Thus Burst Hippocrene

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Studies in the Olympian Imagination

By

Laurence K. P. Wong

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PREFACE

The writers discussed in *Thus Burst Hippocrene: Studies in the Olympian Imagination* represent the *ne plus ultra* of world literature: Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Dante, Milton, authors of the *Bible*, Li Bo, Du Fu.... To prove my point, there is no better authority to invoke than *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the final arbiter of the English language.

Under sense 6 ("Of language, style, or a writer: Expressing lofty ideas in a grand and elevated manner") of the headword "sublime" in the great dictionary, there are four quotations related to writers:

> **1690** TEMPLE *Ess.* II. *Poetry* 19 It must be confessed, that Homer was..the vastest, the sublimest, and the most wonderful Genius.
>
> **1782** V. KNOX *Ess.* xv. (1819) I. 89 The Bible, the Iliad, and Shakespeare's works, are allowed to be the sublimest books that the world can exhibit.
>
> **1817** COLERIDGE *Biogr. Lit.* xvi. (1907) II. 22 The sublime Dante.
>
> **1839** DE QUINCEY *Milton* Wks. 1857 VII. 319 Whether he can cite any other book than the 'Paradise Lost', as continuously sublime, or sublime even by its prevailing character.[1]

Those who have read Longinus' *On the Sublime* will readily agree that to have "sublimity" ascribed to one's work is the highest praise and the greatest honour one could aspire to.[2] After reading the above quotations,

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[1] J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1st ed. by James A. Murray, Henry Bradley, and W. A. Craigie, 20 vols., combined with A Supplement to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. R. W. Burchfield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd ed. 1989), Vol. 17, 39.

[2] Note, in particular, the following pronouncement by Longinus: "Sublimity is the echo of a great soul" ("ὕψος μεγαλοφροσύνης ἀπήχημα"). See Longinus, *On the Sublime*, the Greek text edited after the Paris Manuscript, with Introduction,

no one who has some knowledge of European literature will grudge Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton the high praise and great honour given to them, who are Olympians in the strictest sense of the word. Individually evaluated from a purely literary and non-Christian point of view, no single author of the *Bible* is comparable to the four Olympians, but collectively the *Bible* authors certainly inspire more awe, especially in the eyes of Christians. After all, with the notable exception of Homer, the other three Olympians singled out for praise by *The Oxford English Dictionary* were all deeply influenced by the sacred book. For this reason, the *Bible* authors should collectively have a rightful claim to Olympian status.

If there had been no space limitations, the editors of *The Oxford English Dictionary* would most probably have included quotations that give the same praise to the other writers mentioned in the first paragraph. My reasons are simple. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are the three greatest classical Greek tragedians, who are unrivalled in the genre most exalted by Aristotle, himself an Olympian, in the *Poetics*. Virgil, the greatest Roman poet, is the single European poet most closely associated with Homer. The two respectively typify what C. S. Lewis calls "Secondary Epic" and "Primary Epic."[3] Although not of exactly the same stature as Homer, Virgil richly deserves to be ranked as his peer. The Olympian status of the Greek tragedians, of Virgil, and of the authors of the *Bible* is, then, also beyond question.

This leaves only two more writers who need some justification for their inclusion in the Olympian pantheon: Li Bo and Du Fu. As it is not possible in a short preface to argue with sufficient cogency the case of two poets who are much less famous than Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton in the English-speaking world, I can only refer readers to my

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Translation, Facsimiles and Appendices, by W. Rhys Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), 61, 60.

[3] The words "primary" and "secondary" do not imply any "judgements of value," as has been pointed out by Lewis himself: "The older critics divided Epic into Primitive and Artificial, which is unsatisfactory, because no surviving ancient poetry is really primitive and all poetry is in some sense artificial. I prefer to divide it into Primary Epic and Secondary Epic—the adjectives being purely chronological and implying no judgements of value. The *secondary* here means not 'the second rate', but what comes after, and grows out of, the *primary*." See C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to* Paradise Lost, Oxford Paperbacks (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 13.

paper, "Li Bo and Du Fu: A Comparative Study." With readers who have some knowledge of both European and Chinese literature, no convincing is necessary: they will readily agree that Li Bo and Du Fu, two of the greatest poets in ancient China, are worthy companions to Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, even though they have no epics or plays to their credit.

The idea of putting together a collection of papers in comparative literature came to me on completion of "Within and beyond Aristotle's Canon: Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*" in December 2014. At that time, "Homer as a Point of Departure: Epic Similes in *The Divine Comedy*" and "The Ultimate Portraiture: God in *Paradise Lost* and in *The Divine Comedy*" had already appeared in the *Mediterranean Review*. Together with "Li Bo and Du Fu: A Comparative Study," which was published in 1984 in *Renditions*, and "Image-Making in Classical Chinese Poetry and in Western Poetry," which was published in 1994 in *Chinese Literature and European Context: Proceedings of the 2nd International Sinological Symposium, Smolenice Castle, June 22-25, 1993*, they could already make up a small volume. As for the book title, I found it waiting there to be of service the moment I became aware of a striking characteristic common to the writers discussed in the five papers: their Olympian stature. Almost immediately after the book title was decided upon, three other topics suggested themselves to me in quick succession: "Homer as the Grisly Olympian" (paper completed in January 2016), "Channelling the Amazon into a Canal: Pope's Translation of Homer's *Iliad*" (paper completed in July 2016), "Where Homer Nods: The Unequal Combat between Achilles and Hector in the *Iliad*" (paper completed in February 2017). While writing "Where Homer Nods," I also began writing "Leaving No Stone Unturned: A Characteristic of the Jewish Imagination as Shown in the *Bible*," which was conceived from the notes I made in reading the *Bible* chapter by chapter over a period of some twenty years (from the 1970s to the 1990s), and which was completed at about the same time as "Where Homer Nods."

