Rome, great monuments of Roman art and powerful commemoratives of Roman military accomplishments on the frontier, have often served as visual histories, apparently documenting the "actual" events of the various campaigns for the benefit of viewers in Rome - and Roman historians.

The specificity of the extensive reliefs has been very seductive, their explicit depiction of Roman soldiers and barbarian warriors, of the machines of war, of Roman camps and enemy villages and of terrain, constituting a veritable encyclopaedia of historical facts, a visual counterpart to the written accounts of these wars that did not survive. And yet, the visual narratives of battles won and ene-

mies defeated are very hard to follow as the reliefs move in continuous ribbons, wound around and up the column shafts, moving temporarily out of sight only to reappear displaced and discontinuous at a higher level, (Fig.3). Visual narratives are not equivalent to narrative texts, not the least because "before" and "after" have very different meanings when contrasting the linear, forward movement of textual time with the simultaneity of perception available to a viewer (see my *Visual Narratives*, 1984). Even the ostensible narrativity of the Column reliefs may have been secondary to their annunciative quality as a manifestation of the *realia* of Imperial victory, similar in function to the ensemble of triumphal arch, empanelled reliefs and attic inscription on the Severan Arch, (Fig.1).

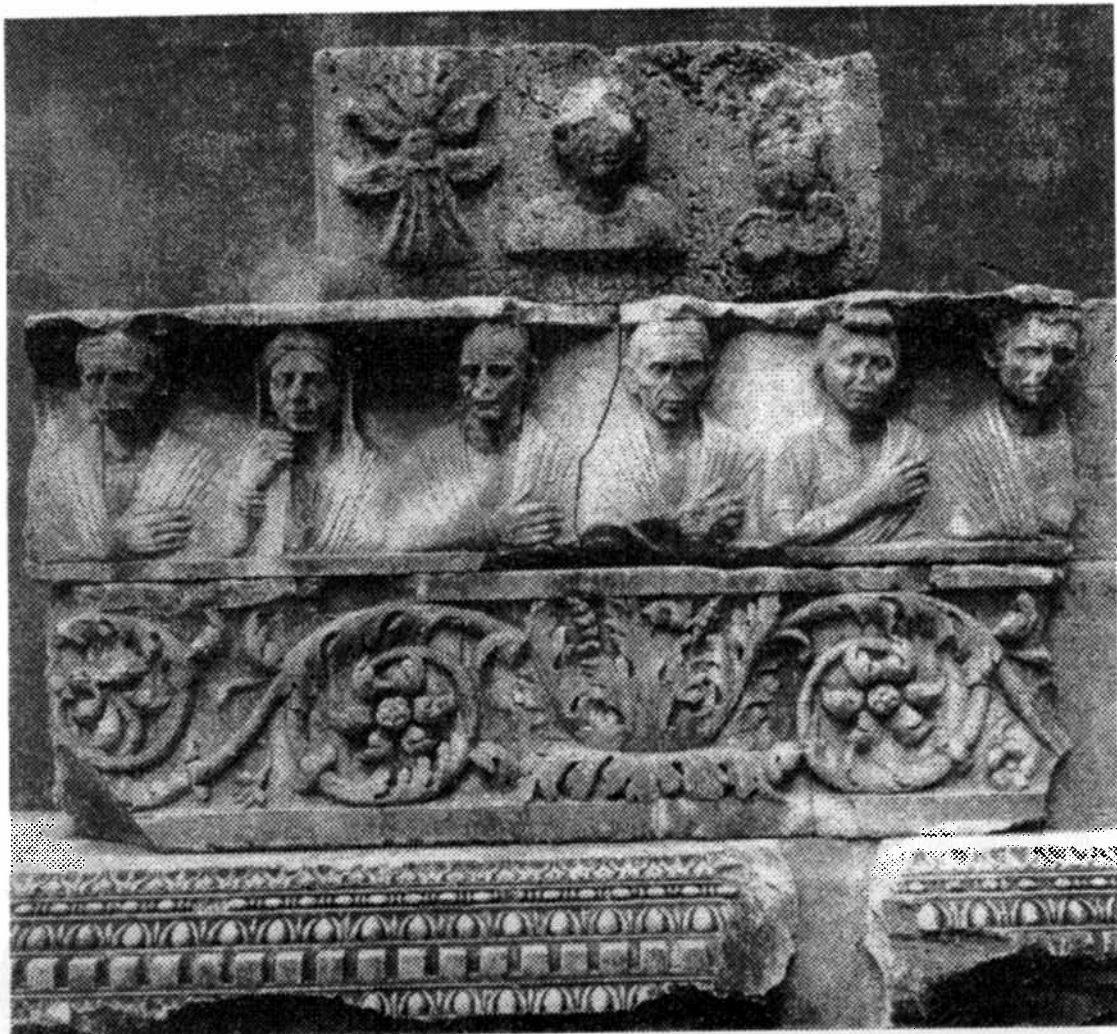


Fig.4 Sepulchral relief of Roman freedmen and their dependents, Augustan, in the Conservatori Museum, Rome; photo, the German Archaeological Institute in Rome, no. 36.523.

"Reading" is a complicated process, to be sure, one requiring considerable visual

and mental sophistication - and practice. But, reading a verbal text is not the same

as reading a visual image, despite the familiar assumption that "reading" is reading and the explication of linguistic expression by means of language is essentially the same process as analysing images. Perhaps the fundamental difference in the attempts to understand these distinct media in their own terms of representation can be gathered from a comparison of three Roman sepulchral monuments: the first is a Roman funerary altar of the early second century C.E. in the Villa Borghese, Rome, displaying portrait busts of Lucius Tullius Diotimus and his wife Brittia Festa, whose identities as well as the details of Diotimus' career have been established by the accompanying inscription, (Fig.2). The second, an anonymous early Imperial grave relief, probably of freedmen (see Valentin Kockel, *Porträtreliefs Stadtrömischer Grabbauten: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und zum Verständnis des spätrepublikanisch-frühkaiserzeitlichen Privatporträts*, 1993), presents an unflattering row of male and female portraits lacking further identification and original context of application; the stark, even grim, line-up of male and female busts has been incongruously sandwiched between other fragments of Roman art to which, most emphatically, it does not belong, although the present assembly of discrepant pieces has been a familiar spectacle in the Conser-

vatori for many years, (Fig.4). Finally, and surely the most deprived of its original character, is the now headless pair of a man and a woman - husband and wife - couched together on the lid of a Roman third century sarcophagus, in the Terme garden, (Fig.5).

Not one of these three monuments is complete. The Borghese altar, the best preserved, was surely moved from its original location; the relief of freedmen and their dependants was once located on a tomb somewhere on the outskirts of the city; and the sarcophagus lid is not only headless but has been separated from the box on which it once sat in some unknown tomb. The hollowed cavities which once held the portraits of husband and wife, individually carved by a specialist, resemble structurally the *lacunae* in inscribed texts which can be filled, reliably, by scholars familiar with the language and expressions, even abbreviations conventionally employed in comparable, better preserved examples. However, the missing portraits cannot be accurately or even reliably replaced, because their individual physiognomy cannot ever be recovered - unless the missing heads themselves turn up; their generic types can be supplied with some degree of certainty on the basis of the artistic conventions operating in this period and for this situation.



Fig.5 Lid of a Roman third century sarcophagus, Terme Museum, Rome; photo, the author.

One may deduce, on one hand, that linguistic formulae, typical of most inscriptions, exhibit a greater conformance to the stereotype, whilst greater variability characterises works of visual art, especially when individually sculpted. It is also quite evident that, despite the passage of two centuries and the loss of their original context, Roman attitudes about personhood, position and relationship remain noticeably consistent, if the viewer but look with a discerning eye. The subordination of the inscription to the aggressive busts of husband and wife on the Borghese altar, (Fig.2), also marks the priority of image over text in the consciousness of both the patron and audience.

Which medium, the visual or the verbal,

has priority in a particular circumstance and for a particular Roman audience, may not be the central issue in historical studies. Still, this persistent subordination of the visual aspects of ancient Roman society should be modified, if one wishes to grasp the lived-in character of that society. The definition and analysis of visuality in twentieth century cultural studies (e.g. Guy Debord, *La société du spectacle*, 1967) has broad ramifications, even beyond Marxist interpretations of modern consumerist culture; many of its lines of inquiry apply, as well, to an ancient society of spectacle whose people were trained to respond to the visual sign - Rome.

Richard Brilliant is the A.S. Garbedian Professor of Humanities at Columbia University in New York.

An Interview with Walter Burkert

by Deborah Gentry

Classical scholars are not generally thought of primarily as writers, although it is through your many publications on our library's shelves that you will be known to most of this magazine's readers. Do you find it easy to write? Which would you say was the most enjoyable to write of your books and why?

I do not really enjoy writing. The thrill is in discovering new phenomena, new details, new perspectives, and gratification comes from putting pieces together and seeing how they fit. Actual writing is a job one has to put up with, using some rhetoric, hoping for some inspiration; writing notes is a chore with which we have to pay for any previous joy.

Homo Necans and *The Orientalizing Revolution* are the two books I really wanted to write, independent from outside suggestions and obligations; here I felt as if I was exploring new territory. On the other hand it was most enjoyable to compose *Structure and History*, the Sather Lectures, because of the uniquely stimulating and exhilarating atmosphere at Berkeley in 1977.

The impact of "*Homo Necans*" in subsequent scholarship has been enormous. What do you, as the author, think will be its most lasting influence? Did you foresee this at the time of publication?

I am not a prophet. When publishing *Homo Necans*, I knew I had important things to say, after struggling for about ten years through unforeseen twisting between Karl Meuli and Konrad Lorenz, from "myth and ritual" via "initiation" to "sacrifice".

For some years after publication, I did not expect much reaction. Reinhold Merkelbach had given me friendly advice not to publish such a book before I had become a professor; years later I learned that some colleagues had decided that the author of such a book was unfit to become editor of a philological journal.

In the meantime, the theme of "sacrifice" has established its role in the interpretation of tragedy and in the analysis of the polis system, and has won some respect in general anthropological studies too.

What - following Meuli - I felt to be the central issue, the imperative of humanity amidst the necessity of violence, has hardly been touched. But perhaps one must distinguish between issues fit for public debate and private hopes or idiosyncrasies.

If one takes *Homo Necans*, *Ancient Mystery Cults* and *The Orientalising Revolution*, all these have had the effect of widening dramatically the areas to be considered in assessing the context for the study of Greek society, religion, thought and art. Do you think

there are any respects in which classical scholarship remains too narrowly focused on "mainstream" Greek culture?

I hope others will come to the fore to do interesting things. I, for one, did not develop the feminist perspective. I also have the impression that we do not yet really understand the ancient economical systems, especially the ups and downs during the imperial epoch; and much remains to be done for the turmoils of "the end of antiquity", if there ever was such an end. What does "decline of culture" (see Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 244) really mean and how does it come about?

The more imminent problem seems to be that "mainstream culture" is dwindling away in our own surroundings. It remains to be hoped that there will still be people who learn ancient Greek to such an extent that they can really understand and enjoy those central texts of a very special quality.

On an issue which you may or may not regard as related, what do you see as the relevant strengths and weaknesses of "continental" as opposed to "Anglo-American" scholarship (assuming there is a clear-cut distinction to be made)?

I think the interrelations have become much more complicated than an opposition of "continental" and "Anglo-American" scholarship would suggest. The emigrations and immigrations due to the Nazi interval (to mention just Eduard Fraenkel, Rudolf Pfeiffer, Werner Jaeger and Kurt von Fritz) have done much to mix up German and Anglo-Saxon traditions, whereas on the "continent" there is much diversity, nay separation: Interaction between French and German scholarship remains limited; Italians keep more contacts to both. Still in France as well as in Germany there are widely differing tendencies between strictly textual philology, modernising approaches to interpretation and cultural theory. Rudolf Kassel, for example, has done admirable work quite distinct from my own tentative studies. There are no "schools".

At the Bristol Conference on "Mythos into Logos" in 1996, the title was posed as a question. For those who could not make up their minds at the time, do you agree that this is a questionable statement, or indeed that it is right to ask at all?

I think "Myth into Logos" is a meaningful question, but it is not a formula that covers the whole of classical *Geistesgeschichte*. It refers just to one pathway in the development of thought and literature. It does not imply that there ever was *mythos* without *logos*, some happy childhood of humanity surrounded by fairytales without practical intelligence and rational strategies, nor that the use of myths in argumentation ever came to an end, especially in the context of group interests and group identity. By the way, the use of the word *logos* in Ancient Greek is very complicated and does not coincide with the modern concept of logic or science.

