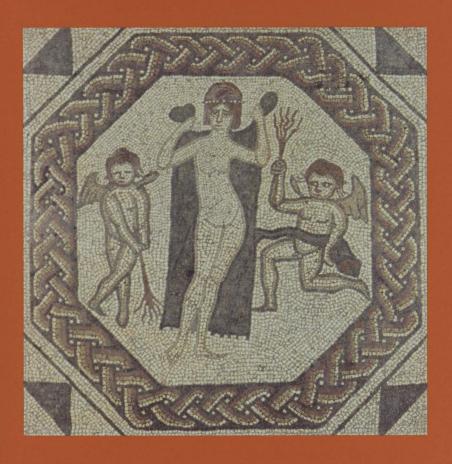
**FALL 1995/WINTER 1996** 

# RION

A Journal of Humanities and the Classics



# Partisan Review

# Winter 1996

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# Poetry and the Classics:

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# Monad Noir\*

WHORE AT THE CAR.
ONE FULL STOP AT THIRTY EIGHT.
ZUKOFSKIFIED
OR MURDERED?

Persicos odi, puer, apparatus, displicent nexae philyra coronae; mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum sera moretur. simplici myrto nihil adlabores sedulus cura: neque te ministrum dedecet myrtus neque me sub arta vite bibentem.

Percy's cous' o.d.'ed. Poor works.

Vice police and next a filly of a coroner,
mildly sexed. Harry Rose, a coy local, run
s a room for renter
s, implies murder. Neil at the lab hurries,
said, "You'll use a current inquest team in his TR, Hmmm?"
Dead. A kid. And murders knot me. Internal constrictions.
A quick drink ends 'em.

#### Notes ad hoc and ad homicidium?

Horati Car. 1.38: The mise en scène is a good example of Zukofskian Pythagorean upsilonian—or in this case psian—translation choices. After jump-cutting to the hero's arrival at the scene, a Hell's Kitchen-type area where streetwalkers expect that any passing, pausing, and unmarked car contains a john, rather than a dick, we confront "1.38." I have chosen "One full stop at thirty eight," using the old telegraphic code, evocative of the film noir '30s, '40s, and '50s, for the symbol "." Here "full stop" stands for the death being investigated. Another avenue would have been to read the phrase as "One period at 38," i.e., one episode in the

<sup>\*</sup> Dedicated to Douglass Parker with apologies to Colin Dexter, Morse, and Thaw.

detective's life, specifically when he is thirty-eight. Or stretching the original to have 38 stand for 38th *vel sim.*, one could have used the second number as a designation for Thirty-Eighth Street in New York City where near the exit from the Lincoln Tunnel low-class hookers hang out for the car trade from New Jersey.

- .1 Read *apparatus* as in English, as a synonym for "works," slang for the paraphernalia used for a drug fix.
- .6 TR=toxicity report.
- .7 Take *vite* as in French, use the root *bib* for a drink (shortened and thereby quickened), and read *entem* as it sort of sounds (and fittingly ends the constrictions and the poem). The overall effect is of an eastern European poetic *Manchester Guardian* crossword puzzle.

By the end, you should understand that our hero, the narrator, is a 38-year-old homicide detective called in to work the case of a young junkie who died of a drug overdose. Routine and straightforward until Harry Rose . . .

Thomas G. Palaima



# Volume IV, Number 1 will include:

Essays by . . .

Herbert Golder on staging the tragic chorus
Rush Rehm on the presence and absence of Euripides' chorus
William Scott on Sophocles' musical design
Stephen Scully on orchestra and stage in Euripides' Suppliant Women
Charles Segal on Sophocles' gods and the chorus of Oedipus Tyrannus

Reviews by . . .

B. M. W. Knox on Hellmut Flashar's *Inszenierung der Antike: das griechische Drama auf der Buhne der Neuzeit*, 1585–1990 and Marianne McDonald's *Ancient Sun*, *Modern Light*Ruth Padel on the Lyric and Barbicon productions of *Ion*Robert Sonkowsky on the Guthrie production of "The Clytemnestra Project"
Oliver Taplin on Mnouchkine's *Les Atrides* 

# Volume IV, Number 2 will feature:

Articles by Anne Carson on Simonides and Greed, Leslie Kurke on Pindar and Prostitutes, Martin Bernal on Orientalizing the Greeks à la Burkert, Mary Lefkowitz on Feminism and the Classics, Simon Goldhill on Oedipus and Suspicion, and more.

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## Inside This Issue:

#### ESSAYS

Kenneth Reckford on Virgil's and Eliot's Venus
Michael Putnam on the Lyric Genius of the Aeneid
Charles Martindale on the Ruins of Rome in The Waste Land
Richard Jenkyns on Late Antiquity in the 19th Century English novel

### POETRY AND TRANSLATION

David Ferry with four from Horace
William Logan's "Beauty" after Horace, Odes 1.25
Rosanna Warren's "Turnus"
Deborah Roberts reverses Horace, Odes 1.5
Thomas G. Palaima's "Monad Noir"
Mark Rudman's "The Diver (after Ovid)" and "Aesacus Risen"
Alistair Elliot translates Juvenal IV
Tony Harrison's The Kaisers of Carnuntum

#### REVIEWS

Daniel Mendelsohn on John Boswell's Same-Sex Unions
Jenny Strauss Clay on Lowell Edmunds' From a Sabine Jar
William Vance on The Legacy of Rome
Michael Putnam on Kirk Freudenberg's The Walking Muse
Lowell Edmunds on Perseus 1.0, HyperMyth, and Writing Space