In evaluating works of literature, I am always mindful that a rigorous critic should never shower praise on undeserving writers, and that he should be able to see subtle gradations in artistic merit. In the nine papers collected in this volume, I have faithfully followed this principle, but I have also given high praise whenever high praise is due; very often, I even extol the Olympians in superlatives when I consider what they have achieved to be the acme of poetry, whether lyric, epic, or dramatic. This is not unexpected, since the writers discussed in the papers are among the

greatest in world literature. If, even with them, superlatives were to be disabled, all superlatives in the English language would cease to have functional signifieds. Fortunately, with Olympians like Homer, Sophocles, Dante, and Shakespeare, a critic is much less likely to be found guilty of extravagant assertions when he makes positive judgements in proportion to their merits.

While drawing attention to Olympian achievements, though, I am also mindful that literary criticism is not panegyrics. This is true even with respect to the greatest Olympians, since they, too, may have flaws. For this reason, whenever I see an Olympian falter, I do not hesitate to point out where and how he falters, even if what I say goes against "sacrosanct" judgements passed on unchallenged from generation to generation. Take Homer, for example. To my knowledge, before I wrote "Where Homer Nods," no critic had ever found fault with the climax of the *Iliad*, in which the Father of European Poetry describes the combat between Achilles and Hector. Pope praises Homer highly for what he has done: preparing step by step for Hector's fleeing the moment Achilles appears so as to highlight the Greek hero's matchless prowess. To me, however, instead of being the epic's strength, this is its most serious weakness. In other words, what Pope regards as Homer's master-stroke is, to me, a structural flaw in terms of artistic effect. Hence my "sacrilegious" paper. Like Pope, I have no doubt about Homer's Olympian status; but, unlike Pope, I am not his unconditional idolater, or, for that matter, an unconditional idolater of any writer. In marvelling at the sun, we should not turn an unseeing eye to the dark spots on its photosphere. By pointing out the sunspots, we can throw into bolder relief the sun's beauty and magnificence: its corona, its solar wind, the mind-boggling intensity of its heat, its dazzling light, and the rainbow that lay hidden in it in profound mystery until it was revealed by Newton's prism.

Academic writing is time-consuming. Compared with creative writing, it is often boring. In the case of the papers collected in this volume, the writing process, which involved a considerable amount of research, was certainly time-consuming; yet, it was anything but boring; on the contrary, it was delightful and invigorating. In checking the many quotations in Classical Greek, Latin, Italian, English, French, German, Spanish, and Chinese, for example, I had the opportunity to zero in once again on many immortal passages by the greatest Olympians in world literature, which shone like gems before my eyes. As a result, the writing of *Thus Burst Hippocrene* became a most pleasurable trip down memory lane, where I first made the acquaintance of the Olympians: Li Bo and Du Fu in primary

school, Shakespeare, Milton, and the *Bible* authors in secondary school, Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, and Dante during my undergraduate days....

In publishing this collection of papers, apart from showing how Hippocrene burst under Pegasus' hoof,[4] I also hope to share with my readers the joy which the great Olympians have given me.

—Laurence K. P. Wong
January 2018

[4] "Hippocrene" = "Gr. Ἱπποκρήνη for Ἵππου κρήνη 'fountain of the horse', so called because it was fabled to have been produced by a stroke of Pegasus' hoof. [...] Name of a fountain on Mount Helicon [Ἑλικών], sacred to the Muses; hence used allusively in reference to poetic or literary inspiration." See *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 7, 240. "Pegasus" = "[L., a. Gr. Πήγασος, f. πηγή spring, fount, named from the πηγαί or springs of Ocean, near which Medusa was said to have been killed. [...]] 1. *Gr*. and *Lat*. *Mythol*. The winged horse fabled to have sprung from the blood of Medusa when slain by Perseus, and with a stroke of his hoof to have caused the fountain HIPPOCRENE to well forth on Mount Helicon. Hence, by modern writers (first in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato c* 1490), represented as the favourite steed of the Muses, and said allusively to bear poets in the 'flights' of poetic genius." See *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 11, 441.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Four of the papers collected in *Thus Burst Hippocrene: Studies in the Olympian Imagination* were presented on various occasions and/or published at different times. Details of their publication and presentation venues are as follows:

"Image-Making in Classical Chinese Poetry and in Western Poetry," in *Chinese Literature and European Context: Proceedings of the 2nd International Sinological Symposium, Smolenice Castle, June 22-25, 1993*, ed. M. Gálik (Bratislava: Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 1994), pp. 177-89; paper presented on 23 June 1993 at the International Sinological Symposium on "Chinese Literature and European Context," organized by the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and held at Smolenice Castle, Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

"Li Po and Tu Fu: A Comparative Study," in *Renditions*, Nos. 21 and 22, special combined issue entitled "Poetry and Poetics" (spring and autumn 1984), pp. 99-126 (published under the author's Chinese name in Wade-Giles romanization: Huang Kuo-pin); collected in *A Brotherhood in Song: Chinese Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Stephen C. Soong (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1985), pp. 99-126; an abridged version of the paper is collected in *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism: Excerpts from Criticism of the Works of World Authors from Classical Antiquity through the Fourteenth Century, from the First Appraisals to Current Evaluations*, eds. Jelena O. Krstović et al. (Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1988), pp. 164-68.

"Homer as a Point of Departure: Epic Similes in *The Divine Comedy*," *Mediterranean Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (June 2011), pp. 83-143; paper presented on 19 August 2010 at the "Dante in East Asia" Workshop in Session VI: Asia in the Changing Comparative Paradigm of the XIXth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association,

organized by the International Comparative Literature Association and held on 15-21 August 2010 at Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea.

"The Ultimate Portraiture: God in *Paradise Lost* and in *The Divine Comedy*," *Mediterranean Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (December 2011), pp. 67-115; paper presented as a Dahlem Humanities Center lecture on 28 June 2011 at Freie Universität, Berlin, jointly organized by the University's Dahlem Humanities Center and Center of Italian Studies.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the editors, publishers, and conference/lecture organizers concerned. In going over the volume, I still have fond memories of the kind invitations I received, of the conferences I attended, of the lecture series I participated in, of the hospitality I enjoyed, of the scholars I met, and of the beautiful cities I visited.

In respect of conference attendance made possible by conference grants, I am grateful to Lingnan University and The Chinese University of Hong Kong for their generosity, particularly to the two universities' conference grants committees, which were always supportive.

I would like to thank Ms. Elisabeth Salverda, whose meticulous proofreading has helped me hunt down typographical and formatting errors lying in ambush.

As in the past few years, my thanks also go to the staff of Cambridge Scholars Publishing, particularly to Ms. Amanda Millar, Mr. Samuel Baker, Mr. Sean Howley, Mr. Keith Thaxton, Ms. Victoria Carruthers, Mr. Anthony Wright, Mr. Adam Rummens, Mr. Theo Moxham, Ms. Courtney Blades, and Ms. Elizabeth Cook, for their efficiency and professionalism.

Finally, I am grateful to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for its acceptance of my book proposal, which has enabled me to share my observations on various topics with scholars and students of comparative literature and translation studies.

—Laurence K. P. Wong
January 2018

NOTE ON ROMANIZATION

Chinese characters are romanized according to the *Hanyu Pinyin Fang'an* 漢語拼音方案 (the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet). Thus, "Du Fu" stands for "杜甫," "*Jing Xiapi Yi Qiao huai Zhang Zifang*" stands for "經下邳圮橋懷張子房," "Zhonghua shuju" stands for "中華書局," and so on. When Chinese characters already romanized in the Wade-Giles (or Wade) System are quoted, the Wade-Giles (or Wade) System is retained. Well-known place names like Peking (instead of Beijing) for 北京 are also retained when publications are cited. In the Wade-Giles System, aspiration is indicated differently by different scholars; thus the Wade-Giles romanization for "長安" can be "Ch'ang-an," "Chʻang-an," or "Chʻang-an." In this collection, the mark for aspiration is standardized, that is, only the apostrophe "'" is used.

According to the *Hanyu Pinyin Fang'an*, the given name of a person, when it consists of two characters, such as "商隱" in "李 [surname] 商隱 [given name]," is normally written as one word; thus, when romanized, "李商隱" is written as "Li Shangyin."

NOTE ON CHINESE CHARACTERS

The Chinese characters that appear in this collection of papers are all in *fantizi* 繁體字 'traditional Chinese characters.'[1] Quotations which appear in *jiantizi* 簡體字 'simplified Chinese characters' have been standardized, so that they all appear as *fantizi*. Today, *jiantizi* is used in mainland China and Singapore, whereas *fantizi* is used in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and many Chinese communities overseas. To avoid ambiguity in quoting classical Chinese texts, which were always printed in traditional Chinese characters before the People's Republic of China introduced *jiantizi* in the 1950s,[2] I have opted for *fantizi*. For example, while classical Chinese makes a distinction between "鬱" (as in "憂鬱") 'melancholy' and "郁" (as in "馥郁") 'strong fragrance,' simplified Chinese characters make no such distinction: "鬱" is simplified as "郁." Similarly, in simplified Chinese characters, no distinction is made between "云" (as in "子云" 'Confucius said') and "雲" (as in "白雲" 'white clouds'). Under normal circumstances, simplified Chinese characters do not give rise to any problems, but when distinctions like the above are essential to the understanding of a passage written in classical Chinese, simplified Chinese characters become "defective." As this collection contains many quotations from classical Chinese texts, traditional Chinese characters are used throughout.

