

"DREAM-BOATS" AND THE CLASSIC DRAMA

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parachute, but the resemblance is remarkably close.

Perhaps Lucian's most amazing anticipatory flight of the imagination is to be found in his remarks about his visit to the moon: "And I saw another marvelous thing in the palace. There is an enormous mirror over a shallow well. If a person goes down into this well, he hears everything that is said by us here on earth, and if he looks into the mirror he sees all cities and all nations, just as if he were present in person in each case. At that time I saw my own people and all of my native country, but whether the people there saw me, I am not able to say truthfully" (*True History* i, 26). Lucian warned at the beginning of his story that the things to be described by him "could not be"; but the development of short-wave radio broadcasting has long since made it possible to hear, if not "everything that is said by us here on earth," at least things said in all parts of the earth. Lucian, of course, was speaking of auditory contact between the earth and the moon. But even that has been accomplished, for a few years ago scientists were able to send a radio beam to the moon and hear it a few instants later when it was reflected back to the earth. Recent developments in television have already made it possible for a mid-western audience to see events as they transpire on the Atlantic coast. It seems probable that future developments will soon make it possible to see "all cities and all nations." One feels that Lucian would probably be much at home in our highly mechanized civilization.



### "DREAM-BOATS" AND THE CLASSIC DRAMA

By LILLIAN B. LAWLER

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**T**O MANY suffering by-standers, an all-time record of some sort in linguistic ineptitude seemed to have been reached when, not long ago, our ecstatic 'teen-agers began apostrophizing the objects of their affections as "dream-boats." Yet, oddly enough, the offending metaphor has a striking precedent in that stronghold of unimpeachable taste—the classic drama!

The likening of a human being to a boat, directly or by implication, is rather common in Greek dramatic poetry, in both tragedy and comedy. In the *Thesmophoriazusae* of Aristophanes, lines 1105-6, for instance, Euripides, quoting from his play *Andromeda*, says of his heroine, ". . . a maiden, beautiful as the goddesses,"

chained to a rock, "like a moored boat." Even more effective is the same tragic playwright's metaphor in the *Andromache*, lines 854-5. Here Hermione upbraids her father for leaving her: "You have left me, father,

mad and goad him on to murder, tells her to "let out the gory cable."

The adjective *kalliprōros*, "with beautiful prow," is, as we should expect, properly applied to boats (cf. Euripides, *Medea* 1335): but in the Greek drama we find it just as freely used to refer to human beings, both male and female. The conservative Aeschylus, for example, in the *Agamemnon*, lines 235-7, speaks of Iphigenia's "fair-prowed mouth"—a metaphor daring in any language! The same author, in his *Seven Against Thebes*, line 533, calls Parthenopaeus of Arcadia the "fair-prowed offspring of a mountain-dwelling mother." The Medicean scholiast on the passage feels called upon to elucidate: "*Kalliprōros* instead of *eueidēs*," he says, "since the prow is the face of a ship." Hesychius, too, notes the word, and glosses it "*euprosopon*"—"with handsome countenance."

Great opportunities for jests and "gags" are implicit in the boat metaphor. Not long ago a newspaper columnist recorded Milton Berle's classic comment upon an infant swimmer who at the age of eight months was already being trained by an aquatic coach. "What's she training to be?" queried Berle. "A boat?"

Anaxandrides, a Greek writer of Middle Comedy, in his play *Odysseus* (34, 7; ap. Athenaeus vi, 242 F; cf. Eustathius, *Od.*, 1642, 62; 1761, 49) is conveniently informative on another sort of "boat." "Does a fawning flatterer follow on one's heels?" he asks. "Then he is called a *lembos*." And a *lembos*, according to the lexicographers, is "a little, fast-moving boat with a sharp prow," or "a little boat dragged along after a big boat" (Eustathius, *Od.* 1642, 64; cf Nonius 535). In the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, the heroine's middle-aged nurse is named, significantly, *Scapha*, "Boat"—or should we say "Scow"? Plautus' play is an adaptation of the Greek comedy *Phasma*, probably written by Philemon. Presumably, then, the metaphor is found in Greek New Comedy also.

Certain unknown Greek authors, if we may trust Hesychius (s.v. *nausipodes*), Photius (s.v. *naupodes*, 289, 14), and Eustathius (*Od.* 1515, 23-4), presented a variant of the boat metaphor in their use of the words *nausipodes*, *naupodes*. These words, meaning literally "boat-footed," were applied to island-dwellers. Eustathius' discussion of this metaphor might lead us to expect to find it in epic verse; but it does not appear in extant Greek epic. Whether the usage is dramatic or not we cannot determine; but it

### SICELIDES MUSAE

A Poem for Christmas, 1949

By CHARLES C. MIEROW

Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota

Muses of Sicily—shell-torn and desolate—

Mars and his minions have raged and departed.

Sing now (for gone are the years that the locust ate),

Sing now the song that the Mantuan started.

*Paulo maiora*—yes, greater than battle-lust—

Sing now of peace and of brotherly love.

Gone are the planes and the smoke and the swirling dust, .

