

THE ANGLO-HELLENIC REVIEW

No 34 Autumn 2006 Published by the Anglo-Hellenic League £2(UK)



Virgin and Child mosaic, Church of Panagia Kanakaria, Lythrangomi, Cyprus

Michael Jansen **The Stolen Treasures of Cyprus**

James Whitley **The BSA in the 21st Century**

Michael Haag **Cavafy's Heir: Nanos Valaoritis**

Obituaries: Maurice Cardiff, Peter Megaw

THE RUNCIMAN AWARD 2006

REVIEW

No 34 AUTUMN 2006

Published each spring and autumn by the
Anglo-Hellenic League, The Hellenic Centre,
16/18 Paddington Street, London W1U 5AS
Tel: 020 7486 9410 Email: anglohellenic.league@virgin.net
www.hellenicbookservice.com/ahl.htm

©The Anglo-Hellenic League 2006

The Anglo-Hellenic League

President and Chief Patron

HRH Prince Michael of Kent KCVO

Joint Patrons

The Rt Hon the Earl Jellicoe KBE DSO MC FRS
HE The Greek Ambassador to the Court of St James

Chairman

Sir David Miers KBE CMG

The Anglo-Hellenic Review

Editor: Paul Watkins

Associate Editor: Paul Cartledge

Books Editor: Kostas Yiavis

Editorial Consultants: Roderick Beaton,
Gerald Cadogan, David Holton, John Taylor

Contributions

Readers are invited to submit suggestions for
articles, notification of events, and other
information of Anglo-Hellenic interest.

Please write to the editor at the above address

Membership of the League

Annual subscription:

Single £25, double £40

Life membership: Single £250, double £300

Overseas subscription for *Review* only: £7.50

UK subscriptions for *Review* only for academics,
teachers and students: £6

Printed by Hobbs the Printers, Southampton

Contents

The Runciman Award 2006/2

The Stolen Treasures of Cyprus / Michael Jansen / 3

The BSA in the 21st Century / James Whitley / 7

League Events / 11 News / 13

Cavafy's Heir: Nanos Valaoritis / Michael Haag / 15

Obituaries / 16 Book Reviews / 18

Forthcoming Events

Oct 9 Bettany Hughes' Lecture 'Helen of Troy' at the Society of
Antiquaries, Piccadilly W1, 7pm (Tickets £12)

Nov 15 Charity Lunch at Searcy's, 30 Pavilion Road, Knightsbridge
in aid of MDA Hellas, 11.30am-3pm (Tickets £50)

13 Oct-16 Nov at the Hellenic Centre, Paddington St, London W1

Greek Embroidery (17th-19th Century) from the collections of the
Victoria & Albert Museum and the Benaki Museum, Athens

An exhibition reflecting the inventiveness and artistic sensibility of
the women of Greece, the Greek Islands and Cyprus. The many
varied artifacts illustrate the wealth of colour, style and technical
diversity of Greek embroidery.

The Runciman Award 2006

This year's Award, the first since the prize was internation-
alised, was announced on May 23 at a ceremony at the
London Hellenic Centre. It was introduced by the League's
Chairman, Sir David Miers, who paid tribute to the National
Bank of Greece, which sponsors the Award. The Chairman of
the judges, Sir Roger Tomkys, then spoke.

'It is an honour for me to report to you this evening as
Chairman in this my final year as a member of the panel of
judges for the Runciman Award.

'First, let me take this opportunity to express on behalf of
the Judges our gratitude to the National Bank of Greece for
their generous support of the Award. We should also thank
Lady Fairweather for her skilful administrative support.

'Second I should say that I will be succeeded in the Chair by
Professor Elizabeth Jeffreys. My own place will be taken by
Mr Martin Hammond who retired this year as headmaster of
Tonbridge School after a very distinguished career in classics
and in school mastering. He has published highly regarded
translations of Homer. Marcus Aurelius is just out and
Thucydides is in the pipeline. His experience of the place of
classics in schools today will give a new dimension to the
panel's deliberations.

'This year was an especially difficult one for the judges for
reasons which will become apparent. It was certainly not
because of the lack of entries, which were by my count 41 in
total, well up to the recent average. Perhaps the number
might have been higher, since this year for the first time
books published in English anywhere in the world were eli-
gible. Moreover the prize money was increased to a princely
£9,000. All the entries, as it turned out, were published in the
United Kingdom or the United States. Melbourne, famously
the second largest Greek city in the world, should wake up.
On the other hand the entries were submitted by some 20
different publishing houses which is a commendably broad
spread.

