



Elżbieta Olechowska

THIS IS THE SONG THAT NEVER ENDS

Classical Mythology
in the Twenty-First-Century
Audiovisual Series for Young Adults





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Chronological Survey of Audiovisual Series and Films Inspired by Classical Antiquity (2000–2023)

2000

1. **1995–2001, *Xena: Warrior Princess*** (US). Created by John Schulian and Robert Tapert, developed by R.J. Stewart and Sam Raimi, prod. by R. Tapert and S. Raimi for Renaissance Pictures; first aired from September 4, 1995, to June 18, 2001; in 21st c.: from S05E09, January 10, 2000, to S06E22, June 18, 2001; DVD released 2003–2005, 2010–2016.

Genre & length. Television series, an original version of mythology combined with historical elements, centred on heroes and mortals, fantasy, SF; 6 seasons, 134 episodes, 45–48 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Time of action: mythological characters in the 1st c. BCE, but a jumping timeline takes the action into a twisted mythological or historical past. Greek mythology mixed with fictionalized historical figures features an alternate universe, the heroine's supernatural conception (!), the twilight of the gods, prophecies, deicide, and resurrection. Seasons 5 and 6 centre on Xena's child, Eva (later called Livia, then Eva again), who was prophesied to bring about the end of the Olympic gods and, for that reason, was targeted by them. Asian mythological motifs join the increasingly fantastic mix: classical / Roman historical / Christian / SF / fantasy. 25 years after the Ides of March, Caesar escapes from the Underworld, takes the three Fates hostage, and uses their loom to rewrite reality, making Xena his co-ruler of Rome. Gabrielle and Xena snatch the loom and explode it, ending the existence of the alternate world. *Xena*, a spin-off of *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (1995–1999), belongs to S. Raimi's Xenaverse franchise, as does *Young Hercules* (1998–1999).

In the 21st c., the show won 3 awards for music (Joseph LoDuca): the 2000 and 2001 ASCAP Film and Television Music Awards for Most Performed Underscore and the 2001 Amy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series.

References. Gwenllian Jones, 2000, 403–418; Futrell, 2003, 13–26; Hayes, 2003; Ross, 2004, 231–255; Young, 2005; Tigges, 2007, 2010, 441–455; Potter, 2010b, 97–122; Zeiler, 2013, 229–245; Tomasso, 2015b, 151–155; Stevenson, 2017, 154–169; Willis, 2017, 111–116; Strong, 2018, 155; Maurice, 2019b, 194–195; Solomon, 2020, 506–523; N.J. Lowe, 2021, 193–209; McGeough, 2022, 224, 237, 282.

2. **1995–2001, *Star Trek: Voyager*** (US). Created by Rick Berman, Michael Piller, and Jeri Taylor, showrunners: Brannon Braga (1998–2000) and Kenneth Biller (2000–2001), prod. by Rick Berman for Paramount Network Television; aired on UPN from January 16, 1995, to May 23, 2001.

Genre & length. Television series, military SF, a space odyssey; 7 seasons, 172 episodes, 44–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek*, a sequel to *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. 10 earlier episodes referenced antiquity: "Prime Factors," S01E10, March 20, 1995; "Lifesigns," S02E19, February 26, 1996; "Darkling," S03E18, February 19, 1997; "Favorite Son," S03E20, March 19, 1997; "Concerning Flight," S04E11, November 26, 1997; "Message in a Bottle," S04E14, January 21, 1998; "Latent Image," S05E11, January 20, 1999; "11:59," S05E23, May 5, 1999; "Barge of the Dead," S06E03, October 6, 1999; "Dragon's Teeth," S06E07, November 10, 1999; "Pathfinder," S06E10, December 1, 1999. For 21st-c. episodes, see under the date of broadcast.

References. Austin, 2010, 61–81; Schueller, 2023; A. Smith, 2023; Simard, 2023.

3. **1997–2003, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*** (US). Created, directed, written, and prod. by Joss Whedon et al. for Mutant Enemy Productions, Sandollar Television, Kuzui ENT., 20th Century

Fox Television; aired on The WB from March 10, 1997, to May 22, 2001, and continued on UPN from October 20, 2001, to May 20, 2003; in 21st c.: from S04E11, January 18, 2000, to S07E22, May 20, 2003.

Genre & length. Television series, supernatural horror, fantasy, school story, coming of age, a witch show, a hidden world of witches, vampires, demons, gods; 7 seasons, 144 episodes, 42–51 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Classical hero archetype, Hellmouth – entry to the Underworld, Pandora’s Box, “Fortune favours the brave” (Virgil’s *Aen.* 10.284), epic heroes Aeneas, Achilles, and Odysseus correspond to Riley, Angel, and Spike; deicide; twilight of the gods. J. Whedon continued Buffy’s theme in the series of comic books *Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season Eight*, Dark Horse Comics, 2007–2011; *Buffy the Vampire Slayer Season Nine*, DHC, 2011–2013.

References. Yeffeth, 2003, and Wilcox, 2005, are 2 examples of so-called Buffy studies. See also press comments about Buffy’s 20th anniversary, e.g., Mangan (2017); it was *Buffy*, not the *Sopranos*, that brought scholars to the study of television series. Ross, 2004, 231–255; Young, 2005; Cocca, 2014, 215–236; Jenkins, 2015, 1–9; South, 2018, 161–175.

4. **1997–2007, *Stargate SG-1*** (CA, US). Created by Brad Wright and Jonathan Glassner, written by B. Wright, J. Glassner, et al., directed by Mario Azzopardi, Martin Wood, et al., prod. by B. Wright, J. Glassner, Robert C. Cooper, et al. for MGM Television etc.; aired on Showtime (S01–05) and Syfy (S06–10), from July 27, 1997, to March 13, 2007; in 21st c.: from S03E15, January 19, 2000, to S10E20, March 13, 2007.

Genre & length. Television series, military SF, fantasy; 10 seasons, 214 episodes, 44 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Time of action: the present with some time travel; a fantasy explanation of Egyptian, Greek, and Norse mythologies; the language of the ancients strongly resembles Latin. Names of SG-1 starships: *Apollo*, *Aurora*, *Daedalus*, *Odyssey*, *Phoenix*, *Prometheus*. The last one is also the title of episode 121 of the series (2002), which is not otherwise classically inspired. See also individual episodes listed under the year of broadcast. A sequel to Dean Devlin and Ronald Emmerich’s 1994 *Stargate* movie. Part of MGM’s *Stargate* franchise. The series was followed by 2 sequels, direct-to-DVD movies without additional mythological inspiration; they are not listed in the Survey.

References. Olechowska, 2016, 408–409.

5. **1998–2000, *Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend*** (US). Directed by Jim Craig, written by Peter Colley and Kathy Slevin, prod. by Nelvana Ltd and Marathon Productions for CBS; aired on CBS from November 7, 1998, to January 22, 2000.

Genre & length. Animated television series, a retelling of myths, an adaptation of a cycle of novels; 2 seasons of 12 episodes, 30 min. each.

Classical content & comments. “Persephone and the Winter Seeds,” “Daedalus and Icarus,” “Atalanta, the Wild Girl,” “Prometheus and Pandora’s Box,” “Bellerophon and Pegasus,” “Psyche and Eros,” “Cadmus and Europa,” “Castor and Pollux,” “The Hounds of Acteon,” “Phaeton: The Chariot of Fire,” “Jason and Medea,” “Damon and Pythias,” “Androcles and the Lion,” “Ulysses and Circe”; in the 21st c.: “King Midas: The Golden Touch” (January 15, 2000), and “Hercules and the Titans” (January 22, 2000). Based on Laura Geringer Bass’s 8-volume cycle of novels, *Myth Men: Guardians of the Legend*, 1994–1997. Alternative title for the television series: *Mythologies: Guardians of the Legend*.

6. **1998–2006, *Charmed*** (US). Created by Constance M. Burge, directed by John T. Kretchmer et al., showrunner and exec. prod.: Brad Kern, co-prod. by C.M. Burge, Aaron Spelling, and E. Duke Vincent for Spelling Television and The WB; aired from October 7, 1998, to May 21, 2006; in 21st c.: from S02E09, January 13, 2000, to S08E22, May 21, 2006.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, a witch show, a hidden world of the supernatural; 8 seasons, 178 episodes, 40–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Classical mythology motifs begin appearing only in season 4: “Hell Hath No Fury” (S04E03), “Muse to My Ears” (S04E09), in season 5: “Siren Song” (S05E04), “Oh My Goddess” (S05E22, S05E23), and once in season 7: “Little Box of Horrors” (S07E18). See individual episodes listed under the date of broadcast. The title of the pilot, “Something Wicca This Way Comes,” paraphrases *Macbeth*, Act 4, sc. 1: “[By the pricking of my thumbs] / Something wicked this way comes.” See also the song sung by the students’ choir in the 2004 movie *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, which starts with: “Double, double, toil and trouble / Fire burns and cauldron bubbles.”

References. Beeler and Beeler, 2007; Beeler, 2007, 101–111; Potter, 2009, 217–236, 2010b, 97–122, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d, 2018e, 2018f, 2018g.

7. **“Inter arma enim silent leges.”** S07E16. *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (US). Directed by David Livingston, written by Ronald D. Moore et al., prod. by Rick Berman et al. for Paramount Television; aired on March 3, 1999; in Europe, aired on January 8, 2000.

Genre & length. 166th episode of a television series, military SF; 7 seasons, 176 episodes, 45–46 min. each.

Comments. Cic., *Mil.* 4.11. The quotation is credited to Cicero by one of the characters; starship USS *Bellerophon*, planet Romulus, part of the Star Trek universe.

8. *The Animated Odyssey* (US, LT). Directed by Valentas Aškinis, written by V. Aškinis, Frixos Constantine, and Jack Pitman, prod. by Gary Kurtz for HBO and Vilanima Animation Film Studios in Vilnius; aired on HBO from January 10 to January 31, 2000.

Genre & length. Animated television miniseries in 4 parts, a retelling of the *Odyssey*; each part runs for 25 min. The first full-length (101 min.) Lithuanian animation, *Odisejo nuotykių* [The Adventures of Odysseus], was released in Lithuania in 1998 and the same year in Russia as *Разрушение Трои и путешествие Одиссея* [The Destruction of Troy and the Voyages of Odysseus].

Classical content & comments. The English-language miniseries, composed of: 1. “The Trojan Horse,” 2. “The Cyclops,” 3. “Circe, Hades, and the Sirens,” 4. “Odysseus’ Return,” was reformatted by G. Kurtz at Vilanima Animation Film Studios. It was criticized for clunky movements and awkwardly dubbed dialogues.

9. **“Muse.”** S06E22. *Star Trek: Voyager* (US). Directed by Mike Vejar, written by Joe Menosky, prod. by Rick Berman for Paramount Network Television; aired on UPN on April 26, 2000.

Genre & length. 142nd episode of a television series; more details under the series listing; this episode runs for 44 min.

Classical content & comments. A planet similar to Ancient Greece in the Homeric era. Epic drama staged in an open-air theatre. Reflects the Ancient Greek society’s fascination with theatre and the use of plays about the supernatural guiding mortals in real life. Gods are called Eternals.

References. Meyer, 2009, 46–77.

10. *Gladiator* (US). Directed by Ridley Scott, written by David Franzoni, John Logan, and William Nicholson, prod. by Douglas Wick, D. Franzoni, and Branko Lustig for Scott Free Productions, Red Wagon Entmt, and Dreamworks Pictures; released on May 1, 2000.

Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized historical epic drama; 155 min.

Classical content & comments. Fictionalized Roman imperial history; the film produced the so-called *Gladiator* effect (increased interest in Roman and ancient history) and launched a revival of the historical epic genre, e.g., *Rome* (2005–2007). Based on Daniel P. Mannix’s non-fiction book *Those About to Die* (1958). *Gladiator* received 5 Oscars in 2001, including Best Film and Best Actor; 4 BAFTAs. R. Scott has directed a continuation (30 years later), *Gladiator II*, released in the US on

November 22, 2024, written by Peter Craig and produced for Parkes/MacDonald Image Nation, Red Wagon Films, and Scott Free Enterprises. See the 2024 listing.

References. Solomon, 2001a, 95, 2004, 1–15, 2013, 17–39; G.A. Smith (1991) 2004, entry 101; Winkler, 2004b, 2004c, 87–110, 2004d, 16–30; Ward, 2004, 31–44; Coleman, 2004, 45–52; Eckstein, 2004, 53–72; D.S. Potter, 2004, 73–86; Pomeroy, 2004, 111–123; Cyrino, 2004, 124–149; P.W. Rose, 2004, 150–172; Russell, 2007, 156–186; Nisbet, (2006) 2008, 68–70, 81, 114; Albu, 2008, 185–204; J. Richards, 2008, 174–179, 2014, 19–35; Burgoyne, 2011a, 82–97; Blanshard and Shahabudin, (2011) 2013, 216–237; Paul, 2013a, 145–174; McGeough, 2022, 8–9, 292–296; Kidd, 2024.