Now for a question which everyone finds difficult. If you could discover one lost literary work what would it be?

I would be most curious to see the book of Anaximandros. It must have been *rarisimum* even in antiquity, and the more I try to understand the "Presocratics", the more I realise we have no idea what it was really about. The Derveni papyrus has given a taste of unexpected and baffling discovery. Alas this will hardly happen a second time.

Not to confine ourselves to literary texts, what is the question which you would most like to have answered by the discovery of a new piece of archaeological evidence?

Being a philologist, after all, I would hope for inscriptions together with archaeological findings, especially in the context of the Homeric question. To mention realistic possibilities: What about a seal of "King Priamos" at Troy, in whatever language, or the second copy of the treaty of Alak-sandus of Wilusa, which would finally establish the site of Wilusa (Ilios)? Or a dedication to Chios, in the style, say, of the Apollon of Mantiklos:

Τοῦτ' ἀνέθηκεν Ὀμηρος Ἀπόλλωνι
κλυτοτόξῳ ...?

Finally, when will our readers next have the opportunity to hear you speak in England?

I have been invited to the Classical Association Conference in Lampeter, Wales, where I plan to speak on the *Odyssey* on April 7th, 1998.

Walter Burkert is Emeritus Professor at the University of Zurich in Switzerland. His books include, *Homo Necans*, *The Orientalising Revolution*, *Ancient Mystery Cults and Greek Religion*.

Travelling in Time: A Greek Odyssey

by Jill Marrington

"I have gazed upon the face of Agamemnon" is probably one of history's biggest misquotes, for - as shown by David Traill - the text of Heinrich Schliemann's 1876 telegram describing the finds at Mycenae said nothing of so explicit and quotable a nature.¹ But the phrase evolved because it expressed such a fundamental human emotion: a feeling of awe (shared more recently by Professor Andronikos at Vergina in 1977, when he disclosed the tomb of Philip II) that begins with the find itself, encompassing the triumph of its actually turning up where predicted and, increasingly, the realisation that something one had only read about in ancient history had really existed, and what is more, still does exist to the extent that one may hold it in one's own hands or at least see it with one's own eyes.

It is this emotional connection that I call 'time travelling'. Given that I myself am, sadly, never going to be a famous archaeologist, that moment of glory sought by so many and granted to so few is unlikely ever to be mine. But I can get close. I can go to Vergina and marvel at the tomb frontage believed (though this is still in dispute) to be that of Philip II of Macedonia, gazing up at the faded (and extremely rare) paintwork on doors sealed in 336BC by Alexander the Great. Further, I can go to the Archaeological Museum at Thessaloniki and be separated only by a pane of glass from objects in daily use by the Macedonian royal family, and the awesome solid gold larnax in which Philip's bones were put to rest. A few years ago, I could even see in the same museum the body purported to be Philip himself (though he has now, inexplicably, gone away for a face-lift).

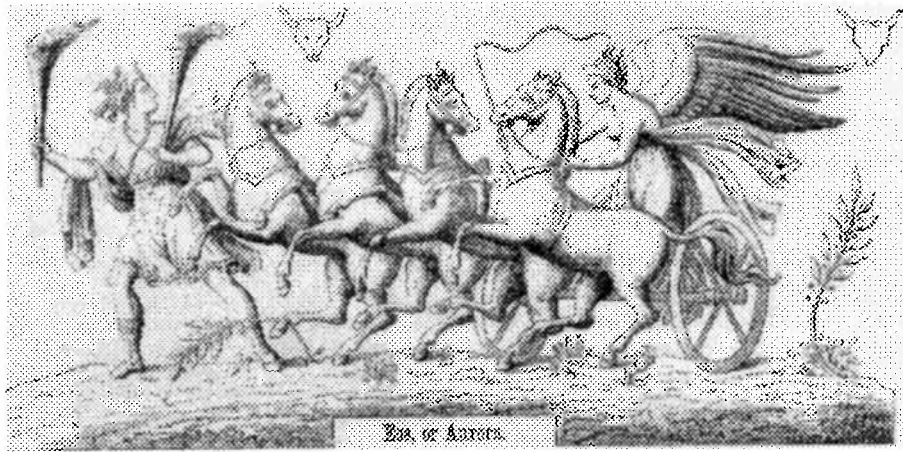
There is a fierce joy of recognition when one crosses the void of centuries, linking one's knowledge of the past to the indisputable solidity of the historical artefact. To see is to believe, man having ever put the evidence of his eyes foremost amongst his perceptions. The physical reality of this connection has, for me personally, been inspirational. Yet there is more. An object can be viewed, its beauty, value and utility assessed and assimilated. Legendary mosaics can be seen *in situ* and famous statuary in the original (sights certainly not to be deni-

grated). But mosaic floors are no longer to be walked on, statues not to be touched and archaeological finds are not only seen out of context but often made more distant to us by reason of their obsolescence. The fabulous gryphon tripods of Samos, for example, are stunning, but only in a remote artistic way: they are no longer intimate to us with the familiarity of frequent use. What remains immutable, however, is the fabric of the land itself. Poseidon's wrath notwithstanding, the Greek landscape is essentially still the same. Mountains still stand, stark and silent; the sun still burns out of a relentless sky; goats still wander scrubby hillsides and the olives are as ageless as the landscape itself. Two things separate us from ancient history: time and distance. Eliminating one of them is half the journey.

By placing oneself spatially in a temporally important setting, therefore, it becomes possible to cast one's mind adrift on the oceans of the past. I was undeniably impressed, at Vergina, to see Philip's tomb. But the crowds of visitors in the busy modern surroundings diminished the connection, scaffolding and glass panels confining it to the present. When I went on up the hill, though, and sat on a broken pillar in the ancient ruined palace of Aigai, where once Alexander had run as a child, I began to feel the link solidifying. The last few tourists drifted off; for a few brief minutes I was alone. The absolute silence comprehended the gentle susurrations of insects, the stillness contained the scurrying of ants in the dust and the ancient stone reflected back the eternal heat of the Greek sunlight. The scent of wild mountain herbs drifted on the air. No man-made sound intruded. If I closed my eyes tightly enough and felt, just felt... I might begin to travel back in time, to imagine myself an inhabitant of that wild and lonely place which had once been so busy and cultured.

From the ancient palace, a path winds down the hillside through the olives and harsh grass to a theatre carved out of the hillside, hidden some 200 metres below. As I walked slowly down the refurbished flagstones, it was possible to visualise the final journey of the king, extrapolated here from the lost books of Quintus Curtius, by John Freinshem:

¹ Traill, D. (1995) *Schliemann of Troy - Treasure and Deceit*. John Murray, London, p163.



Rosy-fingered Dawn, child of the morning, (Murray (1873) *Manual of Mythology*)

The day succeeding the feast was assigned to entertainments of the theatre, to which the guests and attendants of Philip began to move by dawn, marshalled in stately order. Twelve statues of the gods were borne in procession; a thirteenth statue followed, of more exquisite materials and workmanship, representing the king of Macedon, by which it was presumptuously indicated that he was not unworthy to rank among the divinities. When the Greeks and Macedonians were seated in the theatre, Philip came out of his palace, attended by the two Alexanders, his son and son-in-law. Clothed in a white, flowing robe, the kind of habili-ment in which the Grecian deities were usually represented, - he moved exultingly forward, evidently gratified by the applauses of admiring crowds. His guards had been ordered to keep at a distance, in order to show the confidence of the king in the affec-tions of his people, and in the loyalty of the states and nations his allies. Philip had now arrived at the entrance of the theatre, where in a narrow pas-sage he found a young Macedonian nobleman waiting his approach; it was Pausanias; the king reached the spot; Pausanias drew his poniard, and plunged it into his heart; and the con-queror of Greece, and terror of Asia, fell prostrate, and instantly expired.

To be on that twisting path, to stand at the entrance to that theatre, is to see how cleverly Pausanias used the topography to carry out his crime. I halted at a spot where something told me, "This is it! It was here!" This is where I - as Philip - crumpled to the ground when the blade sank into my heart. This is where I - as Alexander now - pushed my way through

to the side of my murdered father and tried to give chase to Pausanias. And as I raised my eyes from the king's body and looked out over the timeless landscape, I could see where a horse might have been tethered, where the escaping horseman might have headed and where, in all probability, he would have been brought down by Alexander's men. This is what I mean by time travel - the connection of the eyes and the mind.

My first experience of time travelling oc-curred at Olympia, a site redolent with ancient association. Not only the sub-stantial ruins of a very considerable sporting, religious and commercial opera-tion remain here; not only does Praxiteles' Hermes preside in person over the mu-seum; but it is still possible and deeply evocative to enter the olympic stadium itself, ducking through the original arched brick tunnel as a fifth-century runner, to emerge into an empty but expectant arena, where imaginary massed specta-tors would lounge on the grassy banks, nibbling olives and sharp sheep's cheese; you can still put your foot on the original starters' block and listen for the echo of ancient approbation as you hurtle up the track.

A Buddhist friend of mine recently asked me whether I had ever felt "temporal vibes" and I told her of these journeys in a place whose history and culture has ab-sorbed my mind for so long that I find it impossible to travel anywhere in Greece without sensing its past associations. Be-ing physically in the places where those events took place which I have read about since childhood brings it all alive in a way that library research can never achieve. Strategy is all very well on paper, but only confirming the lie of the land visually will bring it fully home how and where, for in-stance, battles were fought, wars won or lost. History can leap off the page as one

stands beneath the worn lion monument at Chaeronea and listens for the thunder of Alexander's cavalry, or when one climbs to the top of the ridge overlooking the Bay of Actium and sees just what a mistake it was for Antony to leave his strategic vantage point in the narrows (Plut. *Ant.* 65). One can survey the uninterrupted vistas from Mycenae's citadel and realise how impossible it would be for anyone to sneak up undetected, or how tricky it would be to take Lesbos, with its huge hidden harbours. One may note just how close the coast of Turkey is to those eastern Ionian islands (clearly visible with the naked eye) and understand why they were the subject of such constant conflict.

Moreover, not only can one experience first-hand the places described by ancient sources, but conversely it is immensely satisfying to rediscover on the page places one can recognise and remember and know that they are still there to be enjoyed, such as the creations of the Samians "... who are responsible for three of the greatest building and engineering feats in the Greek world" (Hdt. 3.60). "Ooh, I've been there!" I cry. I've stood in Eupalinus' tunnel and seen where the water-carrying channel was hewn out of the sixth-century rock (Hdt. 3.60); I've admired the great artificial harbour whence Polycrates' famous ring was discarded and fatefully returned inside a fish (Hdt. 3.41-2); I've been to "the biggest of

all known Greek temples" (3.60), the Heraion, and sat peacefully until it emptied of modern life, when I removed my shoes and processed solemnly as a celebrant along the Sacred Way. I've been to Delos and admired its sacred lions, and gazed across at "... Rhenea, which is so close to Delos that when Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, ... conquered Rhenea, he dedicated it to the Delian Apollo by binding it to Delos with a chain" (Thuc. 3.104).

I've watched the rosy-fingered dawn (*Od.* 2.1) from a ship on the wine-dark sea (*Od.* 2.421), seen dolphins in its wake and looked across the Thermaic Gulf in that fleeting instant when the clouds opened to disclose the lofty peak of Olympus... I've sat alone on fragrant hill-sides and watched wild tortoises pick their way among the bushes of oregano and thyme. I've seen the skeletons of long-dead sheep and goats picked clean on a remote hillside hard by an ancient theatre and I've travelled in a small boat into the mouth of the underworld at Taenaron (Cape Matapan; Paus. 3.25.5). I've been to Greece, to its sights, its sounds, its smells and its memories; I've travelled there in space and in time; in many ways, I have been to Ancient Greece.

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Combat between Greeks and Amazons, (Murray, (1873) *Manual of Mythology*)

Plato's *μανία* at Delphi Again?

by Larry Shenfield

This paper grew out of my asking myself recently, How right was Plato to say in his *Phaedrus* that the Pythia of the Delphic Oracle was "mad" (244b1) when she prophesied? How "mad" was she? If not by vapours from a chasm, had the Pythia's mind become unbalanced, or was she in some kind of ecstasy, frenzy or trance? The answer, I thought, must hinge on what Plato meant by *mania*, on which scholars seem never to have agreed when translating, even after E. R. Dodds' study (Chapter III, 'The Blessings of Madness') in his well-known *The Greeks and the Irrational* (1951), 64-101. The conflicting evidence of contemporary sources, compounded by the often contradictory pronouncements of both classicists and archaeologists in our own century, have not helped. I may fail likewise to provide answers here; but will report a dramatic new discovery, and review scholarly hypotheses for the intention behind Plato's enigmatic choice of words to describe the Pythia's clairvoyance or inspiration. The Delphic Oracle has been neglected by classicists as a major topic for more than a decade; a revival of interest is perhaps overdue.