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[1] The Chinese term "*fantizi* 繁體字" is also translated as "the original complex form of a simplified Chinese character." See Wu Jingrong 吳景榮 et al., eds., *The Pinyin Chinese-English Dictionary* (Peking / Hong Kong: The Commercial Press; New York / Chichester / Brisbane / Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; 1983), 185. I have not used this translation—for two reasons. First, it is simplified Chinese character-oriented. Second, it is too wordy and sounds like a detailed explanation rather than a translation. It should also be pointed out that, instead of the term "*fantizi* 繁體字," some people prefer to use the term "*zhengtizi* 正體字" 'orthodox Chinese characters,' presumably because the former carries pejorative connotations, especially when used in opposition to the term "*jiantizi* 簡體字," which sounds meliorative.

[2] Strictly speaking, when these "simplified Chinese characters" were introduced, they were officially called "*jianhuazi* 簡化字."

NOTE ON CHINESE NAMES

In Chinese names, the surname (family name) goes before the given name, which is different from the way names in European languages are written. Thus, "杜 [surname] 甫 [given name]" is written as "Du [surname] Fu [given name]," not "Fu Du," "王 [surname] 安石 [given name]" is written as "Wang [surname] Anshi [given name]," not "Anshi Wang," even though reversing the normal Chinese word order would "chime in" better with English names like "William Shakespeare" and "John Milton." In this collection, the traditional way of writing Chinese names is retained in Chinese characters as well as in romanization.

NOTE ON GLOSSING

In glossing words, phrases, sentences, and passages in my papers, I have consulted the following dictionaries:

English:

R. E. Allen, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1st ed. by H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler, 1911 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 8th ed. 1990).

Philip Babcock Gove et al., eds., *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1976).

Philip Babcock Gove et al., eds., *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam – Webster Inc., Publishers, 1986).

Lesley Brown et al., eds., *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

Stuart Berg Flexner et al., eds., *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed., unabridged (New York: Random House, Inc., 1987).

William Little et al., prepared and eds., *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 1st ed. 1933 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd ed. with corrections 1970).

Wendalyn R. Nichols et al., eds., *Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Random House, Inc., 2001).

J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1st ed. by James A. Murray, Henry Bradley, and W. A. Craigie, 20 vols., combined with A Supplement to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. R. W. Burchfield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd ed. 1989). Also referred to as *OED* for short.

John Sinclair et al., eds., *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995).

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Concise Oxford English*

Dictionary, 1st ed. by H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler, 1911 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 11th ed. 2004).

Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2nd ed., revised (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); 1st ed. edited by Judy Pearsall and Patrick Hanks.

Angus Stevenson and Christine A. Lindberg, eds., *New Oxford American Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); 1st ed. (2001) edited by Elizabeth J. Jewell and Frank Abate.

Della Thompson, ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 9th ed. 1995).

William R. Trumble et al., eds., *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 2 vols., Vol. 1, A – M, Vol. 2, N – Z, 1st ed. 1933 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 5th ed. 2002).

French:

Faye Carney et al., eds., *Grand dictionnaire: français-anglais / anglais-français / French-English / English-French Dictionary* unabridged, 2 vols.; 1: *français-anglais / French-English*; 2: *anglais-français / English-French* (Paris: Larousse, 1993).

Abel Chevalley and Marguerite Chevalley, comp., *The Concise Oxford French Dictionary: French-English*, 1st ed. 1934 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, reprinted with corrections 1966).

G. W. F. R. Goodridge, ed., *The Concise Oxford French Dictionary: Part II: English-French*, 1st ed. 1940 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, reprinted with corrections 1964).

Louis Guilbert et al., eds., *Grand Larousse de la langue française en sept volumes* (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1971-1978). On the title page of Vol. 1, Vol. 2, and Vol. 3, the words indicating the number of volumes are “en six volumes” [in six volumes] instead of “en sept volumes” [in seven volumes]; on the title page of Vol. 4, Vol. 5, Vol. 6, and Vol. 7, the words “en sept volumes” [in seven volumes] are used. As a matter of fact, the dictionary consists of seven volumes instead of six. The publication years are 1971 (Vol. 1), 1972 (Vol. 2), 1973 (Vol. 3), 1975 (Vol. 4), 1976 (Vol. 5), 1977 (Vol. 6), and 1978 (Vol. 7).

Harrap’s Shorter Dictionary: English-French / French-English / Dictionnaire: Anglais-Français / Français-Anglais, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd., 2000) [no information on editor(s)].

Paul Imbs et al., eds., *Trésor de la langue française: Dictionnaire de la langue du XIXe et du XXe siècle (1789-1960)*, 16 vols. (Paris: Éditions

du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1971).

J. E. Mansion, revised and edited by R. P. L. Ledésert et al., *Harrap's New Standard French and English Dictionary*, Part One, French-English, 2 vols., Part Two, English-French, 2 vols., 1st ed. 1934-1939 (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., revised ed. 1972-1980).