'A second disappointment was the overwhelming concen-
tration of entries within the classical period. The categories to
which we assign entries are not watertight; where for
example should one place a study of the reception of Greek
tragedy in Britain over a 300-year period from the
Restoration, or another dealing with the political and philo-
sophical impact of the same plays in Paris after the Second
World War? But by my rough calculation we had a bare half-
dozen modern period entries, one from the Byzantine era,
one Ottoman and all the rest classical. It is probably
inevitable and right that the classical entries should be in a
majority, but there is evidence that we missed some of the
others and we shall have to find ways to beat the bushes
more effectively in future years to flush out whatever is lurk-
ing there... It was a pity, in my view, that we had no fiction
entries this time; it is always difficult to rate a novel for a
prize in competition with fine academic writing, but the
Award would be the poorer if there were regularly no fiction,
autobiography or travel writing, only a monopoly of classical
studies.

'There was no problem over the quality of the entries, rather
the reverse. A high proportion of them fully met the aim of
the Award to reward and encourage good and accessible
writing. A number of these, however, were in style and
substance the development of doctoral theses which by their
nature have a relatively narrow focus and are hard to
recommend to the general reader. *(continued on p. 10)*

The Runciman Award *(continued from p.2)*

In the substantial group of books which we enjoyed and admired greatly but which did not make it to our final shortlist there are some which we should particularly like to draw to your attention.

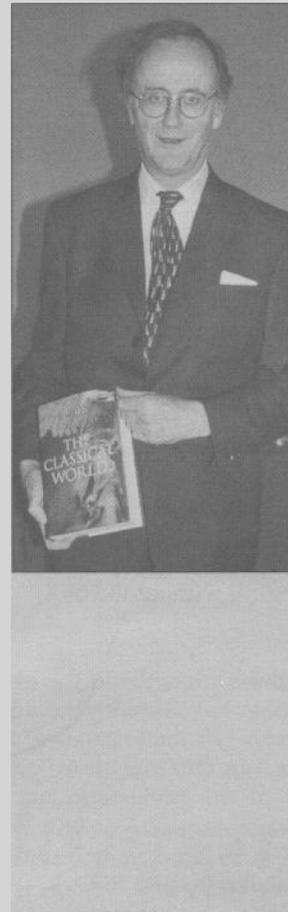
First, there are three entries which would fit well into the discerning traveller's knapsack. Hugh Bowden's *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle* published by CUP is clear, accessible and authoritative. **John Pedley's** *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World* (CUP again) ranges wider and would be an enjoyable and instructive companion around the classical sites. And for any travellers fortunate enough to be able to spend time a little way off the beaten track in Crete, Joseph Shaw's *Kommos: A Minoan Harbour Town* is an admirable short guide. While we are still on our travels I should mention another CUP publication, *Describing Greece* by **William Hutton**, a very good study of Pausanias. But it is a book for scholars rather than the traveller; perhaps Pausanias himself should have made an entry.

In a rather different category among a number of monographs by relatively young scholars we were very impressed by Bruno Currie's *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes* (OUP), by Sylvia Montiglio's *Wandering in Ancient Greek Culture* (Chicago) and by Matthew Wright's *Euripides' Escape-Tragedies* (OUP); but all are aimed at a specialised audience. This is even more true of *The Further Academic Papers of Sir Hugh Lloyd-ones* (OUP), but this volume is a rare treat for any classicist with a taste for textual criticism and scholarship of the very highest order. Equally in the first rank of scholarly productions but in a very different field is Olga Krzyszkowska's *Aegean Seals: An Introduction* published by the Institute of Classical Studies to meet admirably an important need.

Before I come to our shortlist I must mention one outstanding entry. This is *Odysseus Unbound* by Robert Bittlestone. This is in many respects an ideal entry for the Runciman Prize. It is a very handsome volume beautifully produced by CUP. Its subject is of fascination for anyone who is interested in Homer and the historical background to his poems. The author sets out to establish where exactly was the home of Odysseus. The account of his attempt to prove his thesis by use of geological evidence, by walking the ground and by consulting the philological background for which he had scholarly help, is riveting. If the proof were valid that the whereabouts of the hero's palace and Eumaeus' pigsty together with the details of the journeys of Telemachus can be exactly located and were preserved in poetry and in folk memory from the Bronze Age in the Ionian islands until it all was written down in an eastern Greek dialect centuries later, most of us would have to change radically our view of the poems themselves and their composition. Alas, none of us on the panel was convinced that the proof was indeed there. So it is not on the shortlist but do read it and see whether you agree with us.