To satisfy my curiosity, I began by observing that Plato (at 244a) represents Socrates as denying that *mania*, "madness" (as translated controversially by C. J. Rowe (1986), similarly by R. Hackforth (1952) and Dodds (1951) 64 ff.) "is an evil." He then qualifies this statement, possibly intended to startle us, by adding: "...the greatest of goods come to us through madness (*διὰ μανίας*), provided that it is bestowed by divine gift (244a7-8). This paradox was to be my most important clue, as Plato expressly excludes (at 244d5-9 and 265a5-11) mental derangement or madness caused by disease, although Greeks did acknowledge their possible supernatural origin (Dodds 1951, 65-7). He also excludes the *mania* "madness" driven by anger, shame, or revenge such as we find in Homer and Greek tragedy.

Importantly I found that Plato explains his "evil" versus "divine" madness by dividing the latter into four clear types, under four patron "gods" (at 244a8-245a9, summarized later in the text at 265b1-5). He assigns the inspiration of "prophetic madness" (*μαντικήν ἐπίνοιαν*) to Apollo;

of ritual or "telestic" madness (*Διονύσου τελεστικήν*) to Dionysus; of "poetic madness" (*Μουσῶν ποιητικήν*) to the Muses; and the inspiration of the "erotic madness of love" (*ἐρωτικήν μανίαν*) to Aphrodite (Dodds 1951, 64). My problem remained, not simply to understand the meaning of *mania*, which is a general word referring to a state of mind that is not entirely rational; but to understand the nature of the "divine madness" which Plato ascribes to the Pythia.¹ Did he mean to imply ecstasy or frenzy? I soon realised that for my inquiries this was just the beginning.

Hackforth (1952, 58-9) thought Plato by *mania* here may have meant "prophetic madness" as many do. This first occurs in Greek literature in Cassandra's ravings in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (1072 ff.), taunted by Clytemnestra who says "she is mad" (*μαίνεται* at 1064).² Almost a century later in the *Phaedrus*, Plato seems to be ascribing Cassandra's mostly raving, "frenzied prophetic madness" (*μανία* in 244a-b) to the Pythia.³ I often encountered in contemporary texts *ἐνθουσιασμός*, "divine madness" or "being inspired or possessed by the god" (once in Demokritos and again in later writers), a term implying ecstasy or frenzy. Yet Todd Compton's summation (1994, 220-23) of the behaviour of the Pythia as related repeatedly by Herodotus has led him to conclude "no shrieking or raving", "instantly comprehensible responses". And Joseph Fontenrose, after exhaustively reviewing Parke and Wormell's 1956 definitive study of all 615 then known Delphic responses, maintained (1978, 204) that there is "no support" in ancient literature or art for a "raving" Pythia. As this is contrary to a

¹ I am indebted to David Harvey for assisting me in phrasing the foregoing summary of Plato's intentions in the cited passages of the *Phaedrus*, and for his advice on aspects of their interpretation.

² Cassandra in *Agamemnon* is usually "possessed" by the prophetic powers of Apollo (according to the Chorus, at 1140), but at 1214-16 she confesses that she is calling on her own quite different, self-inspired "dreadful throes of true prophecy enabling her to "see" Thyestes' feast and other horrors. (This I take to be Dionysiac, on which I expand later.)

³ Witness G. Devereux "a raving Pythia" in *Dreams in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1976), xi note 4. While prophecy entered very little into Dionysiac cult in Greece, it was strong in its homeland of Thrace (Herodotus 7.111; Euripides *Hecuba* 1267; Pausanias 9.30.9); and Dionysus actually prophesies at the close of Euripides' *Bacchae* (1330-9).

popular belief, I decided to look for corroboration of such a sweeping statement, first of all in the text.

Was Plato, perhaps, simply thinking of *mania* as "inspired prophecy" (*μαντική ἐνθέω* 244b4, as translated by Rowe and others) which he ascribes to the Sibyl and others? Rowe himself (1986, 171, note on 244b4) thinks his own translation, "inspired", convenient but inaccurate, as *entheos* more properly means "the body has a god in it", i.e. the god speaks through a seer in the first person as mere medium as Dodds claimed (1951, 70 with 87-8).⁴ This implies "prophetic madness" where god and medium are one, different from Cassandra's, whose "madness" is imposed or *inspired* by an outside agency, a distinction that sometimes seems blurred in Plato⁵ and which sets a continuing problem for students. In any case, there seemed to be more to the question of the Pythia than texts alone can reveal, I began to suspect. In the end, a series of chance encounters in the course of literary and geographical journeys, backwards and forwards through time, brought me full circle to a possible resolution and an interesting speculation. I begin with the popular fallacy about the Pythia herself.

Blue Guide in hand, I was before long standing in front of the cliff base of Mt. Parnassus towering over Delphi, with the gorge of the Castilian spring behind me where the Pythia reputedly bathed (Pindar *Pythian Odes* iv, 163; Euripides *Ion*, 94) before drinking from the near-by Kassotis spring (Pausanias 10.24.7) and chewing on a laurel leaf before mounting her tripod to prophesy (Fig. 1).

I could see across some 400 metres to the terraced ruins of the sacred *temenos* of Apollo with at its heart the columns of the sanctuary temple re-erected in 1939-41.⁶ Beneath it, only problematically uncovered by archaeologists years ago and

not now visible, my Blue Guide told me, was the *adyton* or inner shrine, the key underground chamber in which were once the Pythia's tripod, the *omphalos* (a huge egg-shaped stone marking Delphi as the mythical centre of the earth), a gold statue of Apollo, and the traditional tomb of Dionysus. On days designated for prophesy the Pythia apparently walked from home to perform her preparatory rites at the springs and then walked to the temple (Parke and Wormell 1956, 30-31); our sources (mostly late) ascribe her "inspiration" solely to her position seated on her tripod.



Fig. 1. Aegeus before the Pythia, Themis. By the Codrus painter, Berlin 2538: Beazley ARV (2nd edn.) 1269.5.

My guide-book⁷ gave me the traditional story: from a deep "chasm" beneath the tripod in the *adyton* rose vapours which intoxicated the Pythia, who "uttered incoherent sounds" interpreted obscurely as Apollo's pronouncements "by a waiting poet" or by priests, "sometimes in hexameter verse."⁸ Impatiently I closed the book. The truth is that we do not know with any certainty whether, and how often, the Pythia was intoxicated by fumes or in

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⁵ A case in point is *epipnein* ("breathe on") in 265d.3 (quoted above). The Greek *μαντικήν ἐπιπνοίαν* "inspiration of prophecy" literally suggests a kind of "inspiring" action from outside, not the "mediumship" which Rowe (1986, 171-2) argues that Plato really meant.

⁶ I was looking at the remains of Domitian's restoration. The original 7th C BC temple (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, 277-309), burnt in 548 BC and restored for the admiration of Aeschylus, Pindar and Euripides, ruined by landslide in 373 BC and rebuilt ca. 329, had been fired by the Thracians in 88 BC. The oracle was finally suppressed in 363 A.D.

⁷ R. Barber, *Blue Guide: Greece*, 5th ed. (London, A&C Black 1988), 445.

⁸ Among many commentators, see *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2nd ed. 1970), 323, which states that the Pythia was "in a state of frenzy"; the chief scholarly source may well have been Farnell in *Cults* (1907 IV 189). See explicitly in Lloyd-Jones (1976, 67); likewise Flacelière (1938, 104-5), and Poulsen (1920, 25) viz.: her "madness was genuine enough".

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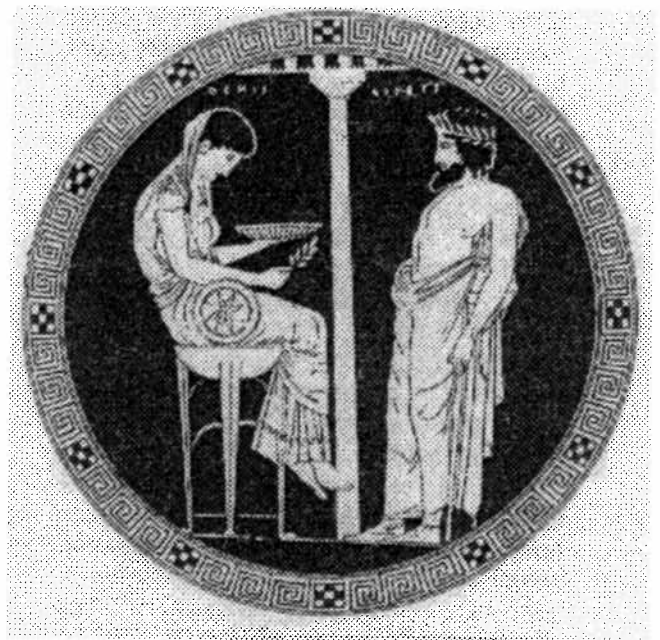


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some kind of frenzy or simply in a trance; and if so, how and of what kind.⁹ The limestone and schist strata known to underlie the temple's *adyton* were long ago held by French archaeologists to preclude any possibility of gases emanating, because they were non-volcanic.¹⁰ Fontenrose's well-known exhaustive studies of "all reliable evidence" for mantic procedures at Delphi (1978, 10 and *passim*) had led him to conclude "no chasm or vapours, no frenzy of the Pythia, and no incoherent cries interpreted by priests." The geology of the mountain behind me, however, gouged by great clefts, seemed quite capable of fissures, in view of the frequency of earthquakes in these parts. In 373 BC a destructive earthquake there followed by a landslide had followed the passing of Halley's comet. And it was there according to legend (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 300-06, 370-387; Euripides *Iphigenia in Taurus* 1244 ff.) that Apollo had killed the chthonian dragon Python and made himself master of the Oracle (whence "Pythia"). If the Pythia had originally been a priestess of the Earth Goddess, *Gê*, as some scholars believe,¹¹ the rocky gorge of Castilia might well have been the first location of her Oracle.

Back in Exeter, I found that the theory of the gorge as the possible original location had been advanced nearly a hundred years ago by A. P. Oppé (1904, 231-3, 234n.41), and simultaneously by Wilamowitz in *Hermes* 38 (1904), 579. To prophesy, Oppé maintained, the Pythia in the beginning would have required communion with the divinity esconced in the

cliffs, then later -- translocated to the temple on the slope -- contact through a hole in a floor slab (*stomion*, "mouthpiece") actually found by the archaeologists. The Pythia's tripod, to be empowered by Apollo, would then have been positioned over the vapour-less hole. A later rationalizing age, unwilling to countenance an ecstatic prophetess and reviving the notion of a vapour, conceivably thought of it, falsely, as intoxicating the sitting Pythia rather than as a source of her inspiration (Amandry 1950, 225 ff.; Parke and Wormell 1956, 30).¹²

As for vapours, Aeschylus, Euripides, Plato and Aristotle never mention them. The Pythia is not mentioned in Homer or Hesiod, nor in the Homeric Hymns; she is first mentioned by Theognis (807-808), and appears next in the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus (Fontenrose 1978, 204) calmly speaking the prologue (*μάντις εἰς θρόνον καθιζάνω* 29, "I take my seat as prophetess upon my throne") before being frightened by the Erinyes. For years Plutarch was a priest of Pythian Apollo at Delphi, yet nowhere does he mention vapours, except dismissively (*Moralia* 402B; 435A,C).¹³ He mentions only a "current of air" which he says is the "medium of the divinity" and arouses no sensation or excitement (*Mor.* 436F). The tripod alone, without vapours, is mentioned by writers of the Classical period, but the "chasm" would appear to be an imaginary innovation of Roman times (Parke and Wormell 1956, 19 ff). Vapours were first elaborated by Diodorus Siculus (16.26) in Augustan times, but Strabo (9.3.5) goes only so far as to imply their possessive and ecstatic effect. Lucan dramatised them much later in an episode (*Pharsalia* V, 79-200) in which the Pythia was allegedly forced to inhale the fumes before she would prophesy (*rupis spiritus ingessit vati*, 164-50). (*Fig.2*)

So we are without chasm or vapours as claimed by my guide book and tradition. Or are we? Science does not stand still. A conference in London in early 1997

⁹ We know by name only two Pythias; they were usually ordinary women, 50 or older, chosen for no special learning. Over time their responses showed a consistent policy which led to suspicion by scholars that they were manipulated by the priests as intermediaries (Parke and Wormell 1956, 35 & 40). For a recent overview of the Oracle's political responses, see R. Parker (1985, 298-326); for allegations of bribery, see D. F. Harvey (1985, 78-80); for how the Delphic Oracle related to the wide variety of Aegean-Middle Eastern oracles, see Burkert (1985, 114-17).