Marie-Hélène Corréard et al., eds., *The Oxford-Hachette French Dictionary: French-English • English-French / Le Grand Dictionnaire Hachette-Oxford: français-anglais • anglais-français*, 1st ed. 1994, 4th ed. by Jean-Benoit Ormal-Grenon and Nicholas Rollin (Oxford: Oxford University Press; Paris: Hachette Livre; 4th ed. 2007).

Alain Rey et al., eds., *Le Grand Robert de la langue française*, deuxième édition dirigée par Alain Rey du dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française de Paul Robert, 6 vols., 1st ed. 1951-1966 (Paris: Dictionnaires le Robert, 2001). In the list of "PRINCIPAUX COLLABORATEURS" ["PRINCIPAL COLLABORATORS"], however, the six-volume edition is described as "Édition augmentée" [enlarged or augmented edition] "sous la responsabilité de [under the responsibility of] Alain REY et Danièle MORVAN," the second edition being a nine-volume edition published in 1985.

Alain Rey et al., eds., *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, 6 vols. (Paris: Dictionnaires le Robert, 2000).

German:

Harold T. Betteridge, ed., *Cassell's German and English Dictionary*, 1st ed. 1957, based on the editions by Karl Breul (London: Cassell & Company Ltd., 12th ed. 1968).

Günther Drosdowski et al., eds., *DUDEN: Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, in acht Bänden [in eight volumes], völlig neu bearbeitete und stark erweiterte Auflage herausgegeben und bearbeitet vom Wissenschaftlichen Rat und den Mitarbeitern der Dudenredaktion unter der Leitung von Günther Drosdowski (Mannheim / Leipzig / Wien / Zurich: Dudenverlag, 1993-1995).

Wolfgang Pfeifer et al., eds., *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Akademie – Verlag, 1989).

W. Scholze-Stubenrecht et al., eds., *Oxford-Duden German Dictionary: German-English / English-German*, 1st ed. 1990 (Oxford University Press, 3rd ed. 2005).

Gerhard Wahrig et al., eds., *Brockhaus Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch*, in sechs Bänden [in six volumes] (Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus; Stuttgart:

Deutsche-Verlags-Anstalt, 1980-1984).

*In August 1998, a spelling reform began in Germany, of which the 2005 (third) edition of the *Oxford-Duden German Dictionary*, edited by W. Scholze-Stubenrecht et al., has given a succinct account (see page 1727). Part of this account reads: "German spellings in this dictionary are in accordance with the reforms in force since August 1998 and reflect modifications of the reforms agreed in June 2004. Most newspapers and new books use the new spellings. Key points of the reforms are summarized below." "[T]he most important changes" relate to (1) the ß character; (2) nominalized adjectives; (3) words from the same word family; (4) the same consonant repeated three times; (5) verb, adjective and participle compounds; (6) compounds containing numbers in figures; (7) the division of words containing *st*; (8) the division of words containing *ck*; (9) the division of foreign words; (10) the comma before *und*; (11) the comma with infinitives and participles. As four of the five dictionaries I have consulted were all published before 1998, I have not tried to standardize German spellings in my glosses.

Italian:

Maria Cristina Barreggi et al., eds., *DII Dizionario: Inglese Italiano•Italiano Inglese*, in collaborazione con Oxford University Press (Oxford: Paravia Bruno Mondatori Editori and Oxford University Press, 2001).

Cristina Bareggi et al., eds., *Oxford-Paravia Italian Dictionary: English-Italian•Italian-English / Oxford-Paravia: Il dizionario Inglese Italiano•Italiano Inglese*, 1st ed. 2001 (Oxford: Paravia Bruno Mondadori Editori and Oxford University Press, 2nd ed. (seconda edizione aggiornata) 2006).

Salvatore Battaglia et al., eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, 21 vols. (Torino: Unione Tipografico–Editrice Torinese, 1961-2002). *Supplemento all'indice degli autori citati: autori, opere, edizioni che compaiono nei volumi X, XI e XII per la prima volta*; *Supplemento 2004*, diretto da Edoardo Sanguineti, 2004; *Indice degli autori citati nei volumi I-XXI e nel supplemento 2004*, a cura di Giovanni Ronco, 2004; *Supplemento 2009*, diretto da Edoardo Sanguineti, 2009.

Giorgio Cusatelli et al., eds., *Dizionario Garzanti della lingua italiana*, 1st ed. 1965 (Milan: Aldo Garzanti Editore, 18th ed. 1980).

Aldo Duro et al., eds., *Vocabolario della lingua italiana*, 4 vols. (Roma:

Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1986-1994).

Catherine E. Love et al., eds., *Collins dizionario inglese: italiano-inglese inglese-italiano*, imprint issued by HarperResource in 2003 (Glasgow / New York: HarperCollins Publishers; Milan: Arnoldo Mondatori Editore; 2000).

