

In Magna Graecia

with George Sharpley

All Latin, English translations and references

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Filmed in Italy 2023

The **LATIN** QUARTER

Video Diary 1

A. Laocoon appeals to his fellow citizens not to trust the wooden horse

Virgil, Aeneid 2.42-49 – read by Matthew Hargreaves

‘Ō miserī, quae tanta īnsānia, cīvēs?
crēditis āvectōs hostīs? aut ūlla putātis
dōna carēre dolīs Danaum? sīc nōtus Ulixes?
aut hōc inclūsī lignō occultantur Achīvī,
aut haec in nostrōs fabricāta est māchina mūrōs,
īnspectūra domōs ventūraque dēsuper urbī,
aut aliquis latet error; equō nē crēdite, Teucrī.
quidquid id est, timeō Danaōs et dōna ferentīs.’

‘My poor citizens, what is this insanity? Do you believe the enemy has gone? Do you think any gifts from Greeks are free from treachery? Is this what Ulysses is known for? Either there lurk Greeks enclosed in this wooden construction or this is a machine with a hostile design against our walls, to spy on our homes and come down on the city from above. Or it’s some other aberration we cannot detect. Do not trust the horse, Trojans. Whatever it is, I fear Greeks, not least when they bring gifts.’

B. Two huge snakes attack Laocoon and his two sons

Virgil, Aeneid 2.212-15 – read by Llewelyn Morgan

Diffugimus vīsū exsanguēs. illī agmine certō
Lāocoonta petunt; et primum parva duōrum
corpora nātōrum serpēns amplexus uterque
implicat et miserōs morsū dēpāscitur artūs.

We paled at the sight, and fled. They make straight for Laocoön: first the two snakes seize the small bodies of his two sons and coil about them, and — too distressing — sink their jaws into the boys’ limbs and feast on them.

Also in Video Diary 1

All Etruscan sarcophagi sculptures (except Centauromachy) – Tarquinia Museum
Centauromachy sculpture from the sarcophagus of Velthur Vipinana (6th-5th century BC) – Vatican Museum, Rome
Wall paintings – Tarquinia Necropolis

Achilles playing dice with Ajax: signed by Exekias as both painter and potter (540-30 BC) – Vatican Museum, Rome

Vase from Vulci (7th century BC) – National Etruscan Museum, Rome

Herakles fighting the Nemean lion, from Cerveteri (490-80 BC) – Vatican Museum, Rome

Wooden Horse – This stands today in Turkey, at the current location of the ancient city of Troy.

Laocoon Group – Vatican Museum : Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79) attributed the work to three Greek sculptors from the island of Rhodes: Agesander, Athenodoros, and Polydorus. The date is uncertain.

Video Diary 2

C. The Sibyl's cave at Cumae

Virgil, Aeneid 6.42-4 – read by George Sharpley

Excīsum Euboicae latus ingēns rūpis in antrum,
quō lātī dūcunt aditūs centum, ostia centum,
unde ruunt totidem vōcēs, respōnsa Sibyllae.

A huge side of Euboean rock is carved into a cave, where lead a hundred wide mouths, a hundred doorways, from where rush as many voices, the responses of the Sibyl.

D. Cicero's mocking of Clodia

Cicero, Pro Caelio 38 – read by George Sharpley

Caelī causa est expeditissima. Quid enim esset, in quō sē nōn facile dēfenderet? Nihil iam in istam mulierem dīcō; sed, sī esset aliqua dissimilis istius quae sē omnibus pervolgāret, quae habēret palam dēcrētum semper aliquem, cuius in hortōs, domum, Baiās iūrē suō libīdinēs omnium commeārent, quae etiam aleret adulēscentēs et parsimōniam patrum suīs sūmptibus sustinēret; sī vidua līberē, proterva petulanter, dīves effūsē, libīdinōsa meretrīciō mōre vīveret, adulterum ego putārem sī quis hanc paulō līberius salūtāset?