11. *Jason and the Argonauts* (US). Directed by Nick Willing, written by Matthew Faulk and Mark Skeet, prod. by Robert Halmi, Sr.; aired on Hallmark Entmt on May 7, 2000.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, mythological fantasy; 2 parts, 90 min. each

Classical content & comments. Greek mythology, a paraphrased retelling of the myth of the Argonauts.

References. Solomon, 2001a, 115; Dumont, 2013, 144; Olechowska, 2018a; Lovatt, 2021.

12. “Life Line.” S06E24. *Star Trek: Voyager* (US). Directed by Terry Windell, written by John Bruno and Robert Picardo, prod. by Rick Berman for Paramount Network Television; aired on UPN on May 10, 2000.

Genre & length. 144th episode of a television series; for other details, see the series listing; this episode runs for 45 min.

Classical content. The Trojan Horse Project – a holographic infiltration technique intended to deceive the enemy. No other classical allusions.

13. *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (US). Written, directed, and prod. by Joel and Ethan Coen, prod. for Touchstone Pictures, Universal Pictures, StudioCanal, Working Title Films, and Blind Bard Pictures; released on May 13, 2000.

Genre & length. Feature film, criminal comedy-drama; 107 min.

Classical content. A paraphrase of Homer’s *Odyssey* set in Mississippi in 1937, during the Great Depression. The film won several awards, including for soundtrack and score, Best Cinematography from the British Society of Cinematographers, and George Clooney’s Golden Globe Best Actor (2001).

References. Paul, 2013a, 86–92; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 65–95; Platte, 2019, 65–82; McGeough, 2022, 48.

14. *Así es la vida... / Such Is Life* (MX). Directed by Arturo Ripstein, written by Paz Alicia Garciadiego, based on Lucius Annaeus Seneca, prod. by Álvaro Garnica, Laura Imperiale, José María Morales, et al. for D.M.V.B. Films, Filmanía S.L., etc.; released in May 2000.

Genre & length. Feature film, paraphrase of a myth, based on an ancient play; 98 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern paraphrase of Seneca’s *Medea*. Michelakis, 2013, 220 (discussing Medea’s various modern modes of transport from Corinth), mentions the automobile used in A. Ripstein’s film.

References. Winkler, 2017, 65–67; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 221–248.

15. “Restless.” S04E22. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (US). Directed and written by Joss Whedon, exec. prod. by J. Whedon, Gail Berman, Sandy Gallin, et al. for Mutant Enemy, Kuzui Enterprises, Sandollar Television, and 20th Century Fox Television; aired on The WB on May 23, 2000.

Genre & length. 78th episode of a television series; for other details, see the series listing; it runs for 44 min. The episode is the 4th season’s finale.

Classical content & comments. Buffy, Willow, Xander, and Giles prepare for a relaxing evening of watching videos, but instead they all fall asleep and have strange dreams. Willow's dream is shown first; it begins with her painting on Tara's back a love poem by Sappho in Ancient Greek.
References. Jenkins, 2015, 1–8.

16. *Orpheus & Eurydice* (GR). Directed, written, and prod. by Paul Pissanos for Pissanos Int'l Film & TV Productions; released on September 6, 2000.

Genre & length. Feature film, retelling of a Greek myth; 124 min.

Classical content & comments. The myth of Orpheus (here, he is a son of Apollo) and Eurydice. Includes Orphic rites and Dionysian mysteries. Certain modifications of the myth: Orpheus dies killed by an evil sorceress, Aglaonike, for his role in defending the temples of Zeus from black-magic-wielding Bacchae.

17. *Cleopatra: Daughter of the Nile. The Royal Diaries*, Part 1 (US, CA). Directed by Randy Bradshaw, written by Lori Lansens, prod. by Deborah Forte for Scholastic Productions; aired on HBO on September 9, 2000; DVD released on July 1, 2008.

Genre & length. A cycle of three short television films, historical fantasy, teen drama; 26 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Egypt, 57 BCE. A teenage Cleopatra flees from Egypt to Rome to escape assassins sent to murder her father, Ptolemy XII Auletes. In Rome, she learns the Latin language and Roman traditions to convince the Senate to restore her father to the throne of Egypt and prepare herself to succeed him eventually. The book series "Royal Diaries" (published by Scholastic) includes 20 novels. The film is based on the bestselling 1999 book *Daughter of the Nile* by Kristiana Gregory. The "Royal Diaries" DVD contains *Elizabeth I: Red Rose of the House of Tudor* and *Isabel, Jewel of Castilla*.

18. 2000–2002, *Sheep in the Big City* (US). Created, written, and directed by Mo Willem, co-written by David Wain and Joey Mazzarino, co-directed by Maurice Joyce, Tom Warburton, et al., prod. by M. Willem, Kris Greengrow, Bruce Knapp, et al. for Curious Pictures and Cartoon Network; aired on Cartoon Network from November 17, 2000, to April 7, 2002.

Genre & length. Animated television series, comedy, SF time travel; 2 seasons of 26 episodes, 22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. S01E09, Chapter 2: "It Was Many Shears Ago." The Sheep time-travels to Ancient Greece, an idyllic rural country where people are friendly, feed the Sheep, bathe it, and strange Centaurs come to dance for it. Unfortunately, it realizes it is being groomed as a sacrifice for Lady Medusington, who has a wig of angry bunnies instead of hair. The Sheep escapes to its own time and place.

References. Kłos, 2018.

2001

19. *Vercingétorix, la légende du Druide-roi / Druids* (FR, CA, BE). Directed, prod., and written by Jacques Dorfmann, co-written by Anne de Leseleuc, Rospo Pallenberg, and Norman Spinrad for TF1 Int'l, Transfilm, La Mutualité Française, SMK Ltd, and Téléfilm Canada; released on January 14, 2001.

Genre & length. Feature film, a fictionalized history of the Roman conquest of Gaul; 124 min.

Classical content & comments. After witnessing the tragic death of his father, Celtill, at the hands of his uncle Gobannitio in 52 BCE, Vercingétorix, brought up and trained by Druids, returns to Gergovia and reclaims the Arvernian throne. He defeats the Roman legions at Gergovia but

becomes trapped in the fortress of Alesia. Caesar cuts off all food supplies and defeats the Gallic tribes, which attempt rescue but lack a clear chain of command. Vercingétorix is taken to Rome to be executed. A “super-patriotic” and naive version of events leading to a total failure of the movie; the public and the critics were unanimous. Disappointed by the movie’s flop, N. Spinrad novelized a recovered 3rd version of the script in 2003 under the title *The Druid King*.

References. G.A. Smith, 2004, entry 72; Dumont, 2013, 325.

20. **Attila** (US, LT). Directed by Dick Lowry, written by Robert Cochran, prod. by Paul Lichtman and Robertas Urbonas for Alphaville Films, Attila Productions, Michael R. Joyce Productions; aired on USA Network on January 30–31, 2001.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, fictionalized Roman history; 2 episodes, 88 min. each.

Classical content. 5th-c. invasion of Rome by Huns led by Attila.

21. **“I Was Made to Love You.”** S05E15. **Buffy the Vampire Slayer** (US). Directed by James A. Contner, written by Jane Espenson, prod. by Joss Wheddon, J. Espenson, Garret Davies, et al. for Mutant Enemy, Kuzui Enterprises, Sandollar Television, etc.; aired on The WB, on February 20, 2001.

Genre & length. 93rd episode of a television series; for other details, see the series listing; this episode runs for 60 min. with commercials.

Classical content & comments. April is a robot designed to love its creator, who finds her boring after a while and abandons her, expecting her batteries to expire shortly. She looks for her creator everywhere very aggressively and becomes a threat. Buffy finally disables her. A paraphrase or allusion to the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea.

References. P. James, 2011, 205.

22. **Voyage of the Unicorn** (US, CA). Directed by Philip Spink, written by James C. Christensen and Dan Levine, prod. by Matthew and Michael O’Connor for Babelsberg Int’l Film Produktion, Basset Productions Inc., Hallmark Entmt, Sextant Entmt Group; aired on Hallmark on March 2–3, 2001; DVD released in 2007.

Genre & length. Television film in 2 parts, a book adaptation, a fantasy inspired by mythology; total length 170 min.

Classical content & comments. A mythology professor and his daughters, Miranda and Cassandra, grieve the loss of their mother, who was an illustrator and painted fantastic creatures. The girls, together with their father, embark on a ship made real by the professor’s wishes to visit mythical worlds. They meet creatures from several cultures, among them classical, such as the Sphinx, Harpies, the Minotaur, a dryad, Medusa, a unicorn, and mermaids-sirens. Adaptation of J.C. Christensen’s 1996 fantasy novel *Voyage of the Basset*. Motto of the ship: *Credendo vides*. 2002 Gemini Award for Best Visual Effects and 2002 Leo Awards for Feature Length Drama: Best Cinematography, Best Overall Sound, Best Sound, Best Production, Best Costume Design.

23. **“Human Error.”** S07E17. **Star Trek: Voyager** (US). Directed by Allan Kroeker, written by Rick Berman and Michael Piller, prod. by Kenneth Biller, R. Berman, et al. for Paramount Network Television; aired on March 7, 2001.

Genre & length. 164th episode of a television series; for other details, see the series listing; this episode runs for 45 min.

Classical content. 24th c. CE. Icheb, a Brunali teenager rescued from the Borg, says to Seven-of-Nine: “Don’t kill the messenger. It’s Sophocles, *Oedipus rex*. I’ve been studying Earth literature as part of my Academy training.”



Chapter 2

24. ***Moulin Rouge!*** (US). Directed by Baz Luhrman, written by B. Luhrman and Craig Pearce, prod. by B. Luhrman, Martin Brown, and Fred Baron for Bazmark Productions; distr. by 20th Century Fox; released on May 9, 2001.
Genre & length. Feature film, jukebox musical, romantic drama; 128 min.
Classical content & comments. Various sources, especially *La bohème*, but the director insisted on the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice as his inspiration. A huge artistic and commercial success, the movie was awarded many prestigious prizes.
References. McGeough, 2022, 147.
25. ***Gladiator*** (UK). Directed by Jeremy Freeston, prod. by Pauline Duffy, Mark McMulle, Jack E. Smith, et al. for Yorkshire Associate Producers in assoc. with Discovery UK, Channel 4 Television Corp., and History Television; aired on Discovery Channel on May 15, 2001.
Genre & length. Television documentary movie; 50 min.
Classical content & comments. A documentary about the discovery of a woman's tomb in Roman Britain provided with a gladiator's grave goods. It discusses gladiators and wonders whether women fought in the arena.
26. ***Atlantis: The Lost Empire*** (US). Directed by Gary Trousdale, prod. by Walt Disney Pictures and Walt Disney Feature Animation; distr. by Buena Vista Pictures Distribution; released on June 3, 2001.
Genre & length. An animated feature film, SF, adventure, fantasy; 96 min.
Classical content & comments. Plato's mention of Atlantis; the film is clearly influenced by Jules Verne's *Voyage au centre de la Terre*. 2002 Golden Reel Award for Best Sound Editing – Animated Feature Film.
References. Mik, 2018.
27. **“Never Look a Trojan in the Gift Horse.”** S01E01b. ***Time Squad*** (US). Created, directed, prod., and written by Dave Wasson, co-directed by Eddie Soriano, co-written by Carlos Ramos and Michael Karnow, prod. by Robert Winthrop for Cartoon Network Studios; aired on Cartoon Network on June 8, 2001. The series ended on November 26, 2003.
Genre & length. 2nd segment of an episode of an animated television series, SF comedy; 2 seasons, 26 episodes, each containing two 11-min. segments.
Classical content & comments. The title puns a well-known expression. The Time Squad time-travels to Troy on the King's birthday when the Greeks bring the Trojan Horse as a gift. Instead of warriors, the horse is filled with sweets by Sinon, the Greek in charge of the stratagem. The King is not pleased. Next, a wooden giraffe filled with chocolate is offered to the King, another idea by Sinon, but the King hates chocolate. Finally, Sinon constructs a giant wooden soldier and conceals wild horses inside. The horses end up ruining the city. The name Priam is not mentioned.
28. **“To Hail with Caesar.”** S01E04a. ***Time Squad*** (US). Created, directed, and co-written by Dave Wasson, co-written by Carlos Ramos, prod. by Robert Winthrop for Cartoon Network Studios; aired on Cartoon Network on July 13, 2001. The series ran from June 8, 2001, to November 26, 2003.
Genre & length. An episode of an animated television series, SF, science fantasy, comedy; 2 seasons, 26 episodes, each containing two 11-min. segments.
Classical content & comments. Caesar appears twice in the *Time Squad* series (in an order contrary to the chronology of events): in the episode “To Hail with Caesar” (46 BCE) and with Cleopatra in “Shop Like an Egyptian” (51 BCE). In the first case, the History Instability Alarm goes off on the Time Squad satellite – Julius Caesar requires their assistance. The city is in shambles, the lions in the Colosseum are weak, and Caesar is tired of being a leader. The Squad helps to restore order to Rome, but the Romans choose a member of the Squad, Tuddrussel, as the leader



by acclamation. When Larry from the Time Squad sides with Tuddrussel, Caesar asks him: *Et tu, Larry?* Caesar challenges Tuddrussel to a duel and easily wins because Otto from the Squad has taught him karate. The crowd declares Caesar the victor.