Vladimiro Macchi et al., eds., *Dizionario delle lingue italiana e inglese*, 4 vols., Parte Prima: Italiano-Inglese, Parte Seconda: Inglese-Italiano, realizzato dal Centro Lessicografico Sansoni sotto la direzione di Vladimiro Macchi, seconda edizione corretta e ampliata, i grandi dizionari Sansoni / *Dictionary of the Italian and English Languages*, 4 vols., Part One: Italian-English, Part Two: English-Italian, edited by The Centro Lessicografico Sansoni under the general editorship of Vladimiro Macchi, second edition corrected and enlarged, The Great Sansoni Dictionaries (Firenze: Sansoni Editore, 1985). With Supplemento to Parte Prima a cura di Vladimiro Macchi, 1985.

Tullio de Mauro [ideato e diretto da Tullio de Mauro] et al., eds., *Grande dizionario italiano dell'uso*, 6 vols. (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 2000).

Piero Rebora et al., prepared, *Cassell's Italian-English English-Italian Dictionary*, 1st ed. 1958 (London: Cassell & Company Limited, 7th ed. 1967).

Spanish:

Martín Alonso, ed., *Enciclopedia del Idioma: Diccionario Histórico y Moderno de la Lengua Española (Siglos XII al XX), Etimológico, Tecnológico, Regional e Hispanoamericano*, 3 vols. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1958).

Joan Corominas and José A. Pascual, eds., *Diccionario Crítico Etimológico Castellano e Hispánico*, 6 vols., Biblioteca Románica Hispánica, dirigida por Dámaso Alonso, V. Diccionarios, 7 (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1980-1991).

Beatriz Galimberti Jarman et al., eds., *The Oxford Spanish Dictionary: Spanish-English•English-Spanish / Gran Diccionario Oxford: Español-Inglés•Inglés-Español*, 1st ed. 1994 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 4th ed. 2008).

Lidio Nieto Jiménez and Manuel Alvar Esquerra, *Nuevo Tesoro Lexicográfico del Español (S. XIV-1726)*, Real Academia Española edition, 11 vols. (Madrid: Editorial Arco Libros, S. L., 2007).

Real Academia Española, ed., *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*,

vigésima segunda edición [22nd ed.] (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 2001).

Greek:

Richard John Cunliffe, *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect*, expanded edition, with a new Preface by James H. Dee (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012); first published by Blackie and Son Limited, London, Glasgow, Bombay, 1924; new edition published 1963 by the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Publishing Division of the University; paperback edition published 1977.

Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, compiled, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1st ed. 1843, new edition revised and augmented throughout by Henry Stuart Jones et al., with a revised supplement 1996 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, new (ninth) ed. 1940).

Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, abridged ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

Latin:

Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, revised, enlarged, and in great part rewritten, *A Latin Dictionary*, founded on Andrews' [*sic*] edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary, 1st ed. 1879 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, impression of 1962).

D. P. Simpson, *Cassell's Latin Dictionary: Latin-English / English-Latin*, 1st ed. 1959 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 5th ed. 1968). The London edition of this dictionary has a different title and a different publisher: *Cassell's New Latin-English / English-Latin Dictionary*, 1st ed. 1959 (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 5th ed. 1968). In writing the papers collected in this volume, I have consulted both editions.

A. Souter et al., eds., *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

Chinese-English:

Wu Jingrong et al., eds., *The Pinyin Chinese-English Dictionary* (Peking / Hong Kong: The Commercial Press; New York / Chichester / Brisbane / Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; 1983).

Wu Jingrong et al., eds., *The Pinyin Chinese-English Dictionary* / *Han-*

Ying cidian 漢英詞典 (Peking / Hong Kong: The Commercial Press; San Francisco / London / Melbourne: Pitman Publishing Limited; 1979).

*With the exception of English, when a lexical item is singled out for discussion, it will be glossed, normally as literally as possible, so as to highlight its semantic content. When a gloss is added, it is put in single quotation marks.

In the case of Chinese lexical items in the Chinese script, their *pinyin* 拼音 (the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet) romanized forms are normally given first. Tone marks are not given when Chinese lexical items are transliterated, unless the tones of the lexical items are relevant to the discussion.

NOTE ON TITLES OF WORKS

To date, there is no consensus as to how the initial "*a*," "*an*," or "*the*" in titles of works should be treated when it is preceded by the author's name in the genitive (or possessive) case or by a possessive adjective (*his*, *her*, or *their*): "Dante's *The Divine Comedy*" or "Dante's *Divine Comedy*"? "His *The Divine Comedy*" or "His *Divine Comedy*"? It is possible to get round the problem by rephrasing what has to be said: "Dante's masterpiece *The Divine Comedy*," "Dante's poem *The Divine Comedy*," and so on. Sometimes, however, one may be compelled to choose between "two evils."