The case of Caelius is very straightforward. For what might there be against which he would not easily defend himself? For now I have nothing critical to say of that woman; but imagine there were someone quite unlike her, who made herself available to all comers, who always had someone on the go as a matter of public record, into whose home and gardens at Baiae the lustful behaviour of all would freely mingle, a woman who even supported young men and subsidized the thrift of their fathers at her own expense. Suppose a widow were to live without restraint, wantonly shameless, extravagant with her wealth, lusting like a whore, am I to think a man sexually offensive if he had approached her a little too freely?

E. A jealous longing

Catullus 51 – read by Cristina Anason-Lewis
(adapted from the original poem)

Illa mī pār esse deae vidētur,
illa, sī fās est, superāre dīvās,
quae sedēns adversus identidem tē
spectat et audit

dulce ridentem, miserae quod omnīs
ēripit sēnsūs mihi: nam simul tē,
Lesbia, aspexī, nihil est super mī
vōcis in ōre,

lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artūs
flamma dēmānat, sonitū suōpte
tintinant aurēs, geminā teguntur
lūmina nocte.

She has the look of a goddess, that lady there – no, if I can say this, she outdoes even goddesses – that girl sat opposite, the one eyeing you and lapping up your sweet laughter. I, poor wretch, am losing my senses. One look, Lesb, I cannot speak, my tongue grows numb, a heat trickles down my limbs, my ears have a tingling of their own, and both eyes are lost in darkness.

F. Orpheus and Eurydice

Virgil : Georgics 4.464-503 – read by George Sharpley and Suzannah Lipscomb

Ipsē cavā sōlāns aegrum testūdine amōrem
tē, dulcis coniūnx, tē sōlō in lītore sēcum, 465
tē veniente diē, tē dēcēdente canēbat.
Taenariās etiam faucēs, alta ōstia Dītis,
et cālīgantem nigrā formīdine lūcum
ingressus, Mānīsq̄ue adiit rēgemque tremendum
nesciaque hūmānīs precibus mānsuēscere corda. 470
at cantū commōtae Erebi dē sēdibus īmīs
umbrāe ībant tenuēs simulācraque lūce carentum,
quam multa in foliīs avium sē mīlia condunt,
vesper ubi aut hībernus agit dē montibus imber,
mātrēs atque virī dēfūnctaque corpora vītā 475
magnanimum hērōum, puerī innuptaeque puellae,
impositīque rogīs iuvenēs ante ōra parentum,
quōs circum līmus niger et dēfōrmis harundō
Cōcētī tardāque palūs inamābilis undā
alligat et noviēs Styx interfūsa coeracet. 480
quīn ipsae stupuēre domūs atque intima Lētī
Tartara caeruleōsque implexae crīnibus anguīs
Eumenidēs, tenuitque inhiāns tria Cerberus ōra,
atque Ixīoniī ventō rota cōstitit orbis.
Iamque pedem referēns cāsūs ēvāserat omnīs, 485
redditaque Eurydicē superās veniēbat ad aurās
pōne sequēns (namque hanc dederat Prōserpina lēgem),
cum subita incautum dēmentia cēpit amantem,

īgnōscenda quidem, scīrent sī īgnōscere Mānēs:
 restitit, Eurydicēque suam iam lūce sub ipsā 490
 immemor heu! victusque animī respexit. ibi omnis
 effūsus labor atque immītis rupta tyrannī
 foedera, terque fragor stāgnīs audītus Avernīs.
 illa ‘quis et mē’ inquit ‘miseram et tē perdidit, Orpheu,
 quis tantus furor? ēn iterum crūdēlia retrō 495
 fāta vocant, conditque natantia lūmina somnus.
 iamque valē: feror ingentī circumdata nocte
 invalidāsque tibī tendēns, heu nōn tua, palmās.’
 dīxit et ex oculīs subitō, ceu fūmus in aurās
 commixtus tenuīs, fūgit dīversa, neque illum 500
 prēnsantem nēquīquam umbrās et multa volentem
 dīcere praetereā vīdit; nec portitor Orcī
 amplius obiectam passus trānsīre palūdem.