29. **Mythquest** (CA). Directed by Stefan Scaini, Rob W. King, Paul Schneider, et al., written by Ian Barr, Lienhard Wawrzyn, Jeffrey Cohen, et al., prod. by David Braun, Kevin DeWalt, Wolfram Tichy, et al. for David Braun Productions, Minds Eye Entmt, Myth Quest Productions Inc., etc.; aired on PBS from August 25 to November 17, 2001.

Genre & length. Television series for children, fantasy, various mythologies including Greek; 1 season of 13 episodes, 49 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Two teenagers, Alex and Cleo, look for their father, who has disappeared in a computer programme that allows the player to travel into myths and take the place of mythical characters. The search for their father becomes universally dramatic and urgent – a fight to save the world against a trickster god bent on erasing all myths from existence. 3 episodes refer to Greek mythology: 1. “The Minotaur” – Alex becomes Theseus, 4. “Orpheus” – Alex becomes Orpheus, and 8. “The Oracle” – Cleo becomes the Delphic Oracle.

30. **The Arena** (RU, US). Directed by Timur Bekmambetov, written by John William Corrington, prod. by Roger Corman for New Horizon Home Video; released on August 28, 2001.

Genre & length. A direct-to-video feature movie, fantasized Roman history; 92 min.

Classical content & comments. A remake of 1974 *The Arena* directed by Steve Carver and Jo D’Amato. Enslaved Amazons are forced to fight in the arena as gladiators.

References. McGeough, 2022, 196–197.

31. **Hedwig and the Angry Inch** (US). Directed and written by John Cameron Mitchell, prod. by Christine Vachon, Katie Roumel, and Pamela Koffler for Killer Films; released on September 12, 2001.

Genre & length. Feature film, adaptation of a rock musical; 92 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on a 1998 musical, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, by Steven Trask and John Cameron Mitchell about a gay East German rock singer. The story is inspired by Aristophanes’ speech on love from Plato’s *Symposium* (189c–193e). There are strong links between the film and Aristophanes’ *Ecclesiazusae*.

References. Garcia, 2015, 173–182.

32. **Quo vadis** (PL). Directed and written by Jerzy Kawalerowicz, prod. by Mirosław Słowiński and Jerzy Kajetan Frykowski for Studio Filmowe Kadr and Chronos Film, co-prod. by Telewizja Polska and HBO Polska; released on September 14, 2001.

Genre & length. Feature film, adaptation of a novel, fictionalized Roman history; 170 min.

Classical content & comments. Adaptation of Henryk Sienkiewicz’s 1896 novel set in the time of Nero, a love story against the background of the great fire of Rome and the persecution of Christians. A fictionalized story with historical figures, such as Nero, Acte, Poppaea Sabina, Seneca, Petronius, Aulus Plautius and Pomponia Graecina, and St Peter, as well as fictional characters of the young lovers, Vinitius and Ligia. Love is stronger than tyranny, and Christian faith is stronger than pagan beliefs. The most expensive film in Polish cinematic history (PLN 75 mln). The same team produced a television series of 6 episodes; see below, under the year of broadcast (2003).

References. Skwara, 2013, 163–174, 2015, 149–157; Ostrowska, 2020, 282–300.

33. **2001–2005, Star Trek: Enterprise** (US). Created by Rick Berman and Brannon Braga, prod. by R. Berman, B. Braga, et al. for Paramount Network Television, Braga Productions, and Rick Berman Productions; aired from September 26, 2001, to May 13, 2005.

- Genre & length.** Television series, military SF, action/adventure; 4 seasons, 98 episodes, 42 min. each.
- Classical content & comments.** A space *Odyssey*. No particular mythological references or inspirations, except individual episodes with titles alluding to antiquity or, even less frequently, to a specific myth or concept. See such episodes listed under the year of broadcast. Based on Gene Rodenberry's *Star Trek*, chronologically a prequel to *Star Trek: The Original Series*.
34. **"Hell Hath No Fury."** S04E03. *Charmed* (US). Directed by Chris Long, written by Krista Vernoff, prod. by Brad Kern, Aaron Spelling, et al. for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Television, and Viacom Productions; aired on The CW on October 11, 2001.
- Genre & length.** 69th episode of a television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world; 8 seasons, 178 episodes, 40–45 min. each. This episode runs for 42 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Three nameless demonic Furies pursue and kill all murderers. As in Euripides' *Orestes* 260, they are called dog-faced (κυνώπιδες): Φοῖβ', ἀποκτενοῦσί μ' αἱ κυνώπιδες γοργώπες, ἐνέρων ἰέρεαι, δειναὶ θεαί (Phoebus, these bitch-faced fierce-eyed ones mean to kill me, these priestesses of the dead, dread goddesses!; trans. David Kovacs) (*Elektra* 1342, ἀλλὰ κύνας). See the listing for the series in 2000.
- References.** Potter, 2009, 217–236, 2018b.
35. **"Terra nova."** S01E06. *Star Trek: Enterprise* (US). Directed by LeVar Burton, written and prod. by Rick Berman, Brannon Braga, et al.; aired on October 21, 2001.
- Genre & length.** 4th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.
- Classical content & comments.** A Latin title alluding to the content but no mythological inspiration.
36. **Hera Purple: Devil Goddess** (KR). Directed, written, and prod. by Kil-chaе Jeong for Jeong Kil-Chae Productions; released on October 27, 2001.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, horror/thriller; 93 min.
- Classical content & comments.** A beautiful woman commits a series of gruesome murders. She seduces and then kills her sexual partners. At the same time, a woman seeks relief from nightmares in which she is possessed by the goddess Hera, who exacts revenge on men guilty of committing rape on the woman in the past by seducing, torturing, and killing them.
- References.** Maurice, 2019b, 96–97.
37. **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's** [aka Sorcerer's] **Stone** (UK, US). Directed by Chris Columbus, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Hayman for Warner Brothers, Heyday Films, and 1492 Pictures; released on November 4, 2001.
- Genre & length.** First of a cycle of feature films, fantasy, witch show, school story, an adaptation of a cycle of novels; 152 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Based on J.K. Rowling's first *Harry Potter* novel, published in 1997. Fluffy, the three-headed dog guarding the Philosopher's Stone, is inspired by Cerberus.
- References.** Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Olechowska, 2016, 384–410; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.
38. **"Muse to My Ears."** S04E09. *Charmed* (US). Directed by Joel J. Feigenbaum, written by Krista Vernoff; series created by Constance M. Burge and prod. by Aaron Spelling, Brad Kern, and E. Duke Vincent for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Television, and Viacom Productions; aired on The CW on December 13, 2001.
- Genre & length.** 75th episode of a television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world; 42 min.
- Classical content & comments.** The Charmed Ones are trying to stop daemonic warlocks from enslaving the Muses and making their inspiration work for the forces of evil.
- References.** Potter, 2018c.

39. **2001–2002, *Jason et les héros de l'Olympe / Jason and the Heroes of Mount Olympus*** (FR). Written, directed, and prod. by Bruno Bianchi, exec. prod. by Olivier Dumont and Jacqueline Tordjman for Night Storm Productions, Saban Entmt, and Fox Kids Europe; aired on France 1, ZDF, Spanish La 2, RAI 2, and Fox Kids in the US, in 2001–2002.
Genre & length. An animated television series, paraphrased retelling of myths; 1 season of 26 episodes, 22 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Mount Olympus is systematically attacked by harpies under the command of the wicked Dracchus, who swore that he would take over the enormously powerful Orion's belt worn by Jupiter to reinforce his rule. There is a prophecy about a young mortal who would someday help the gods vanquish Dracchus. During a battle, Jason appears, a young teenager fascinated by mythology. Assisted by Mercury and his friends, Jason is able to face many dangers and monsters, such as Medusa, Hydra, the Minotaur, or the Cyclops, and use the power of the belt to prevail over any foe.
40. ***Atlantis, der verlorene Kontinent*** (DE). Directed, written, and prod. by Roswitha Haas for Dingo Pictures; released on video in 2001.
Genre & length. An animated video for children; 44 min.
Classical content & comments. A Greek boy named Petros finds a map of Atlantis in a bottle on the beach. A speaking dolphin shows him the entrance to the underwater city, where a technologically advanced race (the Atlanteans) live a peaceful life. He finds there the girl who put the map in the bottle and who is the reason Petros is allowed to stay on the condition that he would not reveal Atlantis's existence to anybody. Low-quality dubbing into English.
References. M. Lindner, 2017, 527–528.
41. ***Herostratus*** (AM, US). Directed and written by Rouben Kochar, co-written by Armen Vatyan, prod. by Blue Lion Entmt-Hayfilm Studio; released in 2001.
Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized Greek history; 118 min.
Classical content & comments. The story of Herostratus, who set fire to the temple of Artemis in Ephesus in 356 BCE. An award at the International Film Festival in Mexico.
References. Dumont, 2013, 658.

2002

42. ***The Bacchae*** (US). Directed and written by Brad Mays (based on Euripides), prod. by Lorenda Starfelt and John Morrissey for LightSong Films and Rebours Productions; released in 2002.
Genre & length. Feature film, staging of an ancient tragedy; 90 min.
Classical content & comments. Dionysus comes back to Thebes to launch his worship. He enchants local women to participate in a festival of dance and wine, but Pentheus, King of Thebes, insults the god by refusing to agree to such a cult. Dionysus takes him into the mountains, where he dies at the hands of the crazed worshippers (among them Pentheus' mother, Agave). Based on a highly successful performance of Euripides' *Bacchae* directed in 1997 by B. Mays at the Los Angeles Complex.
43. ***Astérix et Obélix. Mission Cléopâtre*** (FR, DE). Written, directed, and co-prod. by Alain Chabat, prod. by Claude Berri for Katarina et Renn Productions, co-prod. by TF1 Film Production, Canal+, CNC, Chez Wam, and La Petite Reine; released on January 30, 2002.
Genre & length. Live-action feature film, “comédie de péplum,” a satirical take on Roman history, an adaptation of a comic book; 107 min.

Classical content & comments. The story of Cleopatra, according to a comic-book version. Based on Albert Uderzo and René Goscinny's *Astérix et Cléopâtre* (1963). The most popular of all comic-book adaptations in France. The total number of tickets sold was 24.8 mln; repeats on TF1 in 2009–2021 were viewed by approx. 41 mln people (cf. data at, e.g., JP Box-Office, n.d.). Chabat released a remastered version on July 5, 2023.

References. Galipeau, 2023.

44. **“Shop Like an Egyptian.”** S01E13a. *Time Squad* (US). Created, directed, and co-written by Dave Wasson, co-written by Carlos Ramos and Michael Karnow, prod. by Dave Wasson and Gwynn Adik for Cartoon Network Studios; aired on February 1, 2002.

Genre & length. 1st segment of the 13th episode of an animated television series, SF comedy; 2 seasons, 52 episodes, each contains two 11-min. segments.

Classical content & comments. 51 BCE. Cleopatra wants to transform pyramids into shopping malls. At the request of Otto of the Time Squad, Caesar comes from Rome and helps convince Cleopatra to leave the pyramids as they are and concentrate on ruling the country. Season 1 aired from June 8, 2001, to February 1, 2002.

45. *Orpheus and the Underworld: I Love You to Bits* (AU). Directed by Nathan Jurevicius, prod. by Vishus Productions, flash animation by Square i for ABC and the University of Melbourne; released in 2002.

Genre & length. An animated short, a paraphrase of a myth; 3:33 min.

Classical content & comments. As Orpheus sings, “I believe – in you – and me – forever...,” Eurydice, fleeing from a beast, is bitten by a snake. Orpheus drives off in his colourful van until the car falls off a cliff. He wakes up in a black-and-white Underworld. On the shore of the River Styx, he meets Charon, who starts singing with him while taking him across the river; Cerberus on the other shore goes to sleep when Orpheus sings. Orpheus goes down to Tartarus in an elevator. He sees Sisyphus and Tantalus and possibly Arachne being punished. Hades and Persephone are moved too, and let him take his wife to the elevator. They sing, she disappears, he returns to the River Styx, and his body disintegrates into bits; see the title and the lyrics. The film was produced as part of the (now defunct) *Winged Sandals* project designed to teach classical mythology.

The short won the Best of the Best AIMIA Award for Best E-Learning or Reference in 2003, and two other awards in 2004.

References. Riverlea, 2020.

46. **“Persephone: A Tale from Greece.”** S02E13. *Animated Tales of the World* (US). Directed by Sergey Olifrenko, series created by Christopher Grace, prod. by Christmas Films for Children’s Television Trust Int’l, 2001–2004; aired on HBO Family on February 10, 2002.