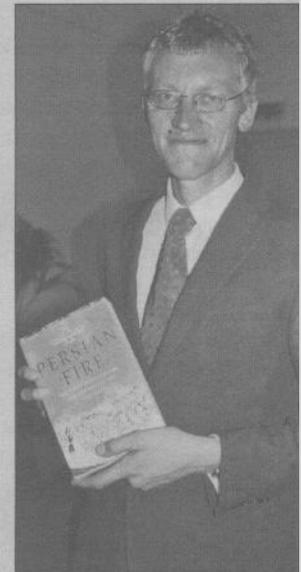
Now to the shortlist itself. I will take the entries in no particular order. Two may be termed essentially classical art history, though each has an interest going a good deal wider than its apparent subject matter. In *Picturing Death in Classical Athens* (CUP) **John Oakley** has authored a magisterial account of a specific ceramic art form, the white ground flasks produced for funeral ware in the 5th century BC. The scholarship is impeccable, the illustrations stunning and the exploration of the social and historical importance of the development of the genre during the catastrophic period of the Peloponnesian War fascinating.

Our second shortlisted entry in this category is Andrew Stewart's *Attalos, Athens and the Acropolis*, once again from



Joint winners of the 2006 Runciman Award

Left: Robin Lane Fox
Below: Tom Holland



CUP. At first sight for the uninitiated this looks like a very beautiful but unnecessarily long study of some minor Hellenistic statuary. What it offers is enormously more than this suggests. First there is the association with Herodes Atticus whose ubiquity in the remains of ancient Athens is legendary. Then there is the whole history of the transmission and reception of the subject group of the little barbarians and related figures in later antiquity and the Renaissance. As with Oakley, however, we felt that the primary focus of the work told against it when measured with the strongest competition.

, 'Among these strong contenders and our only Byzantine period entry was Catherine **Holmes'** *Basil II and the Governance of Empire* (OUP). This is a very substantial study of an important period for the Empire. The author is the master of her subject and writes well. For anyone interested in historiography, particularly of the mediaeval period, her analysis of the scanty sources available and particularly of the history of Skylitzes is admirable and holds the attention. It is not, however, a period which the average Philhellene if such exists can approach eagerly in the expectation of agreeable entertainment without heavy duty intellectual effort. The author has tackled in depth a tough subject. We may hope that in future she may be able to do a Runciman and make a broader canvas accessible to wider audience.

Very much in a category on its own is *Greek Tragedy and the British Theatre 1660-1914* (OUP) by **Edith Hall** and Fiona Mackintosh about which, as I indicated earlier, I would be hard pressed to decide to which Greek period to assign it. This is a major work and chronicle of the extensive part played by Greek tragedy in translation and in the original in the cultural and political life of Britain over a period of two and a half centuries. Our mature conclusion was that it was

more likely to stimulate discussion of and interest in its British subject matter than to take readers back to the originals.

The last of our shortlist is Robert **Parker's** *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (OUP). This is a magisterial study of the subject which will surely remain the basic reference work and standard account for many years to come. It is admirably written and quite accessible for the general reader but we felt that in essence it is a book which will be consulted at need rather than read from cover to cover. We are not reinventing the Runciman Award terms to exclude all but holiday reading but we do think that the award should go whenever possible to books which will make new converts or reinforce established sympathies.

This principle is, we believe, reflected in our final decision. I said at the outset that this had been a particularly difficult year for the judges. The final difficulty was that not only were we unable to decide which of two entries had the superior claim to the Award, but we were also persuaded that on this occasion there were positive merits in sharing it between two fine entries which had complementary qualities. We therefore have two equal prizewinners and I will name them in alphabetical order since there is no order of precedence in our judgment.