He comforts his aching heart with a hollow shell, singing of you, sweet wife, on the lonely shore by himself, of you at day rise, of you at its fall. He even entered the jaws of Taenarus, the lofty entrance to Dis and the grove murky with dark fear, and approached the Shades and their fearful king and hearts no human prayers can soften. His song stirred bodiless souls who made their way from the depths of Erebus and so too phantoms of those deprived of light, as many as the thousands of birds that shelter among leaves when evening or a wintry downpour drives them from the hills – mothers and men and figures of great-hearted heroes, boys, unmarried girls, youths placed on pyres before the eyes of their parents. These the black mud and ugly reeds of Cocytus and unpleasant swamp with its sluggish water hold within, and the Styx encloses, nine times encircling. Why, the very homes of Death and innermost chambers and Furies with blue snakes entwined in their hair and Cerberus three jaws agape just stood there, and the wheel of Ixion stopped in the wind.

Now Orpheus was retracing his steps, avoiding all mishap, and Eurydice, now given back to him, was approaching the air above, a few steps behind (Proserpina had set this condition), when a sudden moment of madness caught the loving husband unawares – forgivable for sure, if the Shades knew how to forgive. He stopped, and almost there in daylight, thoughtless, oh no, his resolve undone, he looked back. At that moment all his effort was wasted and the terms of the cruel tyrant unravelled. Three times thunder roared around the pools of Avernus. ‘What is this madness,’ she cries, ‘that has undone both you, Orpheus, and myself, poor wretch that I am? See, cruel fates summon me back again, and sleep buries my swimming eyes. Now farewell: I am borne by all-enveloping darkness, my failing hands reach towards you – ah! – not yours now.’ She spoke, and in that instant fled the other way, out of his sight, just as smoke fades into thin air. She saw him no more, though he clutched vainly at shadows, anxious to say much; nor did the ferryman of Orcus allow him another passage over the swamp that stood in his way.

Also in Video Diary 2:

The story of Tarquin and the Sibylline books – Roman Antiquities 4.6, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (and others)

Propertius to his mistress at Baiae – Elegies 1.11, Propertius

Seneca on Baiae – Moral Letters 51.1, Seneca,

Lesbia – painted by John Reinhard Weguelin (1878)

Cicero – bust in the Capitoline Museum, Rome

Odi et amo – Catullus 85

Video Diary 3

G. Misenus, the trumpeter and comrade of Aeneas

Virgil, Aeneid 6.156-165 – read by George Sharpley

Aenēās maestō dēfixus lūmina vultū
ingreditur linqūens antrum, caecōsque volūtat
ēventūs animō sēcum. cui fīdus Achātēs
it comes et paribus cūrīs vestīgia fīgit.
multa inter sēsē variō sermōne serēbant,
quem socium exanimū vātēs, quod corpus humandum,
dīceret. atque illī Mīsēnum in lītore siccō,
ut vērēre, vident indīgnā morte perēptum,
Mīsēnum Aeolidēn, quō nōn praestantior alter
aere ciēre virōs Martemque accendere cantū.

As he leaves the cave, Aeneas makes his way with a sorrowful face and eyes downcast, pondering the mysteries in his mind. His loyal comrade Achates comes with him and plants his steps with equal cares. Between them they engage much in varied conversation, as to which lifeless comrade the priestess meant, and which body had to be buried. And as they came, they see Misenus on the dry shore, cut off by an undeserved death, Misenus, son of Aeolus, than whom no other was more outstanding at stirring men with bronze and lighting up martial courage with song.

H. The murder of Agrippina

Tacitus, Annals 14.8 – read by George Sharpley

Centuriōnī ferrum dēstringentī protendēns uterum “Ventrem ferī” exclāmāvit multīsque vulneribus cōnfecta est.

Offering her womb to the centurion as he drew his sword, ‘Strike my stomach,’ she cried, and she was finished off with several thrusts.