Genre & length. 26th episode of an animated television series; 3 seasons and 39 episodes; S02E13 is 13 min. long.

Classical content. A retelling of the myth of Persephone. The series presents a selection of stories (folk tales and myths) from many countries worldwide.

47. **“Tales from the Public Domain: D’oh, Brother Where Art Thou?”** S13E14. *The Simpsons* (US). Directed by Mike B. Anderson, written by Andrew Kreisberg, Josh Lieb, and Matt Warburton, prod. by Mike Scully and George Meyer for Gracie Films and 20th Television (Animation); aired on Fox on March 17, 2002. The DVD of season 13 was released in 2010.

Genre & length. An episode of a famous American animated television series (1989–); 33 seasons, 714 episodes, 21–22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The title paraphrases the title of the Coen brothers’ 2000 film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* The episode is a humorous retelling of the *Odyssey*. Homer Simpson (Odysseus) brings the Trojan Horse to the King of Troy. He and his companions come out of the

Horse and conquer the city. No proper sacrifices were offered to Zeus, Dionysus, and Poseidon. Dionysus tries to kill Odysseus with a lightning bolt but instead sends Atlantis into the deep sea. Poseidon punishes Odysseus and his crew by sending them first to the Sirens and then to Circe. Odysseus eats pigs, who are, in fact, his enchanted crew. When he finally reaches Ithaca, he kills all of Penelope's suitors.

48. **"Vox sola."** S01E22. *Star Trek: Enterprise* (US). Directed by Roxann Dawson, written and prod. by Rick Berman, Brannon Braga, et al. for Paramount Network Television and Paramount Television; aired on May 1, 2002.

Genre & length. 22nd episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.

Classical content. A Latin title alluding to the content of the episode but without classical inspirations.

49. **"Repeat Offender."** S02E07a. *Time Squad* (US). Created, directed, and co-written by Dave Wasson, co-written by Carlos Ramos and Michael Karnow, prod. by Robert Winthrop for Cartoon Network Studios; aired on Cartoon Network on June 14, 2002.

Genre & length. 1st segment of an animated television series, SF, comedy; 2 seasons, 26 episodes, each containing two 11-min. segments.

Classical content & comments. Time Squad members are taking Blackbird to a rehab centre for recidivists but stop in Athens, where they meet Socrates, a fitness instructor, with his students exercising on stationary bikes. They crash his bike and demand that he immediately switch to teaching philosophy. He complies.

50. **"Cure."** S06E10. *Stargate SG-1* (US, CA). Directed by Andy Mikita, written by Brad Wright, Jonathan Glassner, and Damian Kindler, prod. by D. Kindler, A. Mikita, B. Wright, et al. for Double Secret Productions and Gekko Film Corp.; aired on Sci Fi on August 16, 2002.

Genre & length. 120th episode of a television series, military SF; 10 seasons, 44 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Egeria, a Roman nymph, protector of fountains and childbirth, and advisor to the legendary Roman ruler Numa Pompilius, helped him to establish laws. She had been a Goa'uld who was against enslaving humans. Her descendants were the Tok'ra fighting against the Goa'uld. Egeria was captured by Ra, who put her in stasis, closed her in a Canopic jar, and entombed her on the planet Pangar. The inscription on the tomb said: "Here lies Egeria, betrayer of the Goa'uld. May she suffer for all eternity." SG-1 saves Egeria from the inhabitants of Pangar, who force her to produce mindless symbiotes they use to make a miracle drug.

51. *Simone* (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Andrew Niccol for New Line Cinema; released on August 23, 2002.

Genre & length. Feature film, satirical SF, paraphrase of a myth; 118 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern paraphrase of Pygmalion and Galatea. When a capricious movie star abandons her director, he creates an AI character to replace her. The director becomes more of a Narcissus than Pygmalion. The AI's excellent performance brings back the star.

References. P. James, 2011, 246–254.

52. **2002–2003, *Mission Odyssey*** (FR, DE). Created by David Gilson, written by Claude Scasso, prod. by Michael Lessa for BAF Berlin Animation Film GmbH & Co. Produktions KG, Marathon Filmproduktion, and Marathon Animation; aired on M6, from September 6, 2002, to March 12, 2003.

Genre & length. Animated television series, a free adaptation of Homer; 1 season, 26 episodes, 24 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A children's version of the *Odyssey*. Poseidon makes a wager with Athena that Odysseus and his crew, who failed to properly honour him in Troy will never

return to Ithaca. Poseidon puts all sorts of obstacles and monsters in the way of Odysseus and his ship, *Navis*, some of which are borrowed from other Greek myths, e.g., Medusa, the 3 Fates, Pandora's Box, Chiron and the island of the Centaurs, Harpies, Atlantis, Lycaon, the Golden Fleece, the Horn of Plenty. The stories connected to each character evolve differently than in ancient sources.

53. **"Spartacus – Gladiator gegen Rom."** S06E04. *Geheimnisse der Geschichte* (DE). Directed and written by Günther Klein, prod. for ZDF; aired on Arte on September 7, 2002.
Genre & length. 34th episode of a docudrama series with anonymous actors, Roman history; 8 seasons, 51 episodes, 51 min. each.
Classical content. A German docudrama series with episodes about various periods of history, including Ancient Roman history.
54. *Lisistrata* (ES). Directed and written by Francesc Bellmunt, prod. by Ramon Tello and Marc Martí for Laurenfilm S.A.; released on September 13, 2002.
Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, an adaptation of a comic book; 89 min.
Classical content & comments. Based on Ralph König's 1987 *Lysistrata*, inspired by Aristophanes' comedy. After 2 decades of the Peloponnesian War, Athenian and Spartan women decide to force their men to conclude peace by refusing to have sex with them. When the soldiers have difficulties fighting, the generals order them to practise "circumstantial homosexuality," which, on the one hand, improves their fighting potential but, on the other, takes away their will to fight as they fall in love with their enemies. Finally, peace is restored despite the failure of the women's strategy.
55. **2002–2003, *Stargate Infinity* / *Stargate: Le dessin animé*** (US, FR). Created by Eric Lewald and Michael Maliani, directed by Will Meugniot, prod. by Andrew Heyward and M. Maliani for MGM Television Entmt, Les Studios Tex, and DIC Entmt Corp.; aired on Fox Box, Disney Channel France, and M6 Kids Block from September 14, 2002, to March 24, 2003. DVD: MGM and 20th Century Fox, August 13, 2007; Shout! Factory, May 13, 2008 (4 discs).
Genre & length. Animated television series, SF adventure, for pre-teen children; 1 season, 26 episodes, 26 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A Stargate team protects a chrysalis discovered in Egypt against aliens who want to capture it. The chrysalis develops into a non-ascended ancient girl with supernatural powers. A French-American series cancelled without resolving unfinished storylines. No cross-over appeal. Does not belong to the *Stargate* canon.
56. **"Siren Song."** S05E04. *Charmed* (US). Directed by Joel J. Feigenbaum, written by Krista Vernoff, prod. by Brad Kern, Aaron Spelling, et al. for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Company, Viacom Productions, and WB Television Network; aired on October 6, 2002.
Genre & length. 92nd episode of a television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world of the supernatural; 42 min.
Classical content & comments. The Siren here is a demon bent on revenge for having been burned at the stake as a punishment for adultery committed with a married man, while he was absolved from any guilt. She seduces men with her enchanted song and then immolates them together with their wives using flames from her own burning. A mythological monster reimaged as a victim of discrimination. DVD: season 5 featuring "Siren Song" released on March 6, 2006; on February 3, 2014: all seasons. See the listing for the series in 2000.
References. Potter, 2018d.
57. *Kiddy Grade* (JP). Directed by Keiji Gotoh, written by Hidefumi Kimura, prod. by Gimik and Gonzo Digimation; aired on Fuji Television from October 8, 2002, to March 18, 2003.

Genre & length. Anime series, SF; 24 episodes, 23–24 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The spaceship on which the main characters travel is called *La Muse*, and sister spaceships bear the names of individual Greek Muses: Calliope, Clio, Terpsichore, Erato, Euterpe, Thalia, and Polyhymnia. No other mythological inspiration.

58. ***Clone High*** (CA, US). Created by Phil Lord, Christopher Miller, and Bill Lawrence, directed by Ted Collyer and Harold Harris, prod. by Kim Cleary, P. Lord, C. Miller, et al. for Touchstone Television; season 1 aired on Teletoon and MTV from November 2, 2002, to March 2, 2003; seasons 2 and 3 aired on HBO Max from May 23, 2023, to February 1, 2024.

Genre & length. An adult animated television sitcom, satire, SF; 3 seasons of 33 episodes, 22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Clones of famous historical figures attend a high school. Cleopatra is among the 5 main characters, and Julius Caesar is a secondary character (appearing in 7 episodes). A satire of popular teen series, in particular, *Dawson's Creek* and *Beverly Hills, 90210*. The characters are caricatures of their models and represent stereotypes of high-school students. Cleo Smith is a vain and mean popular cheerleader with 2 boyfriends. The series is geared to a less sophisticated audience, and the characters were chosen because of the degree of recognition they enjoy. Gandhi, as a comic relief far removed from the image of the real person, was highly criticized in India. Low ratings ended production after 1 season, but a small group of loyal fans and 2 of the creators, P. Lord and C. Miller, managed to engineer a 2-season revival.

59. ***Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*** (UK, US). Directed by Chris Columbus, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Hayman for Warner Brothers, Heyday Films, and 1492 Pictures; released on November 3, 2002.

Genre & length. 2nd feature film in a cycle, an adaptation of the 2nd novel in a cycle of 7, fantasy, witch show, school story; 161 min.

Comment: Adaptation of J.K. Rowling's 1998 *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.

References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Olechowska, 2016, 384–410; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 253–277; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.

60. **2002–2003, 올림포스 가디언 / *Olympus Guardian*** (KR). Directed by Lee Ki-seok, Park Byung-soon, written by Jeon Hye-yeong, prod. by Cho Hong-jun for SBS, SBS Productions, SBSi, Gana Entmt, Dong Woo Animation; aired on SBC from December 11, 2002, to July 30, 2003.

Genre & length. Animated television series, a retelling of myths; 39 episodes, 20 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Two elementary school students, siblings, a boy and a girl, visit their artist father's studio. They find there a mythology book. The father reads the book to the children, a chapter per episode. Occasionally, the stories are slightly modified compared to the versions known from sources. E.g., episode 3: Hope from Pandora's Box helps create human beings; episode 7: Zeus kills Arachne with his thunderbolt; episode 22: Hades does not kidnap Persephone; she goes with him willingly; episode 34: Hector dies pushed by Achilles down into a deep ravine. Aspects potentially inappropriate for young viewers are adapted. Episodes: 1. "Gods of Olympus," 2. "Fire of Prometheus," 3. "Pandora's Box," 4–5. "Love and Soul: Part I and Part II," 6. "Who Is the Most Beautiful Goddess?," 7. "Athena and Arachne," 8. "Story of Hermes," 9. "Story of Atalanta," 10. "Daphne Turned into a Laurel," 11. "Baucis and Philemon," 12. "Bellerophon and Pegasus," 13–14. "Adventures of Perseus: Part I and Part II," 15. "Wings of Icarus," 16. "Zeus and Io," 17. "Cadmus and Dragon of Ares," 18. "Echo and Narcissus," 19. "Midas, Hand of Gold," 20. "Phrixus and Helle," 21. "Orpheus and Eurydice," 22. "Love of Hades," 23. "Birth of Hercules," 24. "Twelve Labours of Hercules," 25. "Resurrection of Hercules," 26. "Love of Artemis," 27. "Argonauts: 50 Heroes," 28. "Argonauts: Finding the Golden Sheep [sic!]," 29. "Theseus and Minotaurus,"



30. “Phaeton’s Golden Chariot,” 31–33. “Adventures of Odysseus: Part I, Part II, and Part III,” 34. “The Story of Achilles,” 35. “Trojan Horse,” 36. “Eos and Tithonus,” 37. “An Unspoken Story: Flowers,” 38. “An Unspoken Story: Monster,” 39. “An Unspoken Story: Constellation.”