¹⁰ The excavator M. Homolle contradicted his hopeful 1895 report by concluding in 1897 (*BCH* xxi, 273, cited by Oppé 1904, 232n.36) that there was no meaningful depression under the temple.

¹¹ Many terracotta female figurines have been found there. In Homer the word Delphi does not appear; the site of the oracle is called "holy Pytho", its temple of Apollo already famous throughout Greece and filled with treasures. For the latest discussion of the origins, see C. A. Morgan in N. Marinatos and R. Hagg (eds) *Greek Sanctuaries* (London 1993), 27-32. For a standard discussion of Delphi see G. Forrest in *Cambridge Ancient History* III(3) (1982), 305-20; and for the oracle, more recently, R. Osborn *Greece in the Making, 1200-479 BC* (1996), 202-207.

¹² Fontenrose's detailed study of the written evidence (1978, 196 ff.) concluded that there was only one rite in each session at Delphi: the Pythia gave her response directly and in her own voice to her questioner, to whom she was always visible. She spoke coherently and she herself gave the final response, unless (1987, 223) she was called upon to draw a lot or point to an urn, when she probably accompanied her act with a speech.

¹³ Plutarch does recount at length (*Moralia* 438C-D) how a recalcitrant Pythia was forced to the tripod, becoming so hysterical from failure that she died days later. But vapours are not blamed.

(*Daily Telegraph*, 28 April), heard from Dr. Zeilinga de Boer of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, that a major fault zone is now known to pass below the site of the oracular temple at Delphi, with fractures intersecting it. Even though the area is non-volcanic (as the French archaeologists had concluded), gases including ethylene and methane, known to cause anaesthesia and narcotic effects, could have risen through cracks at some time in the past, to affect the Pythia on her tripod. Whether or when they actually did so, we have no evidence, unless, contrary to scholars' conclusions, late writers who implied vapours knew something we do not. For me there was still the problem of the Pythia's raving "madness" whether with or without vapours, described in accounts by so many late writers. Amandry

(1950, 48) has concluded that their interpretation of Plato's "prophetic *mania*" in the *Phaedrus* (244a ff) was flawed. Fontenrose agreed (1978, 204), judging that the sense of the inaccurate translations of *mania* into Latin, *insania* or *vecordia*, persuaded Lucan and others erroneously to adopt a totally new meaning of the word, implying near insanity.

After having been a dead issue for a few decades, shamanism has been dramatically popularised and revitalised by wide interest in states of consciousness, mechanisms of therapy and alternative forms of spirituality, especially in America (Jane Atkinson in 'Shamanism Today', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21 (1992), 307-12, lists 258 recent papers on the subject).

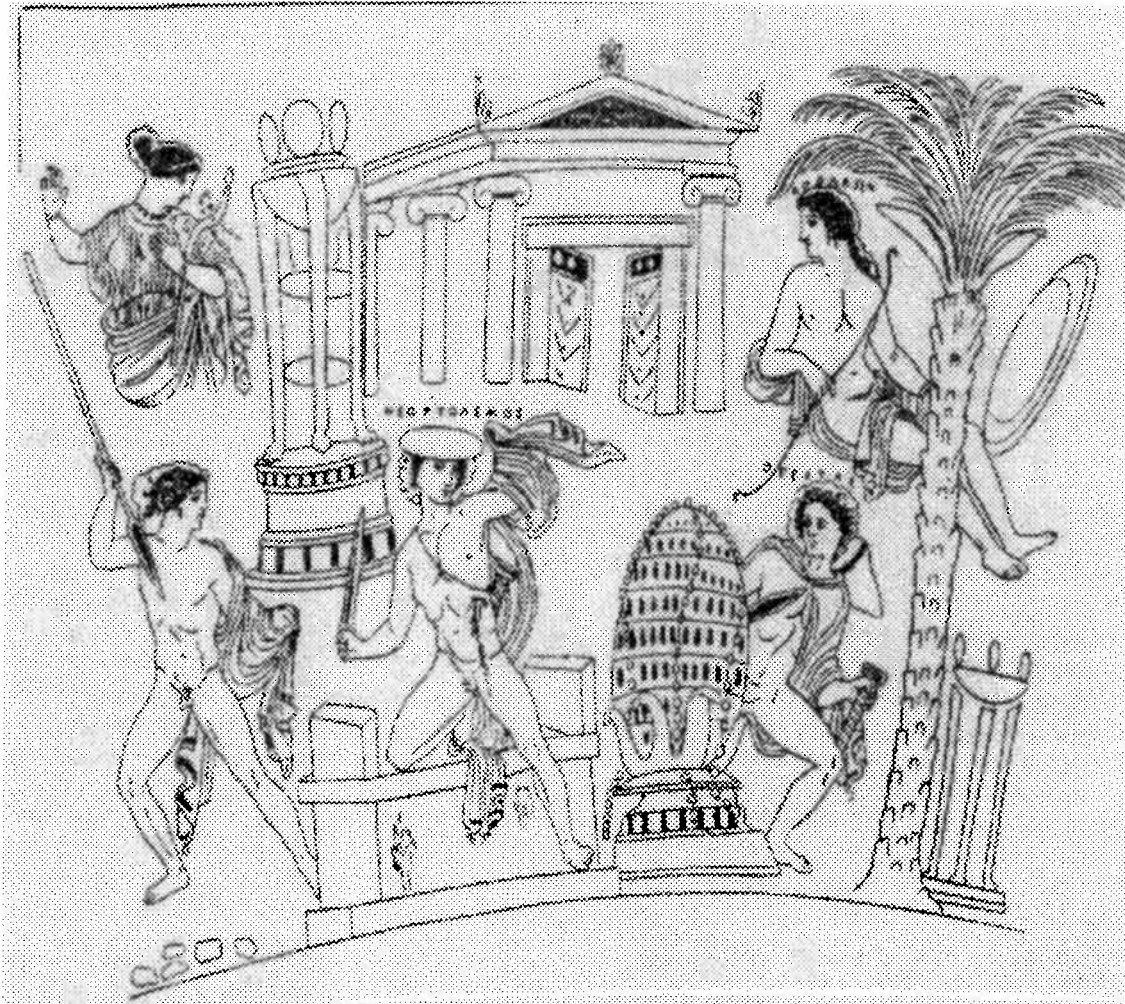


Fig 2. Apulian volute krater, Milan HA 239 = LIMC Apollon 890
 Apollo (upper right) observes the Pythia (upper left) frightened from her tripod at the sight of Neoptolemus stabbed by vengeful Orestes (behind the *omphalos*).
 Cf. Euripides *Andromache*. 993-1008; 1085-1116

Unfortunately, modern trends have sometimes confused shamanism with the use of hallucinatory substances. It is true that shamanic ecstasy was often induced by use of hemp and the shamanic mushroom *Agaricus muscarius* among the ancient Iranians and was known elsewhere (Eliade 1964, 398-405). There is no evidence of this involving the Pythia at Delphi (Burkert 1987, 109 ff.). In any case, we know a great deal about shamanism, ancient and modern. My research soon revealed that all the spiritual and ritual elements of shamanism are found even today, surviving no doubt from prehistory¹⁴, in the rites of living shamans in Siberia and the North American north-west, in South Africa and Australia, and among some Inuit Eskimos (Czaplicka 1914; Eliade 1964, 3-15 and 110-21; Lommel 1967; Halifax 1982; Lawson 1991; Bahn & Vertut 1997).

Shamanism for the inspiration of the Pythia would thus be a fashionable answer today, although bound to be controversial. Dodds sought to demolish the notion decisively in Chapter V of his 1951 *The Greeks and the Irrational* entitled 'The Greek Shamans and the Origin of Puritanism' (135-78): "the characteristic feature of shamanism is not the entry of an alien spirit into the shaman ['possession' e.g. of the Pythia by Apollo at Delphi]; it is the liberation of the shaman's spirit, which leaves his body and sets off on a *mantic journey* or 'psychic excursion' (my italics)" (1951, 88 note 43). Some classicists have nevertheless acknowledged the phenomenon and its pervasiveness in early Greek and Eastern religion. Walter Burkert for example (1996, 67-8) describes the shaman's purposes as many, often healing either physical or psychosomatic illnesses, liberating from black spells animals for the hunt or persecuted human sufferers, contacting or retrieving from the Beyond the souls of the sick or the dead. But the shaman is not an ordinary "medicine man". By mimicry, using symbols and costume trappings, and by normal or disguised voice, he describes his unearthly adventures to his audience, which when repeated can become a story, perhaps the origin of pre-literate narrative and poetry, and later of the theatre. The shaman, "in a state of ecstatic performance, acts out a quest of supernatural dimensions; he can ascend to heaven or go

down to the underworld; he meets with spirits, demons and gods." (That the soul seems habitually to roam in our sleep fosters this belief, as voiced in Aristotle (fr. 10 = Sextus Empiricus *adv. Phys.* 1.21), Cicero and Plutarch.¹⁵ We can glimpse the shamanistic ritual Burkert has in mind when Odysseus in the *Odyssey* (11, 23 ff.) bloodies a trench in the ground to conjure up the spirits of dead Elpenor, Anticleia and the prophet Teiresias. The quest of the Argonauts, led by Jason (*Ieson*, "a healer"), "to bring back the soul of Phrixos" is reputed to be shamanistic, as is equally Odysseus reaching Circe, the daughter of the Sun God, at the dancing place of Dawn. In the Sumerian story, Inanna's recovery from the Underworld is clearly shamanistic, as are the travels of Gilgamesh to the beyond by way of the sun and Herakles' journey to Geryoneus (Burkert 1996, 68-9).

What encouraged me to pursue my hunch of an intimation of shamanism in Plato's *mania* was a window Dodds left open: his contention that later "puritanism" stemmed from Plato's separation of soul from the body, notably in the famous passage of the *Phaedrus* dialogue (245c4-256e3) which follows on the passages (244a-245c3) with which I began. There, Plato expands on notions of the soul and immortality, with the prolonged simile of the winged team of horses and their charioteer (246a6-250c6) -- notions which are akin to the basic attributes of ancient shamanism and which Dodds thought (1951, 142-53) played a demonstrable and often overlooked part in the beginnings of Greek philosophy.

I began to wonder whether Plato's *mania* (in 244-45), while nothing *strictly* to do with maenadism or shamanism, might have been in the earlier fourth century his unconscious alternative for *κατοκαχή* in a shamanistic (or maenadic) sense. Some writers, like Farnell in *Greece and Babylon* (Edinburgh, 1911, 303) (cited by Dodds 1951, 88) use the terms "shamanism" and "possession" as if they were synonymous, whereas possession in the former is spontaneously from within and in the latter (Apolline or Dionysiac¹⁶) the possession

¹⁴ Shamanistic images in palaeolithic cave art have been discovered as old as 31,000 BC (six AMS radiocarbon dates in the Chauvet cave) as well as at Lascaux and Trois-Frères (16-12,000 BC).

¹⁵ Aristotle *De Divinatione per Somnia*, 462-3; Burkert (1996, 69); also Dodds (1951), 'Dream-Pattern and Culture-Pattern', pp. 102-34. For dream-oracles, which may be shamanistic in origin, see Burkert (1985, 115 with notes 56-58).

¹⁶ Maenadism originally was inculcated by possession of women from without by the god; later it was often said or assumed to arise spontaneously (Seaford 1996, 330-37; Dodds 1951, 270-8).

(even if *entheos* "the god within") is imposed from without. In addition, there is tell-tale coupling of "possession" with the Muses again in Plato's own *Meno* (98B ff.), and in his *Ion* (536C).¹⁷ Here the "possession" seems inspired from outside, but goes farther than mere mediumship. Eventually I found that Pierre Amandry had already maintained (1950, 46-47) that Plato "uniquely in the language of the *Phaedrus*" was simply emphasising his point with the stronger term *mania*; whereas he really meant "*une disposition de l'âme*", akin to "rapture", or "inspiration", a kind of spiritual "possession" (Ibid., 140). This appealed to me as the answer I had been seeking.¹⁸ Could "*disposition de l'âme*", implying an internal impetus, be construed as shamanistic, I wondered? Although Dodds disagreed with Amandry here (1951, 70), he later seems to recant and allow an ecstatic Pythia: ". . . there is good evidence [for shamanistic inspiration?] that as late as 1st C AD the trance [claimed by late writers] was *at least sometimes genuine*" (1973, 197 note 3).

