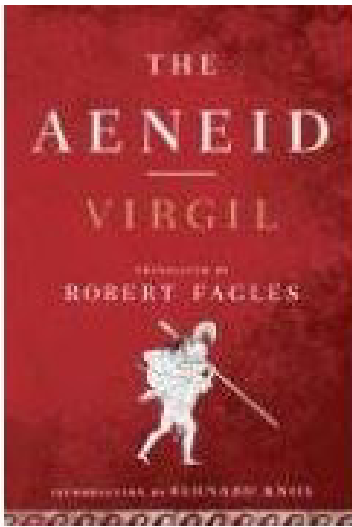


# MEI NUCESQUE

A newsletter for Classics at the University of Dallas

## FAGLES FITS VIRGIL'S MUSE TO ENGLISH METER



A few weeks ago Robert Fagles, Arthur W. Marks '19 Professor of Comparative Literature, Emeritus, at Princeton University, published his translation of the *Aeneid*. This translation joins his translation of Homer's *Iliad*, published in 1990 and *Odyssey*, published in 1996. Fagles's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were unexpected bestsellers and the *Aeneid* translation expects similar success. Fagles's

translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were no doubt successful because of the audio versions released along with them, but also it Mr. Fagles seems surprised about the general public's interest in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In a *New York Times* article, Fagles says, "I was very surprised...because I'm an academic, and a lot of hand wringing goes on in the academy about the illiteracy of the public. The great joy of this work was to discover that there is in fact a great number of very intelligent, hardworking readers out there."

As you know, all students of Constantin College at UD read Fitzgerald's translation of the *Aeneid* in Literary Tradition I. Fitzgerald's edition was published in 1983. Since Fagles worked ten years on his translation of the

*Aeneid*, he probably started in about 1986, only three years after Fitzgerald's translation came out. Did Fagles start translating the *Aeneid* because he thought Fitzgerald's translation was inadequate? Charles McGrath at least, who writes the *New York Times* that announces the publication of Fitzgerald's *Aeneid*, considers Fagles' translation particularly suited for the new generation of *Aeneid* readers. McGrath writes, "succeeding generations of students for whom Virgil was never on the reading list, can now turn gratefully to Robert Fagles's new English translation of the *Aeneid*, in which that ancient war horse emerges as a work of surpassing beauty, feeling and even relevance, everything that teachers used to say it was". And Richard Jenkyns, in the *New York Times Book Review*, says Fagles's translation is, "A memorable achievement . . . Mr. Fagles has been remarkably successful in finding a style that is of our time and yet timeless."

In an article for the daily Princetonian Review, Fagles describes his methods and aims: "'There are many things in our modern language that [embody] the heroic,' he said, praising Ken Burns' PBS series on the civil war as an example of 'nineteenth-century American oratory in many voices high and low.' Fagles hopes to bring Virgil 'from literature into song.' Fagles has a special interest in the voices of great poetic singers, from classical and Romantic writers to modern poets such as Robert Lowell and C. K. Williams. 'Yeats is always the most useful,' Fagles said, recalling his translation of an episode in the "Odyssey" where the gathered Greek legions gaze up at Helen on the walls of Troy."

Sources used for this article are: the *New York Times*, Monday, October 30, 2006, B1, cont. on B2; [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com); <http://www.dailyprincetonian.com/archives/2005/02/24/arts/12133.shtml#continue>; pictures courtesy of [http://www.usatoday.com/life/books/news/2006-11-04-fagles-aeneid\\_x.htm?csp=34](http://www.usatoday.com/life/books/news/2006-11-04-fagles-aeneid_x.htm?csp=34) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).