With respect to this dilemma, Pam Peters has made the following recommendations:

> The titles of many publications include **the**, witness Michael Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient* and reference books such as *The Gentle Art of Flavoring*. In such cases, **The** needs a capital, as an intrinsic part of the title, even when cited in mid-sentence:
>
> *Ondaatje's novel* The English Patient *became an Oscar-winning movie*.
>
> However style guides agree that if retaining the **The** makes an awkward sentence, it can be dropped:
>
> *Have you read his* Gentle Art of Flavoring?
>
> Likewise it's accepted that when referring to titles prefaced by *A* or *An* (e.g. *A New English Dictionary*), the indefinite article may be replaced by **the**. It would not be capitalized as part of the title:
>
> *Information on many a cultural question can be found among the words listed in the* New English Dictionary.[1]

Two other equally authoritative style guides, the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, contain no such recommendation. In giving

[1] Pam Peters, *The Cambridge Guide to English Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 536.

examples of titles with the definite article *the* following a name in the genitive case, *the* is retained even though its inclusion makes the style "awkward" by Peters's standards:

> French's *The Minute Man* (sculpture)[2]

Another style guide, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which is equally authoritative, has the following to say:

> ***An initial "a," "an," or "the" in book titles***. An initial *a*, *an*, or *the* in running text may be dropped from a book title if it does not fit the surrounding syntax. When in doubt, or if the article seems indispensable, it should be retained.
>
> Fielding, in his introduction to *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, announces himself as a professional author.
> Fielding's *History of Tom Jones*…
> That dreadful *Old Curiosity Shop* character, Quilp…
> *but*
> In *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Dickens…
> In L'Amour's *The Quick and the Dead*…[3]

In *Thus Burst Hippocrene: Studies in the Olympian Imagination*, I have followed the recommendation of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. This is because it has taken care of the needs of both rigorous scholarship and "stylistic grace." Thus, while dropping the article *the* in phrases like "In

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[2] *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 3rd ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2008), 118. The same example is also given by the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009), 88. The authority of these two books is suggested by the information given on the copyright page of the 2009 *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*: "The Modern Language Association publishes two books on its documentation style: the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (for high school and undergraduate students) and the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (for graduate students, scholars, and professional writers). These volumes provide the most accurate and complete instructions on MLA style."

[3] *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 1st ed. 1906 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 16th ed. 2010), 452-53.

Dante's *Divine Comedy*,"[4] I have, in cases where the titles of works are less famous, retained the articles (e.g. "In David Hawkes's *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*"). In other words, with well-known titles which are almost common knowledge to readers, I drop the articles "in running text" when they "[do] not fit the surrounding syntax" or when retaining them "makes an awkward sentence"; but when the articles are "indispensable" or when omission of them could give rise to ambiguity or confusion, I will retain them. Take the phrase "David Hawkes's *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*," for example. Omission of the indefinite article "*A*" could leave the reader uncertain as to the exact title of the author's book: "*A Little Primer of Tu Fu*," "*The Little Primer of Tu Fu*," or "*Little Primer of Tu Fu*"? One could, of course, take a circuitous route and say such things as "In David Hawkes's book *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*…" or "In *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*, David Hawkes's book on the great Chinese poet…" and so on, but this kind of circumlocution or "avoidance of the issue" is just as "awkward" as saying "In David Hawkes's *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*," even though it is awkward in a different way.[5] In scholarly writing, it is, of course, desirable to pay attention to both "stylistic grace" and accuracy, but when the two are at odds with each other, accuracy should take precedence over "stylistic grace."

Having stated my position, I would like to end this note by quoting at length a writer for whom I have great respect. In his *Usage and Abusage*, Eric Partridge has the following to say at the entry "TITLES OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS":

> This is a question often neglected: I have already discussed it at the entry *the* in my *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (1937; 3rd ed., revised and enlarged, 1948).

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[4] Even with Shakespeare, the definite article "*The*" in *The Taming of the Shrew* can be found in scholarly writing when the title is preceded by the playwright's name in the genitive case: "The real test of the relationship between the poet and the editor, however, can best be assessed by giving a close reading to how citation sits with sense in a dictionary entry, which is what I now turn to with a number of entries supported by Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*." See John Willinsky, *Empire of Words: The Reign of the* OED (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 75.

[5] The second circumlocution is not only awkward, but also inaccurate, for *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*, apart from discussing the poet and his work, also contains translations of his poems; strictly speaking, therefore, it is not exclusively a book *on* Tu Fu.

Had I chosen the title *Dictionary of Slang*, it would have been incorrect to refer to it either as *A Dictionary of Slang* or as *The Dictionary of Slang* (very pretentious this!, for there are other dictionaries of slang); had the title been *The Dictionary of Slang*, it would have been incorrect (though excusable) to refer to it as either *A Dictionary of Slang* or *Dictionary of Slang*; but as it is *A Dictionary*, why impute telegraphese by calling it *Dictionary*, or conceit by changing it to *The Dictionary*? Hence I write 'My *A Dictionary of Slang*'. If the title had been *The Dictionary*…I should have referred to the book as 'my *The Dictionary of Slang*'.

And let us italicize the initial 'A' and 'The' or, if the inverted-comma mode is preferred, have inverted commas before them. 'A correspondent on the *Times*' or 'A correspondent on the "Times"' is, to put it mildly, a feeble substitute for 'a correspondent on *The Times*' or 'a correspondent on "The Times"'. Luckily, few writers fall into the ineptitude of omitting the capital letter in the properly italicized or inverted-comma mode, as in 'a correspondent on *the Times*' or 'a correspondent on "the Times"'.