Also in Video Diary 3:

Caligula riding across the bay of Baiae – Life of Caligula 19, Suetonius

Aeneas – Naples Museum (detail from a fresco from Pompeii)

The conspiracy to kill Agrippina – English adapted from John Jackson's translation of Tacitus, Annals 14.4-5 (Loeb edn)

Agrippina Minor – Palazzo Massimo Museum, Rome

Nero – Glyptothek Museum, Munich

The eruption of Vesuvius – English adapted from Betty Radice's translation of Pliny the Younger, Letters 6.16 (Penguin Classics)

View of Vesuvius and the Pine of Naples – by Giorgio Sommer (19th century)

Video Diary 4

I. The roses of Paestum

Virgil, Georgics 4.116-9 – read by George Sharpley

Atque equidem, extrēmō nī iam sub fīne labōrum
vēla traham et terrīs festīnem advertere prōram,
forsitan et pinguīs hortōs quae cūra colendī
ōrnāret canerem biferīque rosāria Paestī.

Oh yes, were I not pulling in my sails very close now to the end of my tasks, and were I not hurrying to turn the prow to land, then perhaps I'd sing how careful cultivation enriches fertile gardens, and of Paestum's roses, flowering twice yearly.

J. Palinurus the helmsman

Virgil, Aeneid 5.870-1 : read by James Mountford

‘ō nimium caelō et pelagō cōnfīse serēnō,
nūdus in īgnōtā, Palinūre, iacēbis harēnā.’

‘O Palinurus, having trusted too much the sky and calm sea, you'll be lying naked on an unknown beach!’

K. Aeneid 6.373-6 : read by Linda Martinez

‘Unde haec, ō Palinūre, tibi tam dīra cupīdō?
tū Stygiās inhumātus aquās amnemque sevērū
Eumenidum aspiciēs, rīpamve iniussus adībīs?
dēsine fāta deum flectī spērāre precandō!’

‘Where has this dreadful yearning of yours come from, Palinurus? Will you, unburied, look upon the Stygian waters and stern river of the Furies? Or unbidden, approach the bank? Cease hoping to change the fates of the gods with entreaties!’

L. Aeneid 6.377-83 : read by Linda Martinez and George Sharpley

‘Sed cape dicta memor, dūrī sōlācia cāsūs.
nam tua finitimī, longē lātēque per urbēs
prōdigiīs āctī caelestibus, ossa piābunt

et statuent tumulum et tumulō sollemnia mittent,
aeternumque locus Palinūrī nōmen habēbit.’
hīs dictīs cūrae ēmōtae pulsusque parumper
corde dolor trīstī; gaudet cognōmine terra.

‘But take heed of my words as solace for your hard lot. For neighbouring peoples, driven from cities far and wide by heavenly portents, will appease your bones and erect a tomb and to the tomb discharge the solemn rites; and the place will have the everlasting name of Palinurus.’ By these words his worries are dispelled, and for a short while his grief driven from his sad heart; and the place rejoices in his name.

Also in Video Diary 4:

Lekythoi – Paestum Museum (c.500-475 BC)

Lekythos on left – horsemen armed with spears

Lekythos on right – Herakles’ arrival welcomed by the gods (seated Zeus)

Lucanian tomb paintings – Paestum Museum (4th century BC):

Four-horse chariot race

Horseman

Women arranging their hair

Video Diary 5

M. ‘Do not eat meat!’ says Pythagoras

Ovid, Metamorphoses 15.88-90 – read by Llewelyn Morgan

Heu quantum scelus est in vīscera vīscera condī
ingestōque avidum pinguēscere corpore corpus
alteriusque animāns animantis vīvere lētō!

Oh ! What a crime it is for flesh to be secreted in flesh, for a greedy body to grow fat from a body swallowed, and for a living creature to live off the death of another!

N. The transmigration of souls

Ovid, Metamorphoses 15.165-8 – read by Llewelyn Morgan

Omnia mūtantur, nihil interit. errat et illinc
hūc venit, hinc illūc et quōslibet occupat artūs
spīritus ēque ferīs hūmāna in corpora trānsit
inque ferās noster, nec tempore dēperit ūllō.