2003

61. ***A Miami Tail*** (US). Directed by Melvin James, written by Colin Costello and Stephanie Alese Jordan, prod. by J. Ronald Castell, Doug Schwab, Pamela White, et al. for Breakaway Films, Canvas Films, and R.A.P. Filmworks; released on January 30, 2003.
Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, modern paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 84 min.
Classical content & comments. A paraphrase of Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*. A contemporary young girl attempts to eliminate crime and violence in her neighbourhood by convincing her girlfriends to refuse sex to their gangster boyfriends.
References. Winkler, 2017, 160–163.
62. ***Ben-Hur*** (CA, US). Directed and co-prod. by William R. Kowalchuk, Jr., written by Abi Estrin Cunningham, co-prod. by John Stronach for Agamemnon Films and Tundra Productions; DVD: February 15, 2003.
Genre & length. Animated film, direct-to-video, a book adaptation; 80 min.
Classical content & comments. Small changes compared to previous adaptations, such as miracles performed by Jesus, who heals Ben-Hur’s family from leprosy and Massala from lameness. Based on Lew Wallace’s 1880 novel, *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. Prod. by Charles Heston’s company Agamemnon Films; Judah Ben-Hur is voiced by Heston.
References. Solomon, 2016.
63. **“Pompeii and Circumstance.”** S01E12. ***What’s New, Scooby-Doo*** (US). Directed by Tom Mazzocco and Scott Jeralds, written by Ed Scharlach, prod. by Joseph Barbera and Sander Schwartz, et al. for Warner Bros. Animation; aired on February 22, 2003.
Genre & length. 12th episode of an animated television series for children; 3 seasons, 42 episodes, 20 min. each.
Classical content & comments. The title alludes to Edward Elgar’s first 1901 march, “Pomp and Circumstance.” Shakespeare coined the expression in *Othello*, Act 3, sc. 3; now, it is an outdated expression of patriotism and excessive ceremony. During Scooby and his gang’s vacation in Italy, an alleged zombie gladiator terrorizes Pompeii. This is revealed as part of a scheme to facilitate commercial development by removing ancient artifacts and throwing them into the Vesuvius crater. Their discovery would have stopped development.
64. ***Helen of Troy*** (US). Directed by John Kent Harrison, written by Ronni Kern, prod. by Adam Shapiro for Fuel Entmt; aired on USA Network on April 20, 2003. DVD released in 2003 by Universal Studios and USA Cable Entmt.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, a retelling of a mythological epic; 2 parts, 87 min. each.
Classical content & comments. The *Iliad* and earlier related events (Paris’ childhood, Paris’ judgement, Cassandra as a child, kidnapping of Helen by Theseus at the wedding of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra; Helen’s brothers, Castor and Pollux, recover her from Athens and kill Theseus). A retelling of the myth focused on the title character. Menelaus, as narrator, tells “the true story” of the fall of Troy. Agamemnon, power-hungry and ruthless, is the main villain. He offers his daughter Iphigenia as a sacrifice to the offended Artemis, manipulates his weak brother, and humiliates Helen. Achilles is a brutal giant. Paris kills him, and is in turn is knifed by the deceitful Agamemnon, who also cuts Priam’s throat, rapes Helen in front of Menelaus, and meets his death



at the hand of his wife, Clytemnestra. Nominated for several awards, received the Visual Effects Society Award for Outstanding Models and Miniatures.

References. J. Richards, 2008, 186–187; Winkler, 2009a, 234–242, 2017, 358.

65. **“Nymphs Just Wanna Have Fun.”** S05E19. *Charmed* (US). Directed by Mel Damski, written by Andrea Stevens and Doug E. Jones, prod. by Brad Kern, Aaron Spelling, et al. for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Company, Viacom Productions, and WB Television Network; aired on April 20, 2003.

Genre & length. 107th episode of a television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world of the supernatural; 45 min.

Classical content & comments. Nymphs guard an eternal spring in a forest with the help of a satyr who plays pipes for them. Demons want to find the spring because its waters give eternal life to those who drink from them. A demon kills the satyr, and another demon pretends to be a satyr and fools the nymphs to let him drink from the spring. He cannot be killed, but the nymphs transform him into a harmless tree. The story shows that change is good, and the nymphs can live without a satyr and continue guarding the source and nature in general.

References. Potter, 2018e.

66. *Manfast* (US). Directed and written by Tara Judelle, prod. by T. Judelle, Vesco and Emile Razpov, et al. for Kali Films; released on April 30, 2003.

Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, modern paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 95 min.

Classical content & comments. Loosely inspired by Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*, the film tells the story of 4 independent girlfriends, who live together and publish a zine. Financial problems with the magazine lead them to agree to a grad student’s proposal to restrain from any physical contact with men for 100 days. The story attracts media attention, especially when the father of one of the girls offers a million-dollar reward to the man who breaks the imposed restriction. The 2005 winner of the La Femme Filmmaker Award.

67. *The Matrix Reloaded* (US). Directed and written by the Wachowskis, prod. by Joel Silver for Village Roadshow Pictures, NPV Entmt, and Silver Pictures; released on May 7, 2003.

Genre & length. Feature film, SF action, 2nd in a cycle of films; 138 min.

Classical content & comments. Sequel to the 1999 *The Matrix*. Names and concepts from Greek mythology: Niobe, the Oracle (a programme announcing prophecies within the Matrix, destabilizing its equations), Persephone (wife of the Merovingian, both are programmes), Morpheus (the character is based on Neil Gaiman’s Morpheus from the graphic novel *The Sandman*, 1989–1996), who offers people a choice, a blue pill, which lets them continue dreaming in the Matrix, or a red pill, which allows them to enter a potentially painful reality.

68. **“Oh My Goddess.”** S05E22–23. *Charmed* (US). Directed by Jonathan West (Part 1) and Joel J. Feigenbaum (Part 2), written by Krista Vernoff and Curtis Kheel (Part 1) and Daniel Cerone (Part 2), prod. by Brad Kern, Aaron Spelling, et al. for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Co., Viacom Productions, and WB Television Network; aired on May 11, 2003.

Genre & length. 110th and 111th episodes of a television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world of the supernatural; 45 min.

Classical content & comments. Paige finds reference to the Titans in the *Book of Shadows*, the Halliwell family’s grimoire. The Titans were frozen because there was no other way to stop them. She wants to vanquish them with a potion, but it has no effect on the Titan Meta; on the contrary, Paige herself is turned to stone. When Meta rejoins the other Titans, Cronus and Demetrius, Cronus kills her for bringing a 3rd white lighter. The witches are unable to vanquish the Titans. Previously, the Titans were defeated by humans, who were given powers by the Elders. They did not stop there but demanded to be worshipped as gods. That is how the Olympians came to be,

although they eventually abused their powers. The Titans attack the Elders and kill most of them using the white lighters' power to orb (moving objects and people by a mental command) as transport. The witches become goddesses of war, love, and earth. Quotes from Archimedes ("Give me one firm spot on which to stand, and I will move the earth") and Tacitus ("Reason and judgement are the qualities of a leader") are used by the goddess of war (Paige). The witches bring back order and peace and relinquish their powers.

References. Potter, 2009, 217–236, 2018f.

69. **"The [Delphic] Expanse."** S02E26. *Star Trek: Enterprise* (US). Directed by Allan Kroeker, written and prod. by Rick Berman and Brannon Braga, et al. for Paramount Network Television and Paramount Television; aired on May 21, 2003.

Genre & length. 52nd episode of a television series, military SF, action, adventure, time travel; 43 min.

Classical content & comments. Episode 26 is entitled "The Expanse," but in the episode, the Expanse is called Delphic Expanse; it is an unknown and potentially dangerous region of space where a Vulcan spaceship, the *Vaankara*, was destroyed – an analogy to the Bermuda Triangle.

70. **"Orpheus."** S07E04. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed and written by Peter DeLuise, co-written by Brad Wright and Jonathan Glassner, prod. by J. Glassner, Richard Dean Anderson, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on June 27, 2003.

Genre & length. 136th episode of a television series, military SF, fantasy, action/adventure; 42 min.

Classical content & comments. "According to Greek mythology, Erebus is a place where condemned souls pass as soon as they die." The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and specifically Orpheus' katabasis inspired P. DeLuise to write and direct the episode in which Teal'c journeys to hell to save his son Ry'ac and Master Bra'tac.

71. ***Julius Caesar*** (US, UK, NL, IT). Directed by Uli Edel, written by Peter Pruce and Craig Warner, prod. by Giuseppe Pedersoli, Jonas Bauer, et al. for ARD Degeto Film, De Angelis Group, Five Mile River Films, Global Entmt Productions Holland BV, Smile Production, TNT, and Victory Media G-p; aired on TNT on June 29–30, 2003.

Genre & length. A 2-part television miniseries, a fictionalized biopic; 90 min. per part.

Classical content & comments. Julius Caesar's fictionalized biography covers the years of 82–44 BCE, including all major events but ignoring Caesar's office as *flamen dialis* or his close relationship with Crassus. There are other inaccuracies, such as a completely different version of Sulla's death. It is almost 3 hours of packed action with factual shortcuts but insufficient character development and motivation/causality, which could have created a better flow. Despite technological progress since Enrico Guazzoni's 1914 movie, it is far from flawless. The Italian biopic released in November 1914 was obviously connected to Mussolini's admiration for Caesar as his role model.

References. G.A. Smith, 2004, entry 37; Dumont, 2013, 302, 310–311.

72. ***Lara Croft: Tomb Raider. The Cradle of Life*** (UK, US, JP, DE). Directed by Jan de Bont, story by Steven E. de Souza and James V. Hart, script by Dean Georganis, prod. by Lawrence Gordon and Lloyd Levin for Mutual Film Company, BBC Films, Tele München Gruppe, Toho-Towa, Lawrence Gordon Productions, and Eidos Interactive; released on July 21, 2003.

Genre & length. Feature film, SF fantasy action/adventure; 117 min.

Classical content & comments. An earthquake on Santorini (the ancient Thera) uncovers underwater ruins of the temple of Luna, allegedly built by Alexander the Great. Among the treasures, there is a glowing orb that can locate the "Cradle of Life." An archaeologist / treasure hunter, Lara Croft, and a psychopathic billionaire genius compete to recover the orb. A box is floating in an acid spring in the "Cradle of Life" in Africa. The place is protected by a local tribe and by supernatural

forces. A rationalized myth of Pandora's Box, "Pandora cried tears of acid" – the billionaire wants to use the box to reduce Earth's population but is defeated by Lara, who leaves the lethal box where the gods hid it. Based on the video game *Tomb Raider* by Core Design. Sequel to *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, 2001.

73. **Code 46** (UK). Directed by Michael Winterbottom, written by Frank Cottrell Boyce, prod. by Andrew Eaton for United Artists, UK Film Council, BBC Films, and Revolution Films; released on September 2, 2003.

Genre & length. Feature film, dystopian SF, inspired by the myth of Oedipus; 93 min.

Classical content & comments. In a future reconfigured by biotechnology, there are 2 classes of people: those who live in big cities and those who are forced to live outside in very challenging conditions. Some try to cheat the restrictive system and are subject to criminal investigation and punishment. An inspector falls in love with a suspected fraudster in The Sphinx, a company issuing access documents. When the woman becomes pregnant, routinely conducted genetic tests reveal that she is a clone of his mother (code violation 46), and her pregnancy is automatically terminated. They want to be together and try to hide, but the system wipes the man's memory and returns him to his previous life; the woman is exiled to the desert with her memories intact. The film alludes to the tragedy of Oedipus and Jocasta.

References. Michelakis, 2013, 223–224.

74. **Boudicca / Warrior Queen** (UK, RO). Directed by Bill Anderson, written by Andrew Davies, prod. by Patrick Irwin, Andrei Boncea, et al. for Box TV and Medio Pro Pictures; aired on ITV on September 28, 2003.

Genre & length. Television film, fictionalized Roman Britain; 97 min.

Classical content & comments. Fictionalized history: the uprising of the Iceni led by Queen Boudicca in 60 or 61 CE. Historical inaccuracies: Emperor Claudius died in 54 CE, but the Icenian King Prasutagus, Boudicca's husband, in 61 CE, i.e., not at the same time as the emperor.

75. **Colosseum: Rome's Arena of Death** (UK). Directed, written, and prod. by Tillman Remme, exec. prod. by Jonathan Stamp and Laurence Rees for the BBC, Discovery Channel, France 2, and NDR; aired on BBC One on October 13, 2003.

Genre & length. Television docudrama, "a true story," Roman history; 59 min.

Classical content & comments. The story of a gladiator, Verus, against the background of the building of the Colosseum, the death of Vespasian, the 79 CE eruption of Vesuvius, and the inauguration of the Colosseum. A happy end: at the inaugural games, Verus must fight to the death his friend Priscus, but Titus interrupts the fight and sends both of them wooden swords, i.e., freedom, to the enthusiastic reaction of the crowds. See Mart., *Spect.* 29.

76. **Pompeii: The Last Day** (UK). Directed and written by Peter Nicholson, co-written by Edward Canford-Dumas, prod. by Michael Mosley, Ailsa Orr, Mark Johnston, et al. for the BBC, TLC, NDR, and France 2; aired on BBC One on October 20, 2003.

Genre & length. Television film, docudrama, Roman history; 90 min.

Comment. Awarded Prime Time Emmy for Outstanding Sound Editing for Nonfiction Programming in 2005.

77. **Who Killed Alexander the Great?** (UK, US). Directed by Chris Lethbridge, prod. by Atlantic Productions; aired on National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel, and BBC Five on October 22, 2003.

Genre & length. Television docudrama, investigation of a homicide, Greek history; 52 min.