Furthermore, "divine madness" and even "prophetic madness" in the *Phaedrus* (in spite of its Dionysiac undertones, see below) sounded to me suspiciously like shamanism. Dodds himself (1951, 70-71 and note 42) says it was the belief of later writers that prophetic madness was due to "an innate faculty of the soul itself, when liberated", citing this opinion in Aristotle, Cicero and Plutarch. He even calls this "the shamanistic view", a late, learned theory, "product of philosophical or theological reflection" and contrasts it with the earlier, archaic view embodying a "doctrine of possession [from outside]".¹⁹ I wondered whether, much earlier, Plato might have had shamanistic inspiration in the back of his mind when he quotes Socrates as saying (next after the "madness is good *if by divine gift*" quotation with which I began my second paragraph): "The Prophetess at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona achieve much that is good for Greece *when mad* (*μανεῖσαι*) both on the

private and on a public level;²⁰ whereas *when sane* they achieve little or nothing" (244a7-8 trans. Rowe).²¹ After all, I would argue, Plato could have had in mind an inner compulsion for their prophecies, because a few lines later (244e4 and 245a2), he twice couples *mania* with *katokoche*, "possession", "being possessed" by the Muses in poetic inspiration amounting, significantly, to "Bacchic frenzy" (*ἐκβακχεύουσα*).²²

The hint of Dionysiac initiation rites (244e4) and "possession" in poetic inspiration here (245a2) implied for me Plato's consciousness of a then current, internally generated, shamanistic power, linked to the free soul (which I shall summarise below). Then as now it was easily confused with ecstatic maenadism whose instigator, Dionysus, came late to Delphi, "reformed", pacified and then displaced Apollo by consent for three months of the year when the oracle was closed (Rohde *Psyche* 1925, 256 ff., following Schlegel and Nietzsche). That he was popularly twinned with Delphi is confirmed by Euripides in his *Bacchae*, repository of most of our scant knowledge of his mysteries: ". . . you will see him on the rocks over Delphi . . . great throughout Greece", (*Bacchae* 306-9). As Plato no doubt knew, Dionysus was also popularly "a prophet god, for the bacchic and the manic have much mantic power: for when the god enters abundantly into the body, he makes the maddened speak the future" (*Bacchae* 298-301).²³

While Plato may sometimes have lumped Dionysus and Apollo together --

²⁰ Rowe (1988, 170, 171n.) thinks a Greek reader would have accepted that their utterances were "inspired" as result of "possessive madness", citing Heraclitus fr. 92 on the Sibyl (Plutarch *De Pythiae oraculis* 6, 397A). The Sibyl, however, unlike the priestesses at Delphi and Dodona, was evidently a mythical figure associated with various places who could be inspired *without the agency of a god*.

²¹ Plato means that aside from her being a medium, the Pythia had no special gifts (Dodds 1951, 87-8). Aelius Aristides (*Oratio* 45.11 Dind.) testifies that the Pythia when in trance did not draw in any way on her own knowledge; and Plutarch tells us (*De Pythiae Oraculis*, 22, 405c) that in his day (50-120 AD) the Pythia was the untutored daughter of a poor farmer.

²² Plato connects possession and madness in the same way in the *Ion* (533e-534a), where lyric poets are like Korybantic dancers or like women in a Bacchic frenzy (Rowe 1988, 173). But there as in the *Republic* he is castigating poets, which he does not do in the *Phaedrus*.

²³ At 325 Teiresias describes acting like maenads (Kadmos and himself) as "mad" but incurably so, as if it were a disease, nothing to do with prophecy. See also the famous choral ode 73-166, extolling the joy of the *thiasos* revels.

¹⁷ Hackforth (1952, 60) believes Plato in the *Phaedrus* was perhaps for the first time ascribing what seems to be divinely poetic "possession" to the institution or profession of prophecy.

¹⁸ David Harvey kindly drew my attention to T. Compton's similar conclusion (1994, 221 note 26): "a kind of possession rather than . . . melodramatically visible manifestations [of *mania* in *Phaedrus* 244a]."

¹⁹ Dodds (1951, 71 and n. 44): There is "little doubt the Pythia's gifts were attributed originally to possession and this view remained throughout antiquity".

both being in opposition to the rationalism he espoused -- the fact remains that the madness or "possession" of Dionysiac rites played no actual part as far as we know in the prophecies of the Pythian oracle (Latte 1940, 11-13).²⁴ As Dodds put it (1951, 69), "Mediumship is the rare gift of chosen *individuals*; Dionysiac experience is essentially *collective*" (my italics). Nor for the same reason, in the opinion of many, did maenadism infect shamanism (Eliade 1964, 387 note 42; Fontenrose 1978, 232; Dodds 1951, 74-80, 86 note 30). But these forthright statements are potentially controversial, as I shall now endeavour to explain and modify.

On a pilgrimage to the Warburg Institute library in London, I was intrigued by the theory of Louis Gernet, mentor of Marcel Détienné, that the increasing ambitions of aristocratic post-Mycenaean Archaic society provoked opposition from below expressed partly in the worship of Dionysus.

This, though influenced by Asiatic cults, was a transformation of the old peasant religion into a collective experience of trance and ecstasy open to all, characterised by "orgiastic possession."²⁵ Shamans, diviners, lawgivers were called in as wise men to diagnose and expunge pollution and heal dissension (Parker 1983, *passim*). The shamanistic thrust stemmed from Pythagoras, Parmenides and Empedocles (esp. frag. 129 DK) who (we can surmise from fragments of their works) laid the foundations of Greek philosophy with their ideas of divine revelation to initiates and the voyage of the soul in search of knowledge. Metempsychosis, involving an effective transmigration of the soul, developed through them and was taken in and permeated Platonic thought in the *Republic* (e.g. at 571D ff.), the *Phaedrus*,

and *Laws* (Gernet 1968, 418-19; Humphreys 1978, 82-9). Gernet goes so far as to maintain that Plato's notion of the wandering soul was in fact shamanistic.²⁶ While he accepts the influence of metempsychosis, Eliade (1964, 388) maintains that "the Dionysiac mystical current and Bacchic enthusiasm" have no relation to shamanic ecstasy: "The few figures of Greek legend who can be compared with shamanism are related to Apollo." I now cite a few of the latter, and their attendant controversies.

For Apolline seers, magical healers, and religious teachers in the Archaic Age and earlier we have scattered evidence.²⁷ Some are linked in Greek tradition with northern lands bordering on Siberia, where shamans of old were translocated in trance and could raise the dead to life (Czaplicka 1914, 176-8). All of them exhibited shamanistic traits in various guises (Dodds 1951, 141). Shamanism was already diffused over a vast area, attesting to its high antiquity, and was perhaps first brought into the Aegean by Greeks living in Scythia and Thrace (Dodds 1951, 140; Burkert 1992, 56-7).²⁸ They had demonstrably come into contact with people of the Asian steppes where shamanism thrived, as first fully described by Meuli (1935, 134-43). There was Abaris riding upon an arrow (carried symbolically by Siberian shamans),²⁹ who "banished pestilences, predicted earthquakes, composed religious poems and taught worship of his northern god whom Greeks called the Hyperborean Apollo." Then there was Aristeas, a Greek from the sea of Marmora who returned from a "journey" to the north (Herodotus 4.13 f.) to tell in a poem about one-eyed Arimaspeans and treasure-guarding griffons, also known from central Asiatic folk-lore (Dodds 1951, 141, 162 note 37). Curative shamanism is

²⁴ Dionysiac influence in the Apolline oracle is seen by Winnington-Ingram (1984, 51 n.2) as maintained by Rohde in *Psyche*, pp. 260, 289 ff., who said Dionysus forced the Pythia on Delphi. Dodds (1951, 68-9) says Rohde was wrong, as Dionysiac dance and wine are absent from the Delphic oracle and Plato extolled "the intervention of Apollo which aimed at knowledge". There is no trace of Dionysiac madness in the many accounts of the Pythia by Herodotus, according to Compton (1994, 223).

²⁵ Latte (1940, 12) thought in terms of a trance: The Greek word *ekstasis*, he says, ambiguously can mean strong agitation of the body leading to uncontrolled imagination (incl. dreams and hallucinations) and insensitivity to outside sensations (as in Bacchic revels and maenadism); or if a purely mental process with the state of the body unimportant, it can describe a trance. Guthrie (1952, 117-8) believed that while *ekstasis* of the latter type is usually associated with Apollo, the former can be Dionysiac as in the "ecstasy" or "divine madness" of the Korymbantes.

²⁶ "Le notion de l'âme que le platonisme a finalement recueilli avait jadis été associé à quelque chose comme une discipline de chamane" (1968, 419).

²⁷ Rohde (1925, 290) maintained that Apolline religion before Dionysus' coming did not involve ecstasy, refuted by Dodds (1951, 68-9) and Latte (1940, 9 ff.) on grounds that its roots were in Asia, homeland of prophetic ecstasy.

²⁸ Possibly also from the Hittites, ancient Phoenicia, the Assyrians and the Semites (see Dodds 86n.31). Burkert (1992, 80-81) adduces ecstatic prophecy at Babylon and the extensive evidence at Mari. Lesky (A *History of Greek Literature* (1957-8, Eng. trans. 1996), 16-18) has supposed a shamanistic element in Minoan / Mycenaean story-telling that led to heroisation of embryonic epic and ultimately to the patently shamanistic *Odyssey*, with its dream- and trance-like translocations.

²⁹ A shamanistic motif surviving among us today as the broomstick ridden by our Hallowe'en witches.

seen by Burkert (1996, 115) in the "female illness" of some Scythians traced by Herodotus (1.105) to guilt after plundering the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Askalon. The myth of Orpheus descending into the underworld to rescue Eurydice is shamanic (Guthrie 1952, 116-18), although later Orphism is not (Eliade 1964, 391). Meuli (1935, 163) and Dodds (1951, 144) saw shamanism in Zalmoxis ("god" of the Getae in Thrace) who reappeared from a tomb after three years to "prove" the immortality of man (Herodotus 4.94-96).³⁰ Epimenides of Crete in the legend fasted in the cave of Zeus on Mount Ida, learned the technique of ecstasy and journeyed through many lands practising the arts of healing and prophecy (Eliade 1965, 389, citing Rohde). He also claimed to be a reincarnation and to have lived many times on earth (Aristotle *Rhetorica* 1418).

Dodds (1951, 143) called Pythagoras "an even greater shaman" than these, as Empedocles attributed to him a wisdom gathered in numerous human lives (fr. 129DK). Xenophanes mocked him for saying a human soul could migrate into a dog (fr. 7DK). Dodds (*Ibid.*, 145) believed Empedocles was our best firsthand source for defining a Greek shaman ("perhaps the last in the Greek world"). In fragments B115 D-K, B118 and 121 D-K he describes himself (like a wandering, disgraced *daimon* assuming many mortal shapes) as "an exile and a wanderer from the gods", and tells of underworld experiences (Seaford 1986, 1-3). Later legends about him (staying the winds by magic, restoring a woman to life) embroidered his own claims (Frs. 111.3,9; 112,4) that he could revive the dead and that he himself was thought to be a god made flesh.³¹ There persisted tales of disappearing and reappearing shamans sufficiently familiar for Sophocles in *Electra* to write "Yes, often in the past I have known clever men dead in fiction but not dead, and then when they return home the honour they receive is all the greater. Just so I believe that as a result of this story, alive, I shall shine like a star upon my enemies (*Electra* 62 ff).

There is a shamanistic link to the rituals of the Korybantes (*Bacchae* 55-59, 120-34) in that they were credited with not only

inciting madness (like the Erinyes who madden Orestes at *Eumenides* 329-32 f.) but curing it, with magic incantations accompanied by drums and flutes (Thomson 1973, 351-54), key instruments of shamans in Siberia (Czaplicka 1914, 207 f.) and elsewhere even today. Another key accessory of shamans was the mirror, used in mystic initiation and prophecy, in which for example Pentheus in the *Bacchae* (918-22, 928-34) sees himself a bull with horns. Dionysus tells him (924) "now you see what you should see" as he sees double (Seaford 1994, 288 and *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987), 76-8.). There are many other shamanistic links to the mysteries of Dionysus, I was to find.