All things are changed; nothing dies. A soul wanders there, comes here, and from here to there, occupies limbs as it pleases; and from wild beasts it switches to human bodies, and ours pass into wild beasts: at no time does it perish. 15.165-8

Also in Video Diary 5:

Arion and the dolphin – adapted from The Histories 1.23-25, Herodotos

Arion and the dolphin mosaic – Villa Romana del Casale, Sicily

National Archeological Museum of Sybaris:

Vessels from Sybaris – 1300-1100 BC

Vase from woman’s tomb in Sybaris – 8th century BC

Container from Thurii – 5th-4th century BC

National Archaeological Museum of Crotona:

Amphora, black-figure, 6th century BC

Lekythos, red-figure, 5th century BC

Photograph of sheep – Keith Weller

Sacrifice of bull – Museum of Ara Pacis, Rome: 1st century BC

Video Diary 6

O. Medea fears a sea voyage that may expose them to Scylla and Charybdis.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7.62-5 – read by Cecilia Giussani

‘Quid quod nescioquī mediīs concurrere in undīs
dīcuntur montēs ratibusque inimīca Charybdis
nunc sorbēre fretum, nunc reddere cinctaque saevīs
Scylla rapāx canibus Siculō lātrāre profundō?’

‘What about the mountains out at sea which are said to crash together? Or Charybdis hateful to ships, one moment sucking out the sea, the next flooding it again; and insatiable Scylla girt with savage dogs that bark in the Sicilian deep?’

P. Glaukos, who had been immortalised as a god of the sea by a herb, appeals to the enchantress Circe to help him win the heart of Scylla.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 14.12-18 – read by George Sharpley

‘Dīva, deī miserēre, precor. nam sōla levāre
tū potes hunc’ dīxit, ‘videar modo dīgnus, amōrem.
quanta sit herbārum, Tītānī, potentia, nūllī
quam mihi cognitius, quī sum mūtātus ab illīs.
nēve meī nōn nōta tibi sit causa furōris,
lītore in Ītalīcō, Messēnia moenia contrā,
Scylla mihi vīsa est.’

‘Goddess, pity a god, I beg you! For only you can lighten this longing, if only I seem worthy of it. No one knows better than I the power of herbs, Titaness, I who was changed by them. Nor may the cause of my passion be unknown to you: on the coast of Italy, opposite the walls of Messina, I saw Scylla.’

Q. Polyphemus sees his beloved Galatea enjoy the charms of a rival

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.865-869 – read by Andy Keen

‘Vīscera vīva traham dīvulsaque membra per agrōs
perque tuās spargam (sīc sē tibi misceat!) undās.
ūror enim, laesusque exaestuat ācrius ignis,
cumque suīs videor trānslātam vīribus Aetnēn
pectore ferre meō—nec tū, Galatēa, movēris!’

‘I’ll pull out his living entrails! I’ll rip his limbs apart, and scatter them across the fields and your waves (then you can get cosy with him!).

Oh yes I’m on fire! The flame is hurting and burns ever more fiercely. It’s like I carry Etna buried in my breast with all its power – and you, Galatea, are not bothered!’

Also in Video Diary 6:

Me(dusa)too – by Judy Takács

Sculpture of a Gorgon – from a sarcophagus in Tarquinia (in Tarquinia Museum)

Sculpture of Scylla – by Francesco Triglia (in Scilla Piazza)

The first Greek colonies in Sicily – (adapted from) The Peloponnesian War 6.3, Thucydides

Thucydides – bust plaster cast in the Pushkin Museum (from a Roman copy at Holkham Hall of an early fourth-century BC Greek original)

Cartoons of Polyphemus – adapted from drawings by Andy Riley

Pottery, masonry and second face of a Gorgon – from the dockyard in Naxos (in Naxos Museum)

Video Diary 7

R. Dis, god of the underworld, visits Sicily, and abducts Proserpina, who is out with her friends picking flowers.

Ovid, Metamorphoses 5.391-5 – read by George Sharpley

Dum Prōserpina lūcō
lūdit et aut violās aut candida līlia carpit,
dumque puellārī studiō calathōsque sinumque
implet et aequālēs certat superāre legendō,
paene simul vīsa est dīlectaque raptaque Dītī.

Proserpina was playing in the grove and picking violets here, white lilies there. With girlish eagerness she filled her basket and the fold of her garment, striving to gather more than her companions – and in almost the same moment she was seen and desired and snatched by Dis.