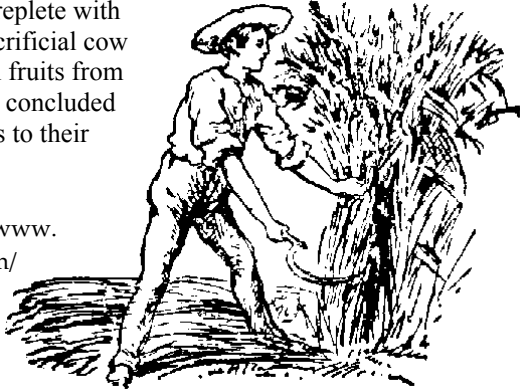
### Notes from the Editor

Maybe you've seen Fagles's translations in bookstores or in the library. Have you read them at all? What do you think about them? Please write in your opinion. As usual, if you have anything to submit to the newsletter, drop it off at the Classics Department, email it to [mpawlow@udallas.edu](mailto:mpawlow@udallas.edu), or mail it to UD Box 610. I hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving!

## Greek Thanksgiving

The ancient Greeks held a harvest festival called the *Thesmophoria*. This harvest holiday observance was held in honor of their goddess of agriculture, fertility, and marriage *Demeter*. This fall celebration held during the month of November (which lasted three days and honored married women only) was held high on a hill overlooking the Sea of Colais. Two women of noble rank and in superior standing were selected to preside as official ministrants in a performance of religious duties and to prepare a sacred meal of rice, meat and vegetables, resembling much of our present-day *Thanksgiving* repast. After their return to Athens, three more days of festivity followed in merry celebration, replete with dancing, a sacrificial cow and pig, fresh fruits from the vine, and concluded with offerings to their deity.

(From <http://www.linguatics.com/thanksgiving.htm>)



### Bit from Smyth's Greek Grammar

from Scott Laverick

#### The Generic Article ἡ ἡ 1122, 1123

The definite article can be used to denote an entire class, as distinguished from other classes. Thus, ὁ ἄνθρωπος = *man* (i.e. as distinguished from ὁ θεός = *god*), οἱ γέροντες = *the aged*. In the singular the generic article makes a single object the representative of the entire class. in the plural, however, it denotes all objects belonging to a class. (The generic article in the plural is commonly used with adjectives used substantively: οἱ κάκουγοι καὶ ἀδίκοι = *the malefactors and wrongdoers*, that is, all those who do wrong.

SS  
SI  
SN  
SE

Wondering how to remember all those noun endings?

from Kate Wyman

The Second Declension Song  
To the tune of "Jingle Bells":

u-s, i, o, u-m / o, long i, o-r-u-m,  
i-s, o-s, i-s too.  
2nd declension nouns.

LATINAM? by ELIZABETH MALONE

**TO EVERYONE WHO HAS A CLASSICS SCHOLARSHIP:**  
Do you want to keep your scholarship next school year? Keep in mind the requirements for renewal of the Classics scholarship, from [www.udallas.edu/admiss/classics.cfm](http://www.udallas.edu/admiss/classics.cfm):

- Maintain full-time academic status each semester by earning at least 12 UD credit hours per fall and spring semester and earning at least twenty-seven UD credit hours per annual review period.
- Demonstrate a cumulative UD G.P.A. of at least 3.000 on the annual review date.
- Complete one advanced course within the Classics Department beyond the required language Core. Exceptions to this are possible, especially if a scholar elects to study Greek and must start at the elementary level.
- Begin Classics courses during the first semester freshman year, and take at least one course each semester attending the Irving campus until the minimum is reached.
- Meet with the Classics Advisor each semester for approval of your course schedule until you have achieved the minimum course completion requirement.
- Help organize at least one extra-curricular activity per semester that is of interest to students of Classics.

## Review from the Classics Department Library



A couple years ago the Classics Department purchased, for students' use, a copy of the **Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Digital Library**, a searchable, computerized databank of Greek texts. The database contains virtually all ancient Greek texts surviving from the period between Homer and A.D. 600 and a large number of texts from between A.D. 600 and 1453. We also have "Phi", a comparable Latin text database. The resource is really helpful for doing word searches in Greek or Latin texts, with various levels of sophistication, and it also has a Greek font, a concordance maker, and all sorts of other useful items. If you are interested in using these databases, talk to me, the Editor, in the Classics Department.