The shock waves of Dionysiac madness (of which the Korybantes' noisily musical rituals were part) persisted simultaneously with shamanistic influence from pre-Archaic times and, I suggest, had an equally strong, perhaps greater effect on Plato's choice of key words in the *Phaedrus*.³²



Fig. 3. The "Upton Lovell Shaman", Early Bronze Age ca.1,800 BC, from remains in a grave near Stonehenge
(Photo courtesy Devizes Museum)

Richard Seaford (1996, 242-44) has postulated how the dithyrambic procession

³⁰ Eliade (1964, 390) believes this is legendary rather than shamanistic.

³¹ Eliade (1964, 389 n.55) says this interpretation has been rejected by Charles Kahn because Empedocles' soul does not leave his body, he never rides an arrow, and is never seen in two places at the same time.

³² Parke and Wormell (1956, 12) think that Dionysus cult may have influenced procedure at Delphi (substitution of a female for the usual male priest) if Dionysus came there by the 6th Century, citing Herodotus 7.111 that among the Satrae there was an oracle of Dionysus where a woman delivered the responses as at Delphi.

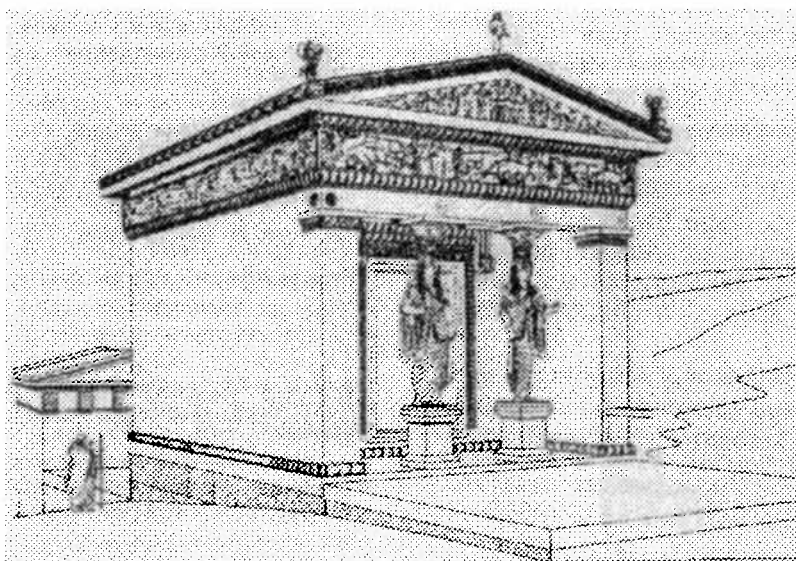
(echoing the *thiasos*, as in *Bacchae* 68-70) may have grown from possible dramatic contests in the *Lenaion* in the *agora* (associated with the Lenaia festival parallel with the City Dionysia) into the full-blown Athenian theatre that we know, with Dionysus as patron and presiding statue. Key figure in what became performances before a mass audience was the leader (*exarchon*) of the dithyramb (later the chorus, multiplied into actors, cf. Arist. *Poetics* 4.1449a) -- who I suggest was a shamanistic figure who when he spoke had an actor's power of bilocation (being or imagining himself to be in two places at once) and able to describe actions elsewhere known only to him. Such is the power of storytelling in the theatre that after the Pythia's chilling description of the Erinyes (at 34-59), at the first performance of Aeschylus's *Eumenides*, some in the audience allegedly fainted from terror at their appearance on stage, most likely grotesquely masked (*Life of Aeschylus*, Page OCT p. 332, 10-13). Today the verbal power of drama's "suspension of disbelief" (could it be shamanistic?) can survive the absence of elaborate scenery or suggestive masks.

Masks were as old as the satyrs of comedy and persisted in the *Iupercalia* and down to our day in Carnival (Dumézil 1929, 160 f.). All those in the classic orchestra were masked (as Oliver Taplin never lets us forget), like shamans almost everywhere then and now (Czaplicka 1914, 202-15; Eliade 1957, 157-9). The mask (Dionysiac hall-mark of theatre) is the shaman's potent emblem of his unique other-worldly divine power (Napier 1986,

31-40). Equally typically shamanistic in the Dionysiac theatre were the drums and flutes accompanying choral dancing (Eliade 1957, 159-63). Aristotle, when extolling *catharsis* of emotions of pity and fear in the tragic theatre, was thinking of the religious experience of "mystical frenzy" from which early Greek tragedy derived (Thomson 1973, 336-7), reminiscent, I suggest, of both principal and audience participation in a shamanistic seance.

To conclude, I have attempted to dissect and analyse two entangled and controversial strands, the one Apolline and the other Dionysiac, which I have suggested played a part in shaping Plato's ambivalent concept of the Pythia's mediumship or inspiration. His choice of the term *mania* in the *Phaedrus* when I speculate that he might have used *κατακοχή*, "possession", can be seen, I believe, against the background of his consuming simultaneous interest in the shamanistic translocation of the soul. I have reviewed evidence that he was deeply aware of the ecstatic nature of inspiration for both prophecy, poetry, love and ritual. Usually precise in his terminology, Plato in the *Phaedrus* seems to have treated playfully if not inexactly at times the multitudinous facets of prophetic or ecstatic "madness" in his day. This should not shield us from the truth; but has left us, I submit, a legacy of perplexity about Plato's *mania* at Delphi which I hope to have gone a little way to resolve.

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Reconstruction of the Treasury of the Siphnians at Delphi, c. 530 BC.

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What was the Name of that Nymph Again?

or

Greek and Roman Studies Recalled

by Joanne Rowling

I enquire now as to the genesis of a philologist and assert the following:

1. *A young man cannot possibly know what Greeks and Romans are.*
2. *He does not know whether he is suited for finding out about them.*

Friedrich Nietzsche

Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen

There is nothing like a pithy quotation to get the ball rolling, so, in the noble tradition of undergraduates anxious to give the impression of extensive background reading, I have stolen one from a book I have never read. By happy chance, Donna Tartt chose this very gobbet to preface her novel *The Secret History*, which I have read. Tartt's story concerns a group of American classics students who decide to recreate a bacchanal; the experiment goes awry when they inadvertently murder a farmer whilst cavorting across one of his fields late at night, accompanied by Dionysus and wearing nothing but bedspreads. If you ask me, the book would have benefited from the attention of a scissor-happy editor, but it is an undeniable page-turner and I doubt whether *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen* is half as informative on the subject of hallucinogenic drugs.

However, I was not asked to contribute a book review ("asked to contribute", how I love that phrase... that I should be asked to contribute to the Classics department magazine... the *irony*...) The point is that Nietzsche's ominous assertions gave me pause for thought, and then a hearty guffaw, because the reason the Classics department of Exeter University ever let me in is a mystery right up there with anything the Bacchae got up to, a feeling I probably shared with the department once it realised what it had done.

I arrived at Exeter enrolled for joint honours French and German, but it soon became apparent to me that what German and I needed was a clean break, with no empty promises about staying friends. It was then that I turned thoughtfully towards the Classics department. Somewhere along those unknown corridors, it was whispered, lurked a subsidiary course which went by the name of "Greek and Roman Studies", and the word on the street was that one did

not need any Greek or Latin to join up. This was fortunate, as my Latin consisted of the word *cave*, which I had gleaned from the Molesworth books.

I was uncomfortably aware as I entered the unfamiliar department that I knew pitifully little about what the study of Classics might involve. The Comprehensive I had just left had never dropped any hints; the headmaster's ramblings about Heraclitus had been admired about as much as his halitosis. Nevertheless, I had somewhere along the line gained the impression that Classics meant Culture. As far as I was concerned, behind these doors lay a world of mysterious, runic knowledge, and I was keen to be let in. I lingered furtively around a noticeboard for a while, trying to compose an eloquent plea for admission. Then, not entirely confident about my material, I knocked on the relevant door, entered, and found myself face to face with a man I shall call Professor X (to shield him from the Aryan equivalent of a *fatwah*, as we shall see).

Professor X had a moustache that positively shouted ancient learning and my nervousness increased. I explained why I had come and braced myself for a close examination of my non-existent classical credentials. I was taken aback when the first words from under that classical moustache were "You want to leave the German department? *I don't blame you.*"

I can't remember another word we said to each other, but I am certain that none of Nietzsche's quibbles came up. Possibly Professor X's admirable antipathy towards the German department extended to Nietzsche. Ten minutes after I had knocked at Professor X's door, I was tripping ecstatically off to the book shop to buy a stack of stylish black-covered Penguins.

My mood of excitement was short-lived, however. I left my very first Classics lecture feeling that the whole thing would have been just as comprehensible in German, or indeed Kurdish. There were slides of fragments of vases and a commentary from a distinguished looking man that I was sure would be enthralling if I had the faintest idea what he was talking about. This was a level of bewilderment I had never reached before, which was saying something, because in those days I was so disorganised that turning up at the right lecture theatre was often more a matter of luck than judgement. I sat and listened with a mounting sense of panic while all around me people scribbled assiduously with every appearance of understanding the gibberish issuing from behind the projector.

The odd thing is that I never, then or later, contemplated another change of subject. I was quite sure that the fault lay with me, not with Classics (whereas with German, I had been more sinned against than sinning).

The unfortunate man who had most to do with me during my classical career was Dr. Y. Dr. Y made quite an impression on me. Once, under the influence of too long a night in the Ram, I decided that what was missing from his life was a Valentine card signed with a quotation from *Phaedra*. A cunning touch, I felt; he would never guess it was from me, because I had never given him reason to suppose I'd opened *Phaedra*. Then again, the card must have arrived two days late, which might have given him a valuable clue.

Dr. Y's tolerance towards my frightening ignorance of his subject was awe-inspiring. The closest he ever came to admonishing me for my erratic attendance and propensity to lose every handout he gave me the moment we parted company was when he described me as sleepwalking around the place. This was said with an expression of mingled patience and amusement. I lived to regret repeating his remark to friends. It was sufficiently apt for them to repeat it rather more often than I found funny.

I had a vague idea that Dr. Y might help lift my fog of confusion if I asked him, directly, for help. The trouble was that I just couldn't bring myself to reveal how dense the fog was. I was well paid for this vanity the day we sat down to examine the life and times of a mass-murderer and bigamist called Theseus.

"What is the most *obvious* question we should ask about Theseus?" said Dr. Y, throwing the debate wide open. The question that popped instantly into my brain was, "Did he really exist?" Naturally, I did not utter it aloud. I knew that would reveal only too clearly my unsuitability to find out about Theseus. I sat in bitter silence, knowing that what he wanted was one of those not remotely obvious questions these classical types kept asking, which were always the cue for comprehensible stories to mutate suddenly into bizarre metaphors and symbols. Only the previous week a thrilling tale of kidnap starring one Persephone had turned out to be about crop storage.

A student we shall call Hugh, because that was his name, broke the silence.

"Did he really exist?" he suggested lazily.

"Exactly," said Dr. Y, with an approving smile.

A thousand curses. Just once, I could have earned an approving smile. I was sure my chance would never come again, and I was quite right. Twelve years later, it is still Dr. Y and smug Hugh who spring to mind whenever I teeter on the verge of posing a possibly stupid question.

Dr. Y was wearing his familiar expression of barely suppressed amusement when he told me two years later that I had passed the course. He admitted that given my disastrous first paper he was rather surprised that I had managed it. I sat opposite him feeling that at long last, I had the advantage of him - I was *much* more surprised than he was.

There is no getting away from the fact that I did not get from the Classics department what Dr. Y and his colleagues set out to give me, but that was my fault, not theirs. On the plus side, the farmers of Devon had no reason to fear me and my bedclothes stayed where they were supposed to. Greek and Roman Studies gave me a few things I value even more highly than my fond memories of *The Frogs*: two of the best friends I ever made at university, for instance, and the unforgettable experience of being lectured to by a person best known simply as Z. It was Z I had in mind when I created Professor Binns, a minor character in the novel I published last year. More than that I am not prepared to say; we all know how underpaid university lecturers are and I have no wish to be sued.

Perhaps, in the deepest and truest sense, I still don't really know what Greeks and

Romans are, but I've never entirely given up hope of lifting a little more fog. A shelf next to me as I tap out these words is dotted with books on Greek mythology, all of which were purchased post-Exeter. And I'm confident I know more than Dr. Y would have credited when I left his office for the last time: enough to inform a pair of bemused four year olds with whom I watched Disney's latest offering that

Heracles *definitely* didn't own Pegasus. That was *Bellerophon*, as any fule kno.