- Classical content & comments.** 323 BCE. The circumstances of Alexander the Great's death were never fully explained. A Scotland Yard detective conducts an investigation and may have found the answer: an overdose of medication.
78. ***The Matrix Revolutions*** (US). Directed and written by the Wachowskis, prod. by Joel Silver for Village Roadshow Pictures, NPV Entmt, and Silver Pictures; released on November 5, 2003.
Genre & length. Feature film, SF action, 3rd in a cycle of films; 129 min.
Comment. Sequel to the 2003 *Matrix Reloaded*. Niobe, Morpheus, Persephone, the Oracle; see the entry on *The Matrix Reloaded* for more information.
79. "Boudicca." S01E04. ***Warrior Women with Lucy Lawless*** (CA, UK). Directed and written by Renny Bartlett, prod. by Andrew Burnstein, Bettina Hatami, and Denman Rooke for October Films, Exploration Production, and Discovery Channel; aired on Discovery Channel on November 12, 2003.
Genre & length. 4th episode of a television docudramatic series; 5 episodes, 45 min. each.
Classical content & comments. 5 historical women warriors, 1 per episode: 1. "Joan of Arc," 2. "Grace O'Malley," 3. "The Real Mulan," 4. "Boudicca," 5. "Lozen, Apache Warrior." Narrated by Lucy Lawless. Episode 4 on the history of Roman Britain, revolt of the Iceni.
80. ***Oldboy*** (KR). Directed and co-written by Park Chan-wook with Hwang Jo-yun and Lim Jun-hyung, prod. by Lim Seung-yong for Show East; released on November 21, 2003.
Genre & length. Feature film, an adaptation of a manga, neo-noir thriller; 120 min.
Classical content & comments. Inspired by *Oedipus rex*. The main character is named Oh Dae-su to signal the inspiration; a yoga pose symbolizing Apollo, a daughter – Mido – corresponding to Antigone; Oh Dae-su cuts off his tongue instead of gouging his eyes, as Oedipus did. Spike Lee's 2013 remake of *Oldboy* is not listed in the table as its inspiration is too far removed from antiquity. It is based on a Japanese manga series, *Oldboy* (1996–1998), by Garon Tsuchiya and Nobuaki Minegishi. Grand-Prix of the Jury at the 57th Cannes Film Festival in 2004.
81. ***Big Fish*** (US). Directed by Tim Burton, written by John August, prod. by Arne L. Schmidt, Bruce Cohen, et al. for Columbia Pictures, Jinks/Cohen Co., The Zanuck Co., and Tim Burton Productions; released on December 4, 2003.
Genre & length. Feature film, fantasy, an adaptation of a novel; 125 min.
Classical content & comments. Strong affinity with the *Odyssey*, an absent father fighting monsters during his magical travels, an unresolved conflict between father and son; a siren. See Hall, (2008) 2012, 30, referring to this movie, as well as to the *SpongeBob SquarePants Movie* (2004): "The important point is no longer whether any particular screenwriters have drawn on the *Odyssey*, or indeed ever read it, but that they would almost all self-consciously cite the *Odyssey* as a key text in the history of adventure narrative. This epic's status, at least in Hollywood, has once again – and in a new sense – become a matter of legend." An adaptation of Daniel Wallace's 1998 novel *Big Fish: A Novel of Mythic Proportions*. Use of themes not only from Homer's *Odyssey* but also from James Joyce's *Ulysses*.
82. ***L'Odysée*** (CA). Directed by Dominic Champagne, written by D. Champagne and Alexis Martin for CBC/Radio-Canada; aired on December 7, 2003.
Genre & length. Live television transmission from a repertory theatre.
Classical content & comments. A theatrical adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey*, staged first in 2000 in Ottawa, at the Theatre du Nouveau Monde, and later at the Theatre Maisonneuve in Montreal, Quebec. Text of the adaptation publ. in 2003 by Dramaturges. Aired in the weekly Sunday show *Les beaux dimanches*.

83. ***Battlestar Galactica*** (US). Directed by Michael Rymer, written by Ronald D. Moore and Glen A. Larson, prod. by David Eick Productions, R&D TV ENT., and Studios USA; aired on December 8–9, 2003.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, military SF, space saga; 2 episodes, 90 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Lords of KOBOL bear the names of Olympic gods and seem to play similar roles. There are also 12 colonies and 12 models of Cylons, each with some affinity to the Olympic gods. A 3-hour pilot preceding the remake series (2004–2005). The original series was broadcast from 1978 to 1979.
References. Tomasso, 2015a, 243–259.
84. ***Quo vadis?*** (PL). Directed and written by Jerzy Kawalerowicz, prod. by Mirosław Słowiński and Jerzy Kajetan Frykowski for Telewizja Polska, Studio Filmowe Kadr, and Chronos Film, co-prod. by HBO Polska; aired from December 25, 2003.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, an adaptation of a novel, fictionalized Roman history; 6 episodes, 45 min. each.
Comment. Filmed at the same time as the 2001 film adaptation of Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel. See above, under the year of broadcast.
References. Skwara, 2013, 163–174, 2015, 149–157.
85. ***Cold Mountain*** (US, RO, IT, UK). Written and directed by Anthony Minghella, prod. by Sidney Pollack, William Horberg, Alfred Berger, et al. for Mirage Enterprises, Bona Fide Productions, Castel Film Romania, and Cattleya; released on December 25, 2003.
Genre & length. Feature film, an adaptation of a novel, historical fiction; 154 min.
Classical content & comments. Based on Charles Frazier's 1997 book *Cold Mountain* about a Confederate soldier who is wounded and deserts near the end of the American Civil War. He journeys back to his sweetheart, encountering many hardships and obstacles. *A nostos*, reminiscent of the *Odyssey* more obviously in the novel than in the film.
References. Edith Hall (2013, 163–185), after discussing the film, compares it to the Coen brothers' 2000 *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*
86. ***The Real Jason and the Argonauts*** (UK). Directed by Tom Pollock for Atlantic Productions, Granada Int'l, and Discovery Channel; released in 2003.
Genre & length. Documentary film; 55 min.
Classical content & comments. The documentary explores the myth of the Argonauts and whether it may have been based on facts. The real Jason could have been a Greek who embarked on a voyage towards the unknown eastern shore of the Black Sea, looking for trade opportunities. Contributions from classicists of several specialities are illustrated with expert CGI.
References. Colavito, 2014, and Lovatt, 2021, do not mention this documentary.
87. ***Imperium: Augustus*** (UK, IT, ES). Directed by Roger Young, written by Eric Lerner, prod. by Luca Bernabei, Ferdinand Dohna, and Salvatore Morell for EOS Entmt, Lux Vide, RAI, and Telecinco; released in 2003.
Genre & length. Television film, 1st part of a cycle, fictionalized history; 200 min.
Classical content & comments. Fictionalized Roman imperial history. 1st of the 5-part British-Italian-Spanish cycle of films for television about the history of the Roman Empire, 2003–2010. For other installments of the cycle, see under the year of release.

2004

88. *Spartans at the Gates of Fire* (UK). Atlantic Productions; released in 2004.
Genre & length. Docudrama, Greek history; 60 min.
Classical content & comments. 480 BCE, the Pass of Thermopylae was defended to the last man by 300 Spartans in a heroic, patriotic sacrifice. Classical scholars, expert CGI, and a retelling of the story combine in an attempt to reveal the truth behind the myth.
89. “Chimera.” S07E15. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by William Waring, written by Brad Wright, Jonathan Glassner, and Robert C. Cooper, prod. by J. Glassner, Richard Dean Anderson, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on January 30, 2004.
Genre & length. 147th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 44 min.
Classical content & comments. Chimera is a fire-breathing tribrid monster made up of a lion, a goat, and a serpent; the human–Goa’uld nature of Sarah/Osiris adds a threatening aspect to their dream interaction, making the analogy suitable.
90. “It’s All Greek to Scooby.” S02E14. *What’s New, Scooby-Doo?* (US). Written by George Doty IV, directed by Russell Calabrese, prod. by Joseph Barbera and Sander Schwartz for Warner Bros. Animation; aired on Kids’ WB! on March 27, 2004.
Genre & length. 28th episode of an animated television series for children; 3 seasons, 42 episodes, 21 min. per episode.
Classical content & comments. The origin of the expression: Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act 1, sc. 2: “But, for my part, it was Greek to me” (Servilius Casca to Cassius about what Caesar said when offered the diadem). Plut., *Caesar* 61 – speaks only of Caesar declining the diadem with a gesture. Spring break in Greece: the members of the gang are cursed at the airport and meet a Centaur, who attacks them; they enter a maze and cannot get out following their thread because someone has cut it. The 9th *Scooby-Doo* series of Hanna-Barbera Saturday morning. Warner Home Video released single-season DVDs first, then complete sets starting in 2003.
References. Mik, 2019d.
91. *Spartacus* (US). Directed by Robert Dornhelm, written by Robert Schenkkan, prod. by Ted Kurdyla for Kurdyla Entmt, Fuel Entmt, Vesuvius Productions, and USA Cable Entmt; aired on USA Network on April 18–19, 2004.
Genre & length. Television miniseries in 2 parts, an adaptation of a historical novel; 174 min.
Classical content & comments. Roman fictionalized history: 71 BCE slave revolt. *Spartacus* is a 1951 novel self-published during Joseph McCarthy’s era by Howard Fast, a member of the Communist Party at the time. Disillusioned with communism, he strongly criticized its excesses in 1957. DVD prod. by Universal Pictures Home Entmt, August 22, 2010.
92. “The Roman Invasions.” S01E05. *Historyonics* (UK). Directed by Simon Everson, written and presented by Knick Knowles, prod. by Annie Heather; aired on BBC One on May 2, 2004.
Genre & length. 5th episode of a television series, docudrama; 1 season of 6 episodes, 30 min. each.
Classical content & comments. In 55 BCE, Caesar invaded with 2 legions; in 54 BCE, he brought 5 legions and crossed the River Thames. He demanded a tribute as a condition of his withdrawal. In 43 CE, Emperor Claudius ordered 3 legions to land in 3 different places on the British coast. Near the River Medway, the legions fought victorious battles with the tribes. Complete Roman control over the province Britannia was established during the next 100 years. It is the only episode in the series dealing with antiquity.

93. *Troy* (US). Scripted by David Benioff, directed by Wolfgang Petersen and co-prod. with Diana Rathbun and Colin Wilson for Warner Bros., Helena Productions, Latina Pictures, Radiant Productions, Plan B Entmt, and Nimar Studios; released on May 13, 2004.
Genre & length. Feature film, a retelling of an epic; 163 min.
Classical content & comments. Adaptation of Homer's *Iliad* combined with *Posthomerica* by Quintus of Smyrna. Various modifications of the sources: Agamemnon, Menelaus, and Ajax die at Troy; Helen and Paris manage to escape; the characters of Hecuba and Cassandra are eliminated from the plot. The main figure is Achilles, who pursues his glory regardless of the cost. After the death of his friend Patroclus – there is no hint of anything more between them than friendship – he hides with other companions in the Trojan Horse. During the sack of Troy, Paris shoots him in the heel, and he dies. Briseis is Hector's cousin, and she kills Agamemnon with a dagger. DVD was released in 2005 by Warner Home Video. A director's cut was released in 2007.
References. G.A. Smith 2004, entry 312; Wieber, 2005, 137–162; Winkler, 2007c, 2009a, 223–233, 2015; Aziza, 2008, 197–199; J. Richards, 2008, 178–179; Blanshard and Shahabudin, (2011) 2013, 235; Krass, 2013, 153–173; Proch and Kleu, 2013, 175–193; Dumont, 2013, 190–192; Martín-Rodríguez, 2015, 203–223; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 39–64; Davies, 2019, 37–52; Curley, 2022b, 17–32; McGeough, 2022, 288–291.
94. *Imperium: Nero* (IT, UK, ES). Directed by Paul Marcus, written by Paul Billing and Francesco Contaldo, prod. by EOS Entmt and Lux Vide for RAI and Telecinco; released on May 23, 2004.
Genre & length. 2nd part of a cycle of 5 television films; 197 min.
Classical content & comments. Fictionalized Roman history. The life of Nero, from the murder of his father by Caligula to his suicide. Many historical inaccuracies, e.g., related to the death of Caligula, Nero's relations with Acte, Poppaea's death, and repeated attempts on his mother's life. 2nd film in the 2003–2010 Italian-British-Spanish cycle *Imperium*. It was criticized for being much too long and sanitized. The DVD was released in November 2005.
References. Winkler, 2017, 299–312.
95. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (UK, US). Directed by Alfonso Cuarón, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Heyman and Chris Columbus for Warner Bros. Pictures, Heyday Films, and 1492 Pictures; released on May 23, 2004.
Genre & length. 3rd film in a cycle, an adaptation of a novel in a cycle, fantasy, witch show, school story, hidden world; 142 min.
Comment. Based on J.K. Rowling's 1999 *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* novel.
References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.
96. *Rubicon: Samuel Johnson Prize* (UK). Directed by Alison Grist, written by Tom Holland, prod. by David Okuefuna and Mark Bell for the BBC; aired on June 9, 2004.
Genre & length. A short historical documentary, Roman history; 12 min.
Classical content & comments. Caesar crossed the river Rubicon with his army, breaking Roman law and launching a civil war that ended the Roman Republic. In 2003, T. Holland wrote a non-fictional book, *Rubicon: The Triumph and Tragedy of the Roman Republic*, which received the Hessel-Tiltman Prize in 2004.
97. *King Arthur* (UK, US, IE). Directed by Antoine Fuqua, written by David Franzoni, prod. by Jerry Bruckheimer for Touchstone Pictures, Jerry Bruckheimer Films, World 2000 Entmt, and Green Hills Productions; released on July 7, 2004.
Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized Roman Britain; 126 min.
Classical content & comments. Artorius Castus, King of Britain. It differs from the Arthurian legend and allegedly relies on archaeological findings. Arthur is a Roman officer, and Guinevere



Chapter 2

is a Celtic warrior; the Knights of the Round Table are Sarmatians, whose battle cry is, inexplicably, RUS! They were taken as children from their homes as a sort of tribute to Rome for a service of 15 years. Merlin is a Celtic chieftain who wants Arthur as an ally against Rome. The Roman legions withdrew from Britain in 467 instead of 410; St Germanus of Auxerre died already in 448; Pelagius was not a bishop but a monk and could not have been executed in Rome because, in 467, he was already long dead.