We very greatly enjoyed Tom Holland's *Persian Fire* (Little, Brown). This is a brilliant rewriting of early and classical Greek history and especially of the Persian Wars, reworking the material of the incomparable work of Herodotus while making full use of the whole range of ancient source material. It is not merely accessible, it is hugely attractive and deserves to bring readers who would not normally have tackled the substantial historical narrative of a distant period into enthusiastic contact with the ancient world. Holland reads across into modern history with spirit and good sense. His interpretation of individual motivation or of power politics in ancient Greece may sometimes be highly coloured but is always scrupulously consistent with the evidence. On a personal note I was very struck by his account of Sparta and the Spartans. His emphasis is on the degree to which with their red cloaks, their oiled hair, their secretive militant society they must have seemed terrible and outlandish to all the other Greeks as well as to the Persian armies. Certainly they were different, but how different is surely an open question. I am reminded of an incident in Kenya when a tribesman meeting the red cloaked Maasai warriors for the first time asked in panic are these mortal men or are they Maasai? For Holland the colours are not shaded but the picture is very clear and very persuasive. We think this is a rewriting of history which is sound in its scholarship and likely to bring many new readers to his subject and a new generation of enthusiasts to Greece and its historic past.

The other equal prize winner is **Robin Lane Fox's** *The Classical World* (Allen Lane). As his title indicates, this compact of 900 years goes well beyond the bounds of the Hellenic World. But the author pulls the whole together through the eyes of the Philhellene Emperor Hadrian, which gives it unity and carries the Greek theme on through the Roman centuries as something more than reception study. We believe it is the best contemporary overview of its subject matter. The author has distilled within it decades of mainstream Classical Tutorials and wide-ranging scholarship. If Holland is a book to enthuse a newcomer with the rich possibilities of an interest in things Greek, Lane Fox must be the ideal volume for the reader or traveller whose interest is already assured and who wants to know more. It is enviably well written and wears its learning lightly.

'We have two very different but equal and very worthy winners.'

LEAGUE EVENTS

A busy spring season commenced on March 30 with the League's Annual General Meeting at the Reform Club in London. As in recent years, this featured a guest lecture, on this occasion given by two distinguished presenters.

'**Odysseus Unbound: the Search for Homer's Ithaca**' was the title both of the lecture and of the impressive book (published by Cambridge University Press in October 2005 and reviewed in our last issue) by Robert Bittlestone, a management consultant and archaeology enthusiast. With the assistance of his collaborator James Diggle, Professor of Greek and Latin at Cambridge University, Mr Bittlestone delivered his own oral — and visual — epic. Working with a combination of projected satellite images, maps, computerised 3D topographic sequences, film and audio, he held his audience spellbound with the narrative of his search for the identity of Odysseus' island. Evidence culled from field trips and from computer analysis of literary, geological and archaeological data pointed clearly, he suggested, to a separated Paliki, the western peninsula of the island of Cephalonia, as the location of the authentic Ithaca. Whatever the verdict of members of the audience on the presenters' highly plausible theories, there can be no doubt that this was one of our most fascinating and spectacular lectures.

On May 8, members were invited to join a tour of the major exhibition '**The Road to Byzantium: Luxury Art of Antiquity**' at the Hermitage Rooms, Somerset House, Strand, London WC1. The exhibition, which ran from March 30-September 3, brought to London for the first time an extraordinary collection of 160 treasures of classical Greek, Roman and Byzantine art, including finely decorated silver and gold, Athenian red-figure vases and exquisite cameos. Seldom seen outside Russia, these objects showed the development of art and civilisation over more than 1000 years, from 5th century BC Greece to the Middle Ages, with a strong emphasis on the enduring influence of the classical tradition.

The first of the League's annual award ceremonies, the Runciman Award, took place at the Hellenic Centre on May 23 and is reported on page 2. The second, the Katie Lentakis Award, took place at King's College London on June 28 and is reported below.

The 2006 Katie Lentakis Award

This was the fifth presentation of the Award, the first being in 2002. In the informal surroundings of King's College's Council Room, members gathered for this special occasion on June 28 in memory of the League's former Vice-Chairman, Katie Lentakis.

The event was introduced by Dr Karim Arafat, the Director of King's College's Centre for Hellenic Studies, who expressed his appreciation of the Award as a continuing example of the collaboration between King's and the League, with whom it had been associated for so many years. He went on to describe the purpose of the Award, which was open to all third-year BA students working in the field of Hellenic studies. The dissertations submitted for the award could cover any aspect of these studies, from ancient to modern, and utilised research undertaken in the students' final year. In all there were nine entries.

The winner this year was Francesca Spiegel for her dissertation 'Knowledge and its Modes in the Pseudo-Euripidean *Rhesus*', a little known play which had been