S. Ceres searched everywhere for her daughter, and eventually found her girdle in Sicily, at the pool into which Dis had driven his chariot and down through its depths into his kingdom below.

Ovid, Metamorphoses 5.474-87 – read by Llewelyn Morgan

Nescit adhūc ubi sit; terrās tamen increpat omnēs
īngrātāsque vocat nec frūgum mūnere dīgnās,
Trīnacrīam ante aliās, in quā vestīgia damnī
repperit.

She still doesn't know where Proserpina is, but blames all parts of the world, and calls them ungrateful and undeserving of her gift of crops – Sicily more than the others, where she found traces of her loss.

T. A nymph, Arethusa, begs the goddess not to blame the Sicilians, and explains who is behind the abduction.

Ovid, Metamorphoses 5.489-92 – read by Emily Griffiths

‘Ō tōtō quaesītae virginis orbe
et frūgum genetrīx, immēnsōs siste labōrēs,
nēve tībī fīdae violenta īrāscere terrae;
terra nihil meruit patuitque invīta rapīnae.

‘O mother of crops and of the girl you have searched for across the entire world, it is time to bring an end to your interminable suffering. Do not show violence in your rage towards a land that is loyal to you. It has deserved nothing, and unwillingly gave access for the abduction.’

Also in Video Diary 7:

Burial of Santa Lucia, by Caravaggio – Church of Santa Lucia al Sepolcro, Syracuse

Story of Philoxenos the poet – Library of History 15.6, Diodorus Siculus

Dionysios I – from Promptuarii Iconum Insigniorum, an iconographic work of wood engravings and short biographies, by Guillaume Rouillé (1553)

Diodorus Siculus – Library of Agira, Sicily (artist unknown)

Plato – the fresco of The School of Athens; in the Apostolic Palace, Vatican City, Rome, by Raphael

Anecdote about Euripides – Life of Nicias 29, Plutarch

Bust of Euripides – 2nd century AD copy of an earlier work, Vatican Museum

Arethusa – coin in the collection of the American Numismatic Society

Fountain of Diana, Arethusa and Alphaeus, by Giulio Moschetti (1907) – island of Ortygia, Syracuse, Sicily

Spring of Arethusa (with ducks!) – island of Ortygia, Syracuse, Sicily

All pottery – Syracuse Museum, Sicily

Video Diary 8

U. Carthage is named early in the Aeneid, only a few lines after Rome itself

Virgil, Aeneid 1.12-14 – read by George Sharpley

Urbs antīqua fuit (Tyriī tenuēre colōnī)
Karthāgō, Ītaliā contrā Tiberīnaque longē
ōstia, dīves opum studiisque asperrima bellī.

There was a city a long time ago (Tyrian settlers lived there), called Carthage, which faced Italy and the Tiber's mouth from afar, rich in resources, and very violent in their appetite for war.

V. Acesta (Segesta) is founded by Aeneas' companions who stay behind in Sicily

Virgil, Aeneid 5.715-8 – read by George Sharpley

‘Longaevōsque senēs ac fessās aequare matrēs
et quidquid tēcum invalidum metuēnsque perīclī est
dēlige, et hīs habeant terrīs sine moenia fessī;
urbem appellābunt permissō nōmine Acestam.’

‘Choose the long-lived old men and the mothers exhausted by the sea, and any with you who are weak or fearful of danger, and let the weary found a settlement in this land; and if you allow it they will call the city by the name Acestes.’

Also in Video Diary 8:

The founding of Akragas – The Peloponnesian War 6.4, Thucydides

Empedocles on the moon – Icaromenippus 13, Lucian

Empedocles (picture) – from The History of Philosophy, by Thomas Stanley (1655)

All pottery – Agrigento Museum

The speech of Nikias – The Peloponnesian War 6.20, Thucydides

Drawings of a hoplite and trireme – from ‘Ancient and Medieval Warfare: The History of the Strategies, Tactics, and Leadership of Classical Warfare’; Thomas Griess (series ed.), Avery Publishing Group (1984)

Latin to English translations by George Sharpley, unless attributed otherwise.