Joanne Rowling read French with additional Greek & Roman Studies at Exeter in the 1980s. Her children's book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Bloomsbury paperback, £4.99), has sold 30,004 copies since it was published in 1997: it has been awarded the coveted Smarties Gold Award, four film companies have been competing for the movie rights, & Joanne has signed a £100,000-plus contract for seven more Harry Potter novels.

Mars

I'm a War-God, don't forget it,
Or I'll make sure you regret it,
All you earthfolk tremble at the name of Mars.
You don't get where I am today,
By falling on your knees to pray,
Or by passing time in dimly-lighted bars.



Show me a drum and I will thump it,
I'll be blowing my own trumpet,
Treading the rolling heads beneath my feet.
I have considerable charms,
For those who hear the call to arms,
So join the stamping, howling jungle beat.

I've no use for wimps and Quakers,
All my men are widow-makers,
For reducing population I'm the tops.
I tell men it's more exciting,
For a chap to do some fighting,
Than waste all his youth and manhood growing crops.

Men with red blood in their system,
Just can't wait till I enlist 'em,
For they know they will be joining the elite.
There are those whose brains are bigger,
But whose finger's on the trigger?
Here's to glory and the sound of marching feet

Stella Lumsden, 1996

Ephesus: the Metropolis of the Antique Age

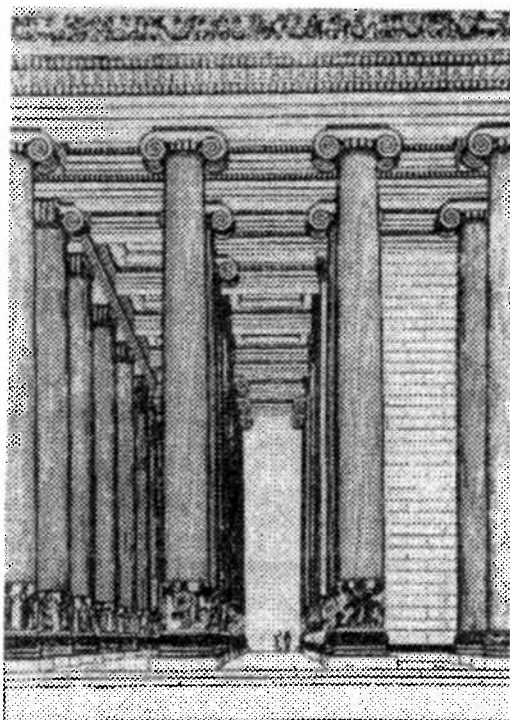
by Alison Wick

Ephesus is perhaps not the best place to visit in the middle of August in the hot midday Turkish sun, but the breeze blowing across Mount Koressos on which the City has finally rested, is reassuringly soothing. Originally established on the shore of the bay on which the Cayster river falls into the sea, Ephesus was moved by alluvions carried by the river to its present resting place.

From the highest point of the ancient city, namely the top of the originally Hellenistic grand theatre, is revealed a breathtaking view - essentially a fascinating visual hybrid of cultures and rulers, each leaving their own particular historical mark. Ephesus could be more specifically described as an incredible patchwork quilt combining and documenting life from the city's early days (thought to have been around the 7th Century BC), through the Hellenistic period and into the Late Roman Republic and Empire.

The Greek geographer Strabo alludes to the fact that the Ephesians first entered the city under the reign of the Persian king Cyrus II, and was used as a base in the years of the Ionian revolt against the attacks of the Persians on Sardis. From 454BC the city came under the control of the Athenians, but supported Sparta during the Peloponnesian Wars, and was later captured by Alexander the Great. It was as a result of the death and will of King Attalus II of Pergamum in 133BC that Ephesus came under the control of Rome. Subdued by Sulla during his dictatorship, it was through Augustus' intervention that Ephesus became an affluent centre of the Roman Empire. It is the fascinating cultural remnants of these years which essentially adorn the city, with comparatively little evidence of its former life. Much of the building work constructed during the Hellenistic period, for example, was subject to reconstruction under the empire, although Ephesus does boast two agoras amongst other Hellenistic aspects. The earliest evidence of the city's magnificence is arguably the Temple of Artemis (of which only one pillar still stands), dating in part to the first half of the 6th century BC. It was once considered one of the seven wonders of the world by antiquarian writers, but sadly this original grandeur can only be marvelled at through pictorial reconstruction, and its decay after the introduction of Christianity lamented.

However, it is the amalgamation of evidence of the Late Roman Republic (although this is comparatively minimal) and the years of the Empire which account for the visual majority of evidence for Ephesus as the bustling metropolis. Ephesus is adorned with the usual decorations of Roman life, such as its basilica, baths, shops, houses, brothels and latrines so well preserved that they reiterated quite severely the luxuries of modern plumbing!



Reconstruction of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus

Yet, from a personal point of view, the aspect of most interest in this fascinating collage of daily life of Ephesus, was the combination of monuments which remain. Only one stands from the Republic, namely the Memmius monument commissioned by Sulla for his grandchild. The empire and its rulers is depicted by precariously balancing temples to Domitian and Hadrian respectively, and by a magnificent fountain of Trajan, still impressive despite its haphazard reconstruction. Although destroyed in part, the temple of Hadrian is breathtaking in its detail and its comparative completeness. It boasts a mosaic floor, a relief of Medusa and a frieze of Fortuna, incredible in its intricacy.

Despite the undoubted grandeur of the aforementioned building works, it is the amazing Celsus library and grand theatre,

which adorn every postcard or picture of the city. It is possible to visualise the original splendour of the library owing to its sensitive reconstruction. Built in AD125 by the grandson of Tiberius Julius Celsus, governor of the Asian province, it once boasted 12,000 roll books in addition to its splendid exterior. The theatre is equally impressive, and not simply because of the view available if you dare to venture to the top (not for sufferers of vertigo!). Originally Hellenistic, it was reconstructed under Claudius and later Trajan. With a capacity to seat 24,500 people, the theatre is in such immaculate condition that it has even hosted various modern pop concerts, a practice which was recently halted

by the Turkish tourist board due to the fact that it made the theatre sink deeper into the hillside.

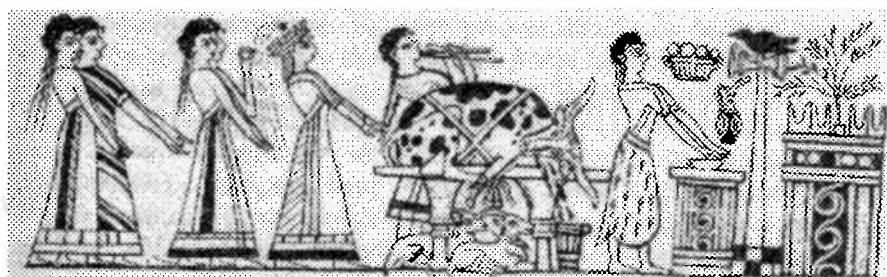
With its amalgamation of beauty, culture and time, Ephesus is an incredible combination of history, disjointed by its inability to detail one period of time precisely, but its ability to provide an invaluable wider outlook of a city adapting to cultural and artistic changes throughout the years. Despite its inevitable loss of detail through decay and time, Ephesus is a fascinating and historically overflowing attribute to ancient life.

Alison Wick is a final year student of Ancient History in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Exeter.

Mouseion ti to Symposium

A Review by Graham Anderson

John Wilkins, David Harvey & Mike Dobson (Edd.): *Food in Antiquity*: University of Exeter Press, 1995. xiv + 459. ISBN 0 85989 418 5.



Animal Sacrifices from the Agla Triadha sarcophagus

In the second century A.D. the satirist Lucian took an otherwise unknown historian to task for an interesting and unusual reason:

This amazing historian had dismissed all the killings at Europus, the charges, the enforcement of the truce, the guard-patrols and counterpatrols - to stand around until late evening watching Malchion the Syrian buy enormous wrasses cheap in Caesarea! (How to write History 28)

Lucian's complaint is symptomatic of literary attitudes to food in the classical world: it is not quite the subject to mention in the highest echelons of polite literature. Modern classical curricula have reflected a similar attitudemym only undergraduate encounter with what a countryman might have eaten in antiquity was a Latin unseen from the pseudo-Virgilian *Moretum*.

This sumptuous work does a great deal towards changing perceptions on food as a subject. There is a strong sense that the world has moved on: where this reader might have linked a word like *amurca* (olive-lees) with the

protecting of grain in Cato and Virgil, there is here a liberating sense that the whole question of food storage can be seen as a subject in its own right (Forbes and Foxhall, pp. 69-86).

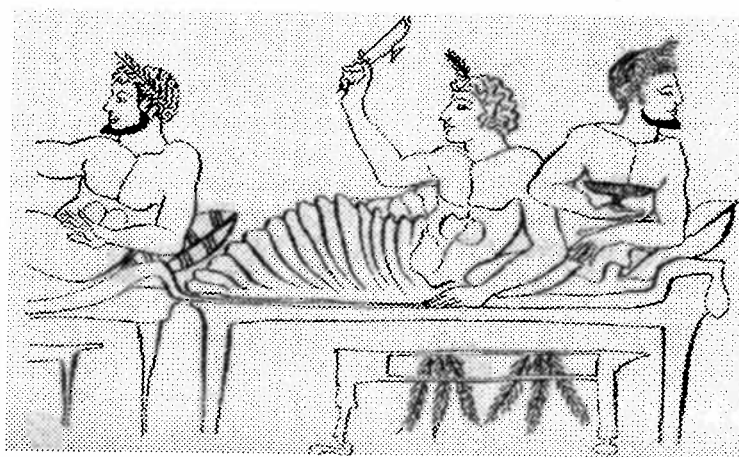
There has been a steady flow of book-length publications on ancient food and dining in recent years: Oswyn Murray's *Symptotica*, Gowers' *The Loaded Table*, Dalby's *Siren Feasts*, and Davidson's *Courtesans and Fishcakes* illustrate the range of seductive titles. The present work has a title matter-of-fact by comparison: here we concentrate on what might be called the carbohydrates of food scholarship beside so much of the *opson*, the relish, of other productions; but the fare itself is no less nutritious. Here we have another *symbole* like Murray's, a common meal assembled from the contributions of participants, presenting the papers at the Exeter conference on food; nine of the thirty-two contributions add an international dimension to the guest-list. I have set out to mention individual contributions only insofar as they illustrate the flavours of the whole.

A notable virtue of this assemblage is its range. This is not for the most part the excess food of overloaded dining tables, but diets of cereals, meat and fish, relationships of food and medicine and of food and religion and treatment of food outside the Greek and Roman world; in fact only four papers deal with food and literature as such. The aim has been not only to present the conference papers themselves, but to present a very diverse range of approaches in a manner accessible to the general reader and to the historian of food; and to focus on the cultural contexts of the food itself (Wilkins, p. 2). We find a model of scientific hesitation over the inadequacies of our data on the use of the acorn (Mason, pp. 12-24) side by side with the anecdotal and empirical (Thomas Braun tracing the emmer in the Abergavenny museum to the baker in Newport, p. 35); several socio-linguistic approaches, including Zaidman on the role of the sacred parasites (pp. 196-203) and Davidson on the lexical meaning and the political metaphor of *opsophagia* (204-213); and other topics as diverse as the meaning of the corn-myth at Eleusis (Baudy, pp. 177-195) and women's fasting in Judaeo-Christian contexts (Grimm, pp. 225-240).

A second virtue was the emphasis on *ars nesciendi*: one contributor after another emphasised the difficulties of oversimplifying

the evidence or making dangerous generalisations: David Braund makes it a good deal more difficult to sustain the image of Byzantium in the classical period as a monopolist in the supply of Black Sea fish, and carefully emphasises the politicising and moralising contexts of the texts on which such a stereotype has been based (pp. 162-170); indeed the rhetorical stereotyping of food would have provided a subject in itself. Brian Sparkes (pp. 150-161) draws attention to the difficulties of reading food scenes on vases: where dogs are ready to receive the scraps from a tunny, it seems a great deal more plausible to see the scene in the context of ordinary food preparation rather than sacrifice. Jon Solomon emphasises the vagaries of individual tastes among chefs, and the natural gaps in such an author as Apicius in a book intended for specialists (115-131).

There is a useful focus too on the interaction between image and stereotype: Sancisi-Weerdenburg (p. 292) finds it odd that Aelian should record the Persians as eating humble food such as terebinth and cardamum which belie the current Persian reputation for luxury. The question is a good one, since Aelian and his kind are natural purveyors of stereotypes; but miscellanists often have a childlike and indiscriminate appetite for facts, and such an author can be as inconsistent in his view of the Athenians as of anyone else.