Still shine the stars and the sun, far above.

Call to our memory the child who once came to earth—

Heaven's great gift—and his message again.

(Cannon, machine-guns, and bombs are but little worth):

"Peace upon earth, and good-will unto men!"

stranded on the shore, alone and bereft of oars!"

The expression "to let out all the cable" (*panta kalōn exienai*), used literally of a ship, is often applied metaphorically to persons, as if they were boats. In the figurative sense it denotes "to go to all lengths" in order to accomplish something. It is used by the Chorus in the *Knights* (756) to encourage the Sausage-Seller. A few lines later (762), the Chorus carry on the metaphor by admonishing him to "hoist the grapples" and "come alongside the (enemy) boat to board it." Still later (830), the Sausage-Seller himself employs a boat metaphor: "Why do you beat and thrash the water with your oars?"

Euripides also uses *panta kalōn exienai* metaphorically. In the *Medea* (278), the heroine laments the fact that her enemies are "letting out all cable" to pursue her, and that she has no "landing-place" to which she may go. In the *Hercules Furens* (837), Iris, bidding Lyssa drive Hercules

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has a whiff of Old Comedy about it. We should note, however, that the figure has nothing in common with our own striking colloquialism "flat-boats," as applied to human feet!

Horrible as the "dream-boat" metaphor may be, things might, I suppose, be worse. We have not yet reached the point of calling one another "scows" or "barges." And perhaps the "dream-boats" will eventually and mercifully pass in the night!



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## NOTES AND NOTICES

The eighty-first meeting of the American Philological Association will be held at the Lord Baltimore Hotel, Baltimore, Md., on December 28, 29, and 30, 1949, in connection with the fifty-first general meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America.

The Southern Section of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South met at Tallahassee, Florida, on November 24-26, 1949, upon invitation of the Florida State University. Classicists would be interested in

"Why 'Go On' with Latin?", by Warren E. Blake, in *School and Society* for May 7, 1949, Vol. 69, No. 1794, pp. 334-5.

Recent newspaper stories of the marriage of an uncle to his niece, in Providence, R. I., are reminiscent of the marriage of the Roman emperor Claudius to his brother's daughter, Agrippina the younger. The latter marriage was legalized by a special *senatusconsultum*.



## TROY

BY HARRIET WEBSTER MARR  
Springfield, Massachusetts

Troy—yellow mounds of earth, shimmering in yellow light.  
A ragged pine-tree crowning one ragged steep ascent;  
Between its roots, potsherds blackened by the fires of Homer's Troy;  
There below, the ringing plain of windy Troy;  
There, the dry course of famed Scamander.

Far on the coast three small mounds, tombs of Achilles, Ajax, and Patroclus.  
To the left, misty purple on the horizon, Tenedos, where the Greek ships stayed.

Behind, Mount Ida, a long range that has watched the centuries pass, nine cities rise and fall, remain long buried, then by Schliemann's faith be brought to light.  
"Sic transit gloria mundi!"

But hark! The sounding verse of Homer rings in memory.  
In the plain, shadowy chariots wheel and turn.  
Before our eyes move hosts arrayed for battle.

From near the ancient Scaean Gate we watch, as did the Trojan dames.

## LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

## A LATIN CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

Professor Herbert N. Couch, of Brown University, writes:

"I am enclosing a copy of our recent Latin Christmas Carol Service, which I thought might be of interest to you. There was a good attendance—some three or four hundred—and everyone seemed to enjoy participating in the program."

The enclosed program is printed in Latin. Persons participating are admonished: "Cantibus lectionibusque sacris non plaudendum est usque ad finem; cantate omnes, si vobis placet, cantus laetos Latine modo, non Anglice, vehementissime." After a "Praeludium" and an "Introitus," two carols were sung—"Adeste, Fideles" and "Somno Soluti." Then came the first lesson, in Latin, from Isaiah xl, 1-5, ix, 2, and ix, 6-7. There followed a solo, "O Mira Nox," and then two carols, "Serena Nocte Media" and "Ecce Chorus Angelorum." The second lesson, read in Latin also, was from Vergil's fourth eclogue. It was followed by two carols, "O Viri, Este Hilares" and "Puer Nobis Nascitur." The third lesson, in Latin, was from Luke ii, 1-14. The chorus then sang the "Magnificat," after which the whole group sang "Quem Pastores Laudavere" and "In Dulci Jubilo." The last lesson, read in Greek, was from John i, 1-14. Following two carols, "Orbem Terrae Transvolate" and "Nox Silens," the service concluded with an "Oratio." The program gives credit to a "Magister Organi Pneumatici," a "Magister Canentium," and a "Magister Equitum," the latter being Professor Couch. The program should prove suggestive to other colleges and high schools looking for a new idea for a community service.

## ENROLLMENT

Professor Mars M. Westington, of Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana, writes:

"Our present enrollment in the Latin and Greek language courses has reached a new 'high.' The related courses, too, have a record registration. The number of classical majors surpasses any figure of recent years."

## FROM A RETIRED TEACHER

Miss Edith M. Jackson, a retired teacher of Latin, of West Chester,