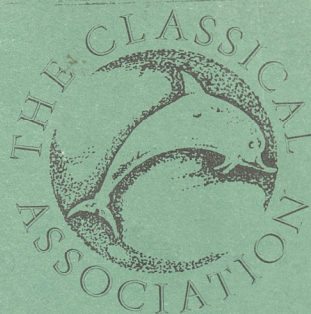


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ΔΩΡΕΑ
ΕΛΛΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΙΚΟΥ
ΠΑΙΟΝΙΔΗ

from the president to be president
with presidential fraternal greetings.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

FACING UP TO THE MUSES

TONY HARRISON

Tony
Limassol
7.9.89.

(The President's Address to the Classical Association, delivered on Tuesday
12 April, 1988 in the University of Bristol.)

Μουσάων Ἐλικονιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' αἶδευ

Hesiod, *Theogony* 1, 1

Let's kick off with the Muses - and I use the word kick off advisedly, as I want to make a revelation about the sporting interests of the Muses that may well surprise you. For the last four years I've been to Delphi for the annual symposium on ancient Greek Drama, and I've just returned from Delphi where I'm preparing, for the ancient stadium, for this year's Festival a sort of reconstruction of that fragmentary satyr play of Sophocles, the *Ichneutae*, 'The Trackers'. My piece is called *The Trackers of Oxyrhynchus* as it is also an account of the discovery of the tattered papyrus in the deserts of Egypt by the Oxford papyrologists, Grenfell and Hunt. I am giving Delphi the doubtful privilege of hosting a *thiasos* of British satyrs.

Last year I went to Delphi in the company of my friend and unflinching inspirer, Oliver Taplin. We were both going to speak at the symposium from our different, though related vantage points, on Greek theatre, he as the scholar, me as the poet and man of the theatre with his smattering of ancient Greek. Our journey together made me think of that anonymous Elizabethan play, *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* (1598), in which there are two pilgrims, like us, going to Parnassus, called Philomusus and Studioso, said to be 'well met in faith in the field of Poetrie'. We had a day free before we were supposed to be under the shadow of Mount Parnassus in Delphi to give our talks on and to debate Greek Drama so I suggested that we made a pilgrimage of our own and hired a car at the Athens airport and drove out into the country rather than spend a night in the noise and poisonous *nephos*. So we drove slowly to Delphi and looked at Boiotia and Mount Cithaeron where Oedipus had been exposed as a baby and where the Maenads had torn Pentheus to pieces, and the turning off to Distomo near which is the famous crossroads where Oedipus had unwittingly killed his father, Laius. I had also suggested that we use the spare time to visit the Archaeological Museum of Thebes, which I had been to four times before, but which Dr. Taplin had not yet visited. I don't need to dwell on our overnight stop at Porto Germano, on the Corinthian Gulf under Cithaeron, where we swam and ate charcoaled crayfish and drank retsina drawn from a great barrel. I wouldn't want you to think that we were waylaid, as were Philomusus and Studioso in their Pilgrimage to Parnassus, by the aptly named Madido, who tells them:

"This Parnassus and Helicon are but the fables of the poetes, there is no true Parnassus but the third lofte in a wine tavernne, no true