Symposium scene from a tomb at Paestum (c. 480-70 BC)

The papers on diet tend to be more descriptive than the rest; but again this is appropriate, since even practised scholars on other aspects of food are less likely to know their way round Galen and Hippocrates. A recurrent nuance is the importance of experience over theory, a tendency favoured by modern sympathies in favour of alternative medicine. And as elsewhere more questions are stimulated: if according to Nutton Galen's puzzling aversion to fruit may have been

psychosomatic (p. 367), what might we make of the dietary attitudes of his arch-hypochondriac contemporary Aelius Aristides?

Several papers deal with the food of what the Greeks would have seen as the barbarian world. Of special interest to this writer was the advance notice of three Akkadian recipe texts some two millennia before Apicius (Bottéro, pp. 248-255). There is much more to interest the classical historian of food where this came from: not only do we know a respectable

amount about Sumerian beer-making; we even have the name of their beer-goddess, Ninkasi. On a very different track Lombardo (pp. 256-272) sets food in the south Italian colonies in the context of a cultural and political frontier: Thurii is quoted for the setting of a golden-age Cockaigne where ready-cooked dainties almost assault the diner, and we are reminded of the hostility of most sources for the luxury of the Sybarites. It should be noted that their reputation ran a good deal beyond the subject of food (to dancing war-horses and the like); one thinks of the similarly unenviable reputation of the Kenyan 'Happy Valley' in a comparably colonial context.

There is little by way of negative comment. Necessarily there were some gaps, so that Rome is relatively thinly represented, as Wilkins himself acknowledges; but the international nature of the Empire and the relatively local nature of so much of the food supply offsets the lack. There is not a great deal either of the fantasy aspects of food that would naturally interest this reader, in whose world Clibanatus ('Oven-Baked') and Piperatus ('Peppered') are consuls in the year that late antique piglet wrote his last will and testament; rather there is a welcome antidote to this literary repertoire.

Occasionally, the assortment of papers made categorization a little awkward: there is really only one paper on meat in the section entitled 'meat and fish'; and yet behind the title the assortment itself proves to be a good one. Osborne on ancient vegetarianism is more restrictive than her title suggests, dealing largely with the phenomenon in Porphyry (pp. 214-224). Occasionally there is arguable over-generalisation: I am not sure that Purcell is right to say that fish are the only eaten creatures who also eat men (p. 132): there is a noteworthy passage of Petronius where Habinnas' wife Scintilla is said to have eaten bear meat with unfortunate results (*Sat.* 66.5). If this seems exceptional, bear-paws are known as a delicacy in Plutarch (*Mor.* 917D). Occasionally, literary difficulties are passed over lightly: Frayn is being a little optimistic in referring to Aesop as 'the famous Greek slave who wrote the fables' (113). But such slips only tend to emphasise the wide variety and the difficulties of maintaining an equal degree of expertise on every periphery of so broad a subject. There was little jargon either (apart from 'interspecific trophic exchanges', p. 139), though just occasionally perhaps a labouring of the obvious: when Davidson is discussing older Persian boys who have to find their own *opson* we are told: 'the space of

opson had at this point become a vacuum, a negative space, a neat and commonplace solution for the essential inessential'... (p. 207, but in an otherwise very entertaining and well-focused contribution).

Among the editors John Wilkins offers brief introductions to all six sections, and well epitomises the collection with his paper on the limitations of Athenaeus (pp. 429-438): there is a very welcome finesse in the observation that Athenaeus filters different types of culinary information from different types of work: the overall preference of verse to prose in particular sets up a bias, while double borrowing limits the repertoire in a way one does not at first quite notice. I wonder how far his views might have changed after the rather more positive image of Athenaeus which emerged at the Athenaeus conference last September, especially in the light of Dorothy Thompson's paper then on the Egyptian dimension in Athenaeus' outlook...

The rewards of such a collection are immediately to set readers thinking about their own experience of food-related texts. For this reader that means re-reading Petronius' *Cena Trimalchionis* in a different light; looking again at what Dio Chrysostom might have to say about trade in Olbia, or slaughtering a pig for a peasant wedding in Euboea; asking what the *Testamentum Porcelli* might tell us about butchers and the Roman meat-trade, or what we might say about the foods that grace the tables of Alciphron or the Greek novelists. I was also left wondering whether we can produce dietary stereotypes from Comedy or elsewhere for places other than Boeotia or Athens (cf. Gilula 386-397), or whether the Midas story conceals some such kernel of truth as the alleged golden baking-woman of Croesus (cf. Harvey 278-281). Other readers can look forward to asking any number of similar questions for themselves across a similarly wide range of topics. To return to the Lucian passage from which we began, the editors of this book might have elicited papers on how army scouts were supplied in the Parthian War, what price Malchion could have expected to pay for the *skaros* in Caesarea, and whether it ought to be translated as 'wrasse'... From *Food in Antiquity*, one experiences that paradoxical pleasure so rarely experienced by Athenian parasites, of being full to repletion and simultaneously hungry for more.

Graham Anderson is Professor of Classics at Darwin College, University of Kent.



The Four Horae

Richard Seaford among the Maenads

A Review by Robert Parker

Euripides: Bacchae edited with introduction and translation by Richard Seaford, Aris & Phillips (Warminster) 1996: 284 pages, hardback £35, limp £14.95.

As readers of his *Cyclops* know, Richard Seaford is an excellent verbal scholar, and anyone interested in *Bacchae* will want his edition constantly to hand. It gives a splendidly concise and acute review of what can be said, almost fifty years after the first publication of Dodds' great commentary on the play, about what words Euripides wrote and how they should be translated. Let me pick out a point where interpretation of a pair of lines affects the whole characterisation of the chorus in a very important way. Seaford adopts Blake's interpretation of 877-81, by which the chorus no longer assert, as is commonly supposed, but deny that the finest gift from the gods is 'to hold the hand powerful over the head of your enemies'. I do not know that I am convinced, but it is good, here and elsewhere, to be reminded that there can be serious objections even to a position supported by E.R. Dodds.

Despite his technical expertise, however, Seaford is under no circumstances to be mistaken for a 'sound scholar' (the term by which Jane Harrison and Francis Cornford, those pioneers in the study of Greek ritual, dismissed their more cautious contemporaries). The commentary resumes and extends a most

individual understanding of *Bacchae* that Seaford has been developing for many years. In his view of the morality of the play, Seaford is very far removed from the case eloquently and influentially argued by Winnington-Ingram in *Euripides and Dionysus* (recently re-issued with a preface by P.E. Easterling). Winnington-Ingram's Euripides is ultimately appalled by the things Dionysus brings mortals *en masse* to do, just as Winnington-Ingram was appalled by the crowd hysteria that he observed in the 20s and 30s: the study 'was haunted by the Nuremberg rallies', he wrote in an unpublished memoir now quoted by Easterling. Seaford does not deny the pathos of Agave's plight, but at bottom for him the house of Cadmus is a royal house that the city of Thebes is well rid of: exit the Cadmidae, enter Dionysus god of the democratic polis. (*Quaere*: what did Euripides' patron Archelaus of Macedon make of this?). Such a counterpoising of afflicted family and liberated city can certainly be found in tragedy (Aeschylus' *Seven* and *Eumenides*, for instance), as Seaford argued in *Ritual and Reciprocity*. He works hard to establish that it is also of prime significance for *Bacchae*.

Still more central to the commentary is the idea that the play repeatedly alludes to 'mystic initiation' into the rites of Dionysus; that the experience of Pentheus, in particular, represents a kind of grim parody of such initiation. On Seaford's own count (42 n.70), some seventy of his notes provide separate illustrations of this thesis. To take an example more or less at random: when Cadmus, on Pentheus' first appearance, comments on his excited state (*ὡς ἐπτόηται*, 214), Seaford comments 'Pentheus is characterised by the first of his many experiences reflecting initiation into the Dionysiac mysteries', and goes on to assemble a series of references to 'fluttering nervous excitement' (*πτόησις*) as a state typical of the initiand. A note by Seaford on 'Have a nice day' would doubtless run 'anticipation of the blessedness to be secured by mystic initiation'!



Maenad from Athenian cup, c. 490 B.C.

Should one detect such a secondary reference in words which in context have a clear and appropriate primary meaning? Alas, on questions of principle such as this it is hard to find arguments that will actually change anyone's views. I raise instead a more concrete problem, that of 'Mysteries of Dionysus' or as Seaford repeatedly calls them 'the Mysteries of Dionysus' (much of my quarrel is with that definite article). Though Seaford stresses that 'most of our evidence for the Dionysiac mysteries is post-classical', he believes that they were already important in Euripides' day and that their form can be approximately described. 'Basic seems to have been a rite of passage centred around an extraordinary (sometimes death-like) experience that effected a transition from outside to inside

the group (the *thiasos*) and from anxious ignorance to joyful knowledge' (39). But in Athens (I allow the case to be slightly different elsewhere), such Mysteries of Dionysus prove hard to pin down. The types of 'initiation' that are clearly visible there are, on the one hand, the Eleusinian Mysteries, a part of the religion of the *polis*, and on the other that dispensed by self-employed 'Orpheus-initiators'. Such Orphic initiation had a bacchic coloration, and much of the evidence adduced by Seaford can equally well be said to illustrate 'Orphic' rites. In particular, recent discoveries have enormously strengthened the case for associating with Orphism the 'Gold Leaves' (often cited by Seaford). Am I quibbling about names? Will Seaford's argument run without check if we simply substitute 'Orphic/Bacchic' for 'Dionysiac'? The difficulty with this is that Orphic/Bacchic initiations are indissolubly associated with an eschatological promise, whereas the concerns of *Bacchae* are exclusively with this world. I do not think that one can postulate for Athens an audience soaked in the kind of familiarity with the kind of Dionysiac Mysteries that Seaford supposes.

Another difficulty concerns the relation between the two theses presented separately above. Seaford's Dionysus is a god of the city no less than Athena Polias, say, or Delphinian Apollo; and that emphasis is most welcome. But initiations of the type he describes, even if much commoner in the city than I allow, were not in the same sense of the city. The most plausible Athenian candidate for a Dionysiac society of the type postulated by Seaford is that led by Phryne in honour of 'Isodaites', perhaps a form of Dionysus. But Phryne was prosecuted and all but put to death for 'assembling illicit *thiasoi*'. The more one associates the Dionysiac worship of the play with 'initiations', the less one can treat it as (in germ) a valuable civic institution with which the tyrant Pentheus was most wrong to tamper.

I argue with Seaford because he is worth arguing with. And I do not suppose for a moment that he would be lost for an answer. The Aris and Phillips series contains by now many useful volumes, but few that attest as much concentrated independent thought over many years, few as thoroughly provocative as this one.

Robert Parker is Wykeham Professor of Ancient History in the University of Oxford.

An Alien Influence: Women's Role in Creating Culture

Conference to be held at the University of Exeter, 10th-13th September, 1998

The dichotomy between *nomos* and *physis*, originally formulated by the Sophists in fifth century Greece, has persisted to the present day. This is best known from the opposition between nature and culture found in the structural analysis of Levi-Strauss. Women, because of their child-bearing role are always associated with nature, while men, through the part they play in government, trade, the legal system, etc., are seen as the creators of culture, including the creative arts. But the woman's role in rearing children engages her in the primary and most important period of transmission of social values and skills.

Questions arising from this are: Whether those who contribute to the formation of society in this way can be separated from the creation of its culture? How far does what is traditionally seen as culture represent male culture? To what extent is this culture actually created and perpetuated by women? Is there an alternative "female" culture?

Current list of speakers (to be confirmed):

Susan Deacy (UK) on Athena
Suzanne Dixon (Australia) on Roman economics
Susan Fischler (UK) on Roman Imperial women
Rebecca Flemming (UK) on medicine
Matthew Fox (UK) on historiography
Maria-Teresa Galaz (Mexico) on Greek oratory
Judith Hallet (USA) on Roman women
Mary Harlow (UK) on late antiquity
Tamar Hodos (UK) on archaeology
Janet Huskinson (UK) on art
Grainne McLaughlin (Eire) on mathematics and philosophy
Nancy Rabinowitz (USA) on Greek drama
Jane Rowlandson (UK) on Egypt
Suzanne Said (USA) on Greek women
Theresa Urbainczyk (Eire) on Christianity
Margaret Woodhull (USA) on women as Roman architectural patrons

For further information contact:

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