References. J. Richards, 2008, 183–184; Davies, 2019, 113–128, 145–158.

98. *Les champions d'Olympie / Die Helden von Olympia* (FR). Directed and written by Philippe Molins, prod. by Antigone Gavriatopoulou and Xenofon Koutsaftis for Arte-Gédéon Programmes-Ville d'Olympie-TSR-TVE-ERT-Sky; aired on TSR on July 12, 2004, on Arte on July 26–30, 2004, and August 2–5, 2004.

Genre & length. Television series, docudrama; 9 episodes, 26 min. each + an additional 100 min.; see below, *Olympie – vaincre pour Zeus / Olympia – Wettkampf für die Götter*.

Classical content & comments. A docudramatic series describing the ancient Olympics consisting of 9 episodes: 1. “The Selection of Athletes,” 2. “First Steps in Antiquity,” 3. “The Life of an Athlete,” 4. “The Secret of the Javelin,” 5. “Olivier’s Marathon,” 6. “Three Falls to Win,” 7. “Ancient Brothers,” 8. “The Pentathlon,” 9. “The Night before the Games.” It was created with the participation of modern athletes and ancient historians and archaeologists before the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

99. **2004–2009, *Stargate Atlantis*** (CA, US). Created and prod. by Brad Wright and Robert C. Cooper for Acme Shark Production and MGM Worldwide Television; aired on Syfy from July 16, 2004, to January 9, 2009.

Genre & length. Television series, military SF, action/adventure; 5 seasons, 100 episodes, 43 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Rationalization of myths, SF interpretation of history. Continuation of the SG-1 universe. The city of Atlantis flourished many thousands of years ago on planet Lantea in the Pegasus galaxy. However, its inhabitants – the race of Ancients known from *Stargate SG-1* – were unable to defeat their enemies and had to submerge the city in the ocean and abandon Lantea. Starships: *Daedalus*, *Odyssey*, *Apollo*, *Phoenix*. A spin-off of *Stargate SG-1*, a prequel to *Stargate Universum*.

100. *First Olympians: A Horizon Special* (UK). Prod. by Cameron Balbirnie for the BBC and Discovery Channel; aired on BBC Two on July 23, 2004.

Genre & length. A television documentary; 51 min.

Classical content & comments. The bone structure of a skeleton discovered in Italy may have belonged to an ancient athlete. Scientists comment on the ancient Olympics and modern athletes (Loughborough University) test equipment used by athletes competing in the ancient pentathlon. A special episode of *Horizon*, season 41.

101. *The Ancient Greek Olympics: 1. Death or Glory. 2. Playing to Win* (UK). Directed by Anthony Thomas, prod. by Carlton Int'l, TWI, PBS, and CPB; aired on Channel Four on July 24–31, 2004.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, docudrama; 2 episodes, 60 min. each.

Comment. Docudrama with anonymous actors.

102. *Olympie – vaincre pour Zeus / Olympia – Wettkampf für die Götter* (FR). Directed by Philippe Molins, prod. by Antigone Gavriatopoulou and Xenofon Koutsaftis for Arte-Gédéon Programmes-Ville d'Olympie-TSR-TVE-ERT-Sky; aired on Arte on August 8, 2004.

Genre & length. An additional episode of a television series, see above, *Les champions d'Olympie / Die Helden von Olympia*; 100 min.



Classical content & comments. The athletes compete in various ancient sport disciplines. They complete their training and arrive in Olympia to participate in the Games at the Olympic stadium, fully reconstructed in Morocco.

103. **“Jason and the Argonauts.”** E01. *Greek Gods and Goddesses* (UK). Directed and prod. by Jean Claude Bragard for BBC Worldwide, BBC Manchester, and TLC; aired on BBC One on August 8, 2004.

Genre & length. Television film, the first part of a documentary miniseries; 54 min.

Classical content & comments. An Olympic athlete (triple jump), Jonathan Edwards, follows Jason and the Argonauts on their journey to find the Golden Fleece. The reality is shown as underlying the myth.

104. *Gory Greek Gods* (UK). Directed, written, and prod. by Arif Nurmohamed, exec. prod. by Ruth Pitt for the BBC; aired on BBC Three on August 12, 2004.

Genre & length. Television miniseries in 2 episodes, a documentary combined with rotoscope animation; 60 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. The episodes are entitled “Divine Sex” and “Divine Violence.” The rotoscope animation creates a comic-book impression suitable for presenting the Greek gods as a sort of gangster family.

References. Maurice, 2019b, 25, 47–49.

105. **“The Odyssey.”** E02. *Greek Gods and Goddesses* (UK). Directed by Jean Claude Bragard, prod. by Ruth Pitt for BBC Worldwide, BBC Manchester, and TLC; aired on BBC One on August 15, 2004.

Genre & length. Television film, 2nd part of a documentary miniseries; 54 min.

Classical content & comments. The Olympic athlete Jonathan Edwards follows Odysseus fighting with his warriors in the Trojan War and during his return voyage from the war to Ithaca.

106. **“Lilli und Atlantis.”** S01E04. *Hexe Lilli* (DE). Written by Armin Prediger, prod. by Michael Coldewey and Tilo Seiffert for Magma Films, Trixter Productions, and Vivatoon; aired on September 9, 2004.

Genre & length. 4th episode of an animated fantasy television series with mythological elements; 23 min.

Classical content & comments. A magic book has taught Lilli how to time-travel not only to historical places but also to mythological ones. With her little dragon, Hector, she embarked on visits to many exciting destinations, some of them ancient. In this episode, she travels to the lost city of Atlantis.

References. M. Lindner, 2017, 527–528.

107. **2004–2009, *Battlestar Galactica*** (US). Developed and written by Ronald D. More, co-written by Toni Graphia, Bradley Thomson, et al., directed by Michael Rymer, Marita Grabiak, Allan Kroeker, et al., prod. by R.D. More and David Eick for David Eick Productions, R&D TV, NBC Universal Television Studio (2004–2007), Universal Media Studios (2008–2009), and Universal Cable Productions (2009); aired on Sky 1 and Sci-Fi Channel, from October 18, 2004, to March 20, 2009.

Genre & length. Television series, military SF; 4 seasons, 76 episodes, 44 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A re-imagined version of Glen A. Larson’s 1978–1979 series. The 65th Annual Peabody Award “for pushing the limits of science fiction and making it accessible to all” (Peabody Awards, 2005).

References. Liedl, 2010, 189–208; Pache, 2010, 132–136; Wetmore, 2012; Garvey, 2014, 215–228; L’Allier, 2014, 285–297; Bataille, 2014, 465–482; Tomasso, 2015a, 243–259; Ahl and Fau, (2011) 2016, 134–135; Safran, 2022a, 201–216. Meredith E. Safran’s monograph on *Battlestar Galactica* is announced in Edinburgh University Press’ series “Screening Antiquity” for 2025.



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108. **“Lilli und Herkules.”** S01E08. *Hexe Lilli* (DE). Written by Mar Hodkinson, prod. by Michael Coldewey, Tilo Seiffert, and Gilles Waterkeyn for Magma Films, Trixter Productions, and Viva-toon; aired on October 25, 2004.
Genre & length. 8th episode of an animated fantasy television series with some mythological elements; 23 min.
Classical content & comments. Lilli meets young Hercules at his school, where another student, a Minotaur, bullies him. Lilli defends Hercules against the bully. See also the entry on episode 4, “Lilli und Atlantis.”
References. M. Lindner, 2017, 521.
109. **“Julius Caesar’s Greatest Battle.”** S23E11. *Timewatch* (UK). Directed by Melanie Archer and William Lyons, prod. by the BBC; aired on BBC Two on November 5, 2004.
Genre & length. An episode of a documentary television series (launched in 1982), docudrama; 50 min.
Classical content & comments. The siege of Alesia. In the longstanding BBC series *Timewatch*, 2 episodes deal with great Roman leaders. There are also installments on Roman archaeological finds from the Hadrian Wall and Atlantis (2010).
110. **“Minutes.”** S06E05. *French & Saunders* (UK). Created and written by Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders, directed by Ed Bye, prod. by the BBC; aired on BBC One on November 12, 2004.
Genre & length. An episode of a television comedy sketch series; 30 min.
Classical content & comments. A spoof of the 2004 *Troy* in a comedy series created by a popular comedy duo. Thetis promises fame to Achilles, whom she calls Spartacus, Alexander, and then Troy.
References. Paul, 2013a, 297.
111. *Et tu* (US). Directed and written by Christopher Lyon, prod. by Bruce Hennigan for Perennial Media; released on November 12, 2004.
Genre & length. A short, Roman history; 15 min.
Classical content & comments. Ceasar’s murder. C. Lyon plays Brutus. Produced in Shreveport, Louisiana. Perennial Media was founded by C. Lyon and Luke Lee (cinematographer), and this was the first film they produced.
112. *The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie* (US). Directed, co-written, and co-prod. by Stephen Hillenburg, co-written by Paul Tibbitt, Aaron Springer, et al., co-prod. by Julia Pistor for Nickelodeon and United Plankton Pictures; released on November 14, 2004.
Genre & length. Live-action/animated feature film, fantasy comedy; 87 min.
Classical content & comments. It was initially planned as the finale for the animated series *The SpongeBob SquarePants* created by S. Hillenburg for Nickelodeon. Instead, it became the 1st part of a 3-part cycle; the animated series still continues and was, as of 2024, one of the longest-running American animated series. A mythical hero’s quest to prevent a hostile takeover of the world and recover King Neptune’s stolen crown ends with success, as a mermaid helps the hero win a battle with a Cyclops.
References. See Edith Hall ([2008] 2012, 80), who comments on the *Odyssey*’s influence on Hollywood writers in relation to the 2003 *Big Fish* film.
113. *Alexander* (US, DE, FR, UK, NL). Directed and co-written by Oliver Stone, co-written by Christopher Kyle and Laeta Kalogridis, prod. by Moritz Borman, et al. for Warner Bros., Intermedia Films, Pacifica Film, Egmond Film & Television, France 3 Cinéma, IMF Internationale Medien und Film 3. Produktions KG, Pathé Renn Productions, and WR Universal Group; released on November 16, 2004.
Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized biopic; 175 min.



Classical content & comments. Greek fictionalized history: Alexander the Great's biopic, private life and military conquests. Narrated by Ptolemy I Soter, Alexander's companion, general, and founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The film was harshly criticized, especially in America, for making Alexander's alleged love affair with Hephaestion, compared to the Achilles–Patroclus relationship, the central plot of the biopic. Partly based on the 1973 Robin Lane Fox novel *Alexander the Great*. 2004 Golden Schmoes Award for the Most Disappointing Film of the Year; 2 Stinkers Bad Movie Awards (for most intrusive musical score and worst fake accent); Camerimage Silver Frog award; 2006 Yoga Award for the Worst Foreign Director. 3 later DVD versions: 2005, director's cut; 2007, *Alexander Revisited: The Final Unrated Cut*; 2014, *Alexander: The Ultimate Cut*, which sold over 4 mln copies.

References. R. Lindner, 2005, 50–66; Nisbet, (2006) 2008, 125–135; Wieber, 2008, 147–162; Petrovic, 2008, 163–183; Chaniotis, 2008, 185–201; J. Richards, 2008, 179–183; Cartledge and Greenland, 2010; Pomeroy, 2011, 155–160; Blanshard and Shahabudin, (2011) 2013, 235; Curley, 2018, 177–181; Tomasso, 2018, 211–214; Davies, 2019, 53–74; Stoneman, 2022b, 27; McGeough, 2022, 283–288.

114. **“Prometheus Unbound.”** S08E12. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by Andy Mikita, written by Damian Kindler, prod. by Jonathan Glassner, Brad Wright, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on December 21, 2004.

Genre & length. 166th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.

