

ΜΕΛΙ ΝΥΚΕΣΚΕ

A newsletter for Classics at the University of Dallas

THE WORLD TRADE CENTER MEMORIAL DESIGN

"Reflecting Absence" in light of the Classical tradition

On January 14 of this year, architects Michael Arad and Peter Walker unveiled their design, called *Reflecting Absence*, for the World Trade Center Memorial site in New York—the winning design chosen from 5201 submissions. The 13-member jury that chose the memorial design included architects, artists, an executive director of a museum in New York, and the wife of a man who died in the South Tower of the WTC. Maya Lin was also on the jury. She's known to UD after her post as McDermott lecturer in 2004, runs her own architectural studio in New York, and first won international recognition for her design of the Vietnam Veteran's memorial in Washington D.C.

The jury chose *Reflecting Absence* based on its fulfillment of the terms set up in the mission statement and competition guidelines. The mission statement requires the memorial to "remember and honor the thousands of innocent men, women, and children murdered by terrorists in the horrific attacks of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001...May the lives remembered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit reawakened be eternal beacons, which reaffirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance, and intolerance." The winning design consists of a park at ground level and an underground complex centered around two pools of water where the "footprints" of the two towers of the WTC once were. The names of those who died will be arranged in no particular order around the pools. Between the pools will

be a quiet area for reflection and memorial services. At the northern footprint there will be a quiet place with a large stone vessel for unidentified remains. Along the western edge of the site is a fissure where there will be a museum for artifacts from the towers. Arad and Walker's design is characteristic of modern trends. The memorial is simple, finished in geometric lines with glass, concrete, and, in places, the bare bedrock. Besides the haphazard arrangement of names, they designers seem to have no place for an inscription or plastic or graphic arts. The memorial departs from the effect of, for example, the stately composed statue of the President in the Lincoln Memorial, and from Simonides' radiant couplet immortalizing the Spartans at the battle of Thermopylae, known especially to all readers of Chase and Phillips; however, can this memorial still honor the dead and their deeds, and inspire the living, as those who drafted the competition parameters required it to? Some families of those who died on September 11 are concerned that the memorial dishonors the dead by putting their names underground. Rosaleen Tallon, the sister of a firefighter killed in the 2001 attacks, has held an overnight vigil outside her brother's firehouse for over two weeks. "There is always opportunity [to halt construction] until concrete is poured" she said.

Yet Arad and Walker's plans allow the transformation of this concrete and glass complex into a more personalized memorial. People will doubtless come and leave behind flowers and candles and pictures of their loved ones who died at the spot. They will remember services and prayers held at the site. The names will bear the fingerprints of people who trace them with their fingers. The trees in the above-ground park will fill the park. These things will fill up *Reflecting Absence*.

On the other hand, those of us who have visited the memorial arches in the Forum, or seen Roman and Greek grave markers in museums, or even walked around any old cemetery know what sorts of things honor the dead and preserve their memory. One Greek grave preserves in bas relief the image of a mother with her child and a little bird. In the *Laudatio Turiae*, a man spares no words in praise of his wife. In an English cemetery from WWII near Monte Cassino, I found this quiet inscription: "trust that those whom we call dead are breathers of an ampler realm." Do we presume the United States will last forever, or that people will always bring flowers and remembrances to the WTC memorial, that we think it suffices to enshrine the place in concrete slabs and glass pools? We would not, I think, leave the memory of heroes and loved ones to such risky circumstances, if one really remembered what hollowness he feels passing through the barest concrete ruins in Rome and Greece, bereft of every perishable mark of those who lived and loved and died there before.



Above: Underground view of the pools. Left: Above-ground view of the WTC Memorial
Photos courtesy <http://www.wtcsitememorial.org/>

FOR THE SPARTANS WHO HELD THE PASS AT THERMOPYLAE

Chapter 25 of Chase and Phillips includes the epigram to the Spartan defenders of Thermopylae in 480B.C., recorded in Herodotus' *Histories*: There is an inscription written over these men, who were buried where they fell, and over those who died before the others went away, dismissed by Leonidas. .. That inscription is for them all, but the Spartans have their own:

ὦ ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῆδε
κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι. (7.228)

Translated, "Stranger, tell the Lacedaemonians that here we lie, obedient to their orders."

Notes from the Editor

Thanks to everyone for their positive comments about the newsletter. Thanks especially to Chris Wolfe, for his submission and to Timothy Dean for his submissions and help with layout. You'll find Chris's puzzle on page two. Submissions for the next issue of MN are welcome. Please send them to UD Box 610, email them to mpawlow@udallas.edu, or drop them off at the Classics department desk. Spero tu valeas,

The Editor

From Smyth's Greek Grammar

Greek grammar in small digestible bits

Since you now know why ἀκούω is quirky in the perfect, here's Smyth on why it happens to have a future middle form that is active:

§805. *Future Middle with Active Meaning.*--

Many verbs have no active future, but use instead the future middle in an active sense:

e.g. λαμβάνω *takes* λήψομαι; γινώσκω, *know*, γνώσομαι.

a. Most such verbs denote a physical action, as the action of the vocal organs; the action of the organs of sight, hearing, smell, touch; the action of throat, mouth, lips; bodily activity in general, voluntary or involuntary; and other aspects of the physical side of human organism. (§806 Lists the other active verbs with middle futures.)