Admittedly, the general practice is against 'my *A Dictionary of Slang*': but should not exactitude overrule a practice that can hardly be classified as idiom? In familiar speech, 'my *Dictionary of Slang*' is permissible: it is a colloquialism. But I do recommend that scholars and reputable serious writers (or humorous writers desirous of a reputation for good English as well as for acceptable humour) and cataloguers should retain the *A* and *The* that form the first word in a title. Is it not better to speak of J. M. Barrie's delightful book as 'Barrie's *A Window in Thrums*' than to refer to it as 'Barrie's *Window in Thrums*'? Is not the latter both ambiguous and impertinent – and just a little cheap? After all, we do not speak of 'Michael Sadleir's *Foolish Things*', but of 'Michael Sadleir's *These Foolish Things*'; we speak, not of 'Michael Arlen's *Charming People*' but of 'Michael Arlen's *These Charming People*'. *A* and *The* have their rights no less than *These* and *Those*.

In the titles of periodicals, however, there is an exception, consecrated by usage and justified by convenience: when the title becomes an adjective, *The* is omitted. 'A *Times* correspondent' is more convenient than, and is idiomatic for, 'A correspondent of (generally, on) *The Times*'. I do not suggest that we should either say or write 'a *The Times* correspondent' or 'the *The Times* correspondent'. But, so far as I can see, there is no excuse for 'The editor of the *New York Times* snorts balefully on discovering this sorry stratagem' (Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words*): either 'The editor of *The New York Times*' or 'The editor of "The New York Times"' is required.[6]

[6] Eric Partridge, *Usage and Abusage: A Guide to Good English*, new edition edited by Janet Whitcut, Penguin Reference (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 350-351.

Having made his recommendations for the British, Partridge goes on to talk about the American practice:

> [For the citing of titles the most generally available American authority is probably the University of Chicago Press's *A Manual of Style*. As first words the articles *a* and *the* are part of the titles of books and one would expect them to be so treated – i.e. capitalized and set within quotation marks or in the italic type that distinguishes the title. However, titles that make for awkwardness or misunderstanding – as in 'his *A Dictionary of Slang*' and 'Dr. Vizetelly's *The Standard Dictionary*' – will inevitably be shortened, now and again, when they interfere with the English language.][7]

What Partridge or Janet Whitcut, who revised *Usage and Abusage* in 1994, says in the above quotation seems to suggest that the University of Chicago Press's *A Manual of Style* is at odds with *Usage and Abusage*. But if Partridge or Whitcut had read the 2010 edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which includes the following clause: "if the article seems indispensable, it should be retained," Partridge or Whitcut would probably have written about the American practice differently, for, clearly, the "*A*" in Partridge's "my *A Dictionary of Slang*" is "indispensable," at least for the sake of scholarly exactitude.[8] Of the four style guides mentioned in this note, Peters's is the least scholarly.[9]

First published in the USA 1942; first published in Great Britain by Hamish Hamilton 1947; revised edition 1957; published in Penguin Books 1963; reprinted with revisions 1969, 1973; this new edition first published by Hamish Hamilton 1994.

[7] Partridge, 351-52. The square brackets are Partridge's (or Whitcut's).

[8] For the sake of consistency and scholarly exactitude, the title of the *Bible* and those of its books are all italicized.

[9] It is interesting to note, that, even in formal writing, which *The Cambridge Guide to English Usage* is supposed to be written in, Peters uses contractions (e.g. "Likewise it's accepted that […]"), thereby blurring the boundaries between formal and informal writing. On the use of contractions, the 2008 edition of the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* has the following to say: "A principal function of apostrophes is to indicate possession. They are also used in contractions (*can't, wouldn't*), which are rarely acceptable in scholarly writing […]" (95). As the counterpart of Peters's *The Cambridge Guide to English Usage*, the *New Oxford Style Manual* does not use contractions in running text. See *New Oxford Style Manual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

PART ONE

HOMER AS THE GRISLY OLYMPIAN

[ABSTRACT]

Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton are all very great writers. To switch to figurative language, they are all Olympians in the strictest sense of the word. All with masterpieces to their credit, they shine in different ways, but when it comes to grisliness of description, Homer reigns supreme. This paper examines and compares some of the most grisly passages taken from these writers' works, and explains why Homer is the most grisly, and how he outshines all his fellow Olympians in the grisliness-assessment exercise.

I. Introduction

As European writers, Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton are all Olympians in the true sense of the word. While critical views may vary as to who is the most sublime, who is the supreme master of language, whose work exhibits the greatest depth of vision or breadth of human passion, and so on, one thing is certain: that Homer is the most grisly.

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, which is generally considered the most authoritative dictionary of the English language, "grisly" means:

> Causing horror, terror, or extreme fear; horrible or terrible to behold or to hear; causing such feelings as are associated with thoughts of death and 'the other world', spectral appearances, and the like. In mod. use tending to a weaker sense: Causing uncanny or unpleasant feelings; of forbidding appearance; grim, ghastly.[1]

[1] J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, first ed. by James A. Murray, Henry Bradley, and W. A. Craigie, 20 vols., combined with A Supplement to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. R. W. Burchfield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd ed. 1989). Also referred to as *OED* for short. Vol. 6, 855, "grisly."