From the Classics Links Page:

Find this featured link and many other ones at

<www.udallas.edu/classics/useful.cfm>

Recitation from Pindar's Odes

<http://www.idyllion.gr/komp-wettbewerb/english/discus.htm>

Here you can hear two different men reciting five different odes of Pindar, from an mp3 file or using Real Player™. The page also displays the Odes in Greek, in Roman transliteration, and in English translation.

(The site is sponsored by guest house and cultural center called Idyllion in Greece. They've also sponsored a composition competition for the Athens Olympics in 2004, along with various other concerts and activities.)

The Curiosity Corner

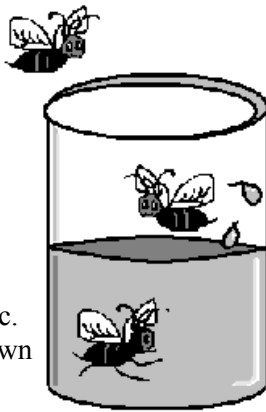
The next time you ask for silence, please don't say "Shut up!" and don't use Mark Antony's "Lend me your ears!" either. Horace has a much better way of getting silence. In the first poem of book three of his Odes, he writes "*favete linguis*".

Lewis and Short help with this curious, but much attested expression: It occurs in religious language, meaning, "to speak good words, or to abstain from evil words, thus to keep still, be silent".

The religiously-tinged expression is particularly appropriate for Horace's poem, which begins with "*Odi profanum vulgus*". You might want to be equally guarded where you use it, if only so as not to be answered not with silence but with a raised eyebrow (*supercilio*, a word that occurs in the same ode).

LOST AND FOUND

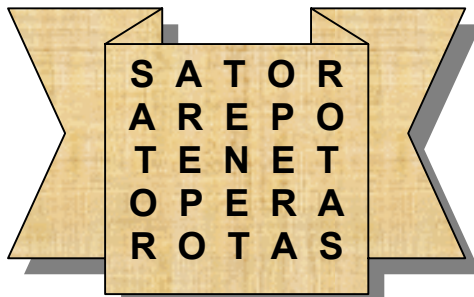
Sad Latinist still looking for a Cassel's Latin dictionary, c. 2000 edition, brown cover.



TRANSLATION SYMPOSIUM WELL-ATTENDED

On Friday of last week the Classics department sponsored a symposium on the ties associated with translation. Dr. Donovan Anderson of the German department was the moderator. Sasah Decker, a senior Latin Classical philology major, writing her thesis on Catullus 64, introduced the audience to the difficulties of translating Catullus' poetry. Dr. Robert Longacre, a professor emeritus at the University of Texas at Arlington and associate of the Summer Institute in Linguistics., spoke in particular about carrying across the suspense of the accumulated circumstantial participles in chapter five of the Gospel of Mark. Dr. Maurer, associate professor of Classics at UD, explained how preserving the end rhyme words in Dante's poetry leads to a better translation of a passage from Dante. About fifty people attended. Thérèse Bart, a senior English major, said, "Sasha gave a very solid talk." She felt the presentation appealed to many other majors in addition to Classics. Rigel Rilling, a junior, whose parents have also been involved in the SIL, said that, "(Dr. Longacre) seemed to be in favor of looser translations that favored the felling of the texts but seemed to think that conveying the syntax of the passage is important." He enjoyed Dr. Maurer's input, saying, "Dr. Maurer was, as always, fantastic, castigating the 'sons of darkness and night' who try to turn poetry into prose [by obliterating the line endings]."

Thanks to Dr. Anderson, Sasha Decker, Dr. Longacre, and Dr. Maurer for their contribution to the symposium. Thanks also to everyone who attended.



The answer to last weeks puzzle was "Hi!", i.e. "navem" without its keel and stern is "ave". No one claimed to know the answer, so no one gets a prize. (Though its rumored the Waterman girls got it with no trouble.)

This week here's a Latin palindrome that you don't have to rack your brain to answer--it's just neat. It can be read from the top left going across or down first, or from bottom to top or right to left from the bottom right corner. (Get that?)

The palindrome might also have been a secret code for Christianity, because the two "tenet"s make a cross, and the A O 's on the edges are the Latinized "ΑΩ"

(Submitted by Chris Wolfe, who got it from his high school Latin teacher, Mr. Handloser.)

Book review from the Classics department library, by T.D.

Despite the review of *A Companion to Classical Texts* found in our last issue, nobody has decided to check that or any other book out of the department's library. So here's another tidbit to excite you.

Jacqueline de Romilly's *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors* challenges misconceptions about Greek historical thought, and then proceeds to address the issue in a simple, systematic fashion.

The first chapter (of four) is devoted solely to defining the scope of the book and removing potential obstacles to the modern reader. The second chapter deals with the rise of powers, the causes and the conditions, and Romilly takes some time to show the development of military and political theory for the Greeks, as well as to show how that differs from modern conceptions. The next two chapters are concerned with the conditions before the fall of a state, and what brings it about. Romilly focuses primarily on two: *hubris* and organization of power.

The Rise and Fall is a straightforward and interesting read, especially for those who enjoy strategy.

Be sure to come check it out from the Classics department. As always, remember to sign your name in the yellow folder, so we know who has it.