Classical content & comment. The title of Aeschylus' play also corresponds to the situation the starship *Prometheus* and its crew found themselves in.

115. *Gladiator* (UK) Directed by Brian Grant, written by Nick Whitby, prod. by Graham Broadbent, Bruce Davey, and Damian Jones for Mission Pictures and Stock Productions; released to video by Icon Entmt Int'l in 2004.

Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized history of Roman Britain, comedy; 85 min.

Classical content & comments. 55 BCE, Caesar's first unsuccessful attempt to conquer Britain. Roman legions were stopped by 3 Celtic warrior sisters, Smirgut, Dwyfuc, and Worthaboutapig. Romans speak English with an exaggerated Italian accent. Filmed late in 2002 in the UK, partly in Hampshire, using costumes and weapons from Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*. A more vulgar British equivalent of *Asterix*, a spoof of the *Gladiator*. The writer and the 3 main actresses hail from the BBC One sketch show *Smack the Pony*, which ended in 2003.

116. *Alexander the Great: The Man behind the Legend* (UK). Series: *Beyond the Movie*. Directed, written and prod. by Helen Fitzwilliam for National Geographic Television and Film Production; aired in 2004.

Genre & length. Television docudrama, fictionalized Greek history; 52 min.

Classical content & comments. A documentary based on academic insight and re-enactment of historical events focusing on the figure of Alexander the Great.

References. Dumont, 2013, 246–247.

117. *Αλέξανδρος ο Μέγας. Μύθος και πραγματικότητα [Alexander the Great: Myth and Reality]* (GR). Directed by Zinon Ramos, prod. by Nikos Ramos for RD Artworks; aired in 2004.

Genre & length. Television documentary series, Greek history; 6 episodes, 30 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Episodes: 1. “The Kingdom of Macedon,” 2. “Education of Alexander,” 3. “The Conquest of Asia Minor,” 4. “Pharaoh of Egypt,” 5. “The Conquest of Persia,” 6. “The Master of Asia.” A presentation of Alexander based on solid research, with the participation of the archaeologist Maria Akamati.

References. Dumont, 2013, 246.



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118. *Ecuba* (IT). Directed by Giuliana Berlinguer and Irene Papas, original trans. of Euripides' play by Salvatore Quasimodo, prod. by Mauro Berardi for Luna Rossa Cinematografica in collab. with La Fondazione "La Scuola di Roma"; released in 2004.
Genre & length. Feature film, a staging of an ancient play; 84 min.
Classical content & comments. After the fall of Troy, when Agamemnon prepares to sail for Greece, Hecuba, his captive, suffers further tragedies: her daughter Polyxena is sacrificed to the shades of Achilles, and the news comes that her son, allegedly safe with the King of Thrace, is dead. She takes revenge by blinding the King and killing his 2 children. Agamemnon agrees with Hecuba that the punishment is just and is cursed by the blinded Thracian. Euripides' *Hecuba* was filmed during 5 performances of the play at the Università di Tor Vergata in Rome. Presented at the Festival of Taormina in 2005.
119. *The Trojan Women* (US). Directed and staged at the LA Whitefire Theater by Brad Mays for Ark Theater Company and prod. by Ark Filmpro; released in 2004.
Genre & length. A documentary film about a live theatre performance; 88 min.
Classical content & comments. After reconfiguring the opening dialectical prologue with Athena and Poseidon into a televised CNN report on the "War in Troy" to be shown on the theatre's dual video monitors, the director worked with a brave and resourceful cast to create a modern variant of *Trojan Women* reset in contemporary Iraq. Euripides' tragedy was filmed at the WhiteFire Theater in Los Angeles in April 2003.

2005

120. *Λουκουμάδες με μέλι [Doughnuts with Honey]* (GR). Written and directed by Olga Malea, co-written by Apostolos Alexopoulos and Cristina Kallas, prod. by Kostas Lambropoulos and Tasos Papandreou for Papandreou A.E., Greek Film Center, Mega Channel, etc.; released on January 7, 2005.
Genre & length. Feature film, an "Aristophanic" comedy; 86 min.
Classical content & comments. A comedy that successfully deals with serious problems, such as death, child molestation, abuse of power, and destructive obsession with body image.
References. Slapšak, 2013, 263–269.
121. *Elektra* (US). Directed by Rob Bowman, written and co-prod. by Mark Steven Johnson, Frank Miller, and Zak Penn, co-prod. by Stan Lee, Brent O'Connor, et al. for 20th Century Fox, New Regency Productions, etc.; released on January 8, 2005.
Genre & length. Feature film, fantasy, martial arts; 97 min.
Classical content & comments. On Elektra's necklace, the name in Greek characters is misspelled: ELEXTPA. Elektra Natchios, a Marvel Comics character, is killed and resurrected by a blind martial-arts master – no other allusions to antiquity. A sequel to the 2003 *Daredevil* written and co-prod. by M.S. Johnson.
References. Bakogianni, 2017, 468–469, 481–482.
122. *Medea* (NL). Directed by Theo van Gogh, written by Theodore Holman and Gijs van den Westelaken, prod. by G. van den Westelaken and Mardou Jacobs for Column Film and AVRO TV (Algemene Vereniging Radio Omroep); aired from January 8 to February 12, 2005.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, paraphrase of a myth; 6 episodes, 50 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A paraphrase of Euripides' *Medea* set in contemporary Dutch politics. Medea, the daughter of the Speaker of the Dutch Senate, falls in love with a businessman, Jason, and helps him to further his political ambitions; when he betrays her, she exacts



revenge. Special jury prize at the 2005 Nederlands Film Festival; Best Fiction at the 2006 Cologne Conference, both for the series and for T. van Gogh, who was murdered by an Islamist fanatic on November 2, 2004, shortly before the release of the series.

123. “**Daedalus.**” S04E10. *Star Trek: Enterprise* (US). Directed by David Straiton, written by Alan Brennert and Ken LaZebnik, prod. by Rick Berman, Brannon Braga, et al. for Paramount Television Network and Paramount Television; aired on UPN on January 14, 2005.

Genre & length. 86th episode of a television series, military SF action/adventure; 42 min.

Classical content & comments. *Daedalus* is a direct reference to the myth: an inventor of transporter technology ordered his son to test the invention. The transporter malfunctioned, causing the son to fail to materialize at his destination. For the following 10 years, the father tried to find him. When he finally did, it was to watch his son die.

124. *The True Story of Alexander the Great* (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Jim Lindsay, co-prod. by Craig Haffner, Donna E. Lusitana, et al. for Lindsay Productions and the History Channel; aired on the History Channel on January 25, 2005.

Genre & length. Video, docudrama, Greek history, a biopic; 150 min.

Classical content & comments. A re-enactment of historical events involving Alexander the Great, focusing on a relatively objective treatment of his personality and achievements.

References. Dumont, 2013, 246.

125. “**Murder in Rome**” / *L'affaire Sextus, 81 avant J.C.* S24E02. *Timewatch* (UK). Directed and co-prod. by David Stewart, written by Colin Swash, co-prod. by John Farren for BBC One and Discovery Channel, in assoc. with France 3; aired on BBC Two on March 4, 2005.

Genre & length. An episode in a long-standing television series (launched in 1982); 50 min.

Classical content & comments. Cicero's early career. The 3-day trial procedure of 81 BCE was reconstructed based on the speech *Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino*, whom Cicero defended on the charge of murdering his father. The accusation had the support of Chrysogonus, the influential freedman of Sulla, which presented a risk for the defender. In his speech, Cicero emphasized the accused's lack of hesitation and fear. The film, on the other hand, shows him hesitant and scared. Another inaccuracy concerns the role of Caecilia Metella (called Metellus!), which, in the movie, is much more important than what we know from the speech. Tom Holland was a historical consultant for the episode; see S23E11 aired in 2004.

126. “**Little Box of Horrors.**” S07E18. *Charmed* (US). Created by Constance M. Burge, directed by Jon Paré, written by Cameron Litvack, prod. by Aaron Spelling and E. Duke Vincent for Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Company, Viacom Productions, and WB Television Network; aired on April 24, 2005.

Genre & length. 152nd episode of a television series, witch show, a hidden world; 8 seasons, 178 episodes, 40–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A demon who wants to use a magical box as a weapon pretends to be its guardian and asks the witches to help her find it. The box appears in the room of a student named Hope, who opens it and, when a dark mist is released, closes it again. Piper, with the disguised demon, Katya, visits Hope, to whom the demon explains what the box is and promptly steals it. Hope is, in fact, the true guardian of the box, Pandora, who was previously able to control her powers and put the ills back into the box. The witches save her from Katya and convince her that her destiny is to guard the box and the world from the bad things kept inside. The heroine is transformed from a silly woman too curious for her own good into a purposeful and responsible person enjoying the help of like-minded friends – a pastiche of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

127. **“Demons.”** S04E20. *Star Trek: Enterprise* (US). Directed by LeVar Burton, written by Manny Coto, prod. by Rick Berman, Brannon Braga, et al. for Paramount Television Network and Paramount Television; aired on UPN on May 6, 2005.
Genre & length. 96th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.
Classical content & comments. The episode features a fanatic leader of a race-purity movement and his secret headquarters, which hint at similarity with the Underworld. They operate an Orpheus Mining Facility there. No other allusions to antiquity.
128. *Hercules* (US). Directed by Roger Young, written by Charles Edward Pogue, prod. by Robert Halmi, Sr., and Robert Halmi, Jr., for Hallmark Entmt, MAT Movies and Television Productions, Project IV KG/Coote-Hayes Productions; aired on NBC on May 16, 2005.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, mythological fantasy/adventure; 2 episodes, 60 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A considerably altered version of Hercules’ myth. It is presented as a struggle between the worship of Zeus and Hera. Alcmene, seduced by Zeus during the absence of her husband, Amphitryon, gives birth to Hercules. 3 characters have a negative attitude towards Hercules: his mother rejects him, his brother Iphicles is envious, and Hera hates him. His only protector is Amphitryon. Nominated for the 2005 Outstanding Sound Editing Emmy Award; won 2006 OFTA Best Visual Effects. The subtitle on the September 6, 2005, DVD: *Half God. Half Man. All Power.*
References. Safran, 2015, 133–145; Alvares and Salzman-Mitchell, 2020, 545–566.
129. **“Alexander the Great.”** S01E01. *Battleground: The Art of War* (US). Directed by Isaac Florentine, prod. by Brett Forbes, Gary Tarpinian, Tim Evans, et al. for Morningstar Entmt and Pixel Monger; aired on Discovery Channel on May 28, 2005.
Genre & length. 1st episode of a television docudrama series, Greek history; 47 min.
Classical content & comments. A reconstruction of the battle of Gaugamela, Alexander’s strategy and tactics.
References. Morison, 2006; Dumont, 2013, 246.
130. *Dido and Aeneas* (DE). Directed by Peter Schönhofer, choreographed by Sasha Waltz. A recording of a performance at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin; aired on Arte on June 25, 2005.
Genre & length. Recording of an opera; 105 min.
Classical content & comments. British Baroque composer Henry Purcell’s (1659–1695) opera *Dido and Aeneas* (1688), with a libretto by Nahum Tate (1652–1715). DVD publ. in Leipzig by Arthous Musik, in 2005.
References. Dumont, 2013, 262.
131. *Empire* (US). Written by Tom Wheeler, Sara B. Cooper, Chip Johannessen, and William Wheeler, directed by John Gray and Kim Manners, prod. by Carrie Henderson, Nick Gillott, et al. for Storyline Entmt, Touchstone Television, and ABC; aired from June 28 to July 26, 2005.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, fictionalized Roman history; 6 episodes, 60 min. each.
Classical content & comments. The same timeline as *Rome*, 2nd series, starting in 44 BCE, just before Caesar’s assassination, and continuing until Octavian takes over power in Rome. Portrayals of Octavian, Cicero, Mark Antony, and others are visibly inaccurate. Cleopatra is absent. Historical events are also shown without any regard for sources. A fictional Vestal, Camene, and just as fictional Caesar’s bodyguard, gladiator Tyrannus, are important characters. Lots of violence and gore. Criticized as imitative of the 2000 *Gladiator*. Won the 2006 Visual Effects Society Award for Outstanding Compositing in a Broadcast Program, Commercial, or Music Video.
132. *Olympus Guardian: Gigantes Counterattack* (KR). Directed by Kim Joon, written by Jun Hye-young, prod. for G. & G. Entmt; released on July 28, 2005.

Genre & length. Animated film, mythological fantasy; 87 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on the 2002–2003 South Korean animated television series *Olympus Guardian*, which is based on 20 volumes of *Greek and Roman Myths in Comics* by Jun Hye-young. See the entry on the television series under the year of broadcast.

References. Mik, 2021a.

133. “**Ex deus machina.**” S09E07. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by Martin Wood, written by Joseph Mallozzi and Paul Mullie, prod. by Jonathan Glassner, Brad Wright, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc., aired on Sci Fi on August 26, 2005.

Genre & length. 181st episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.

Classical content & comments. The title is a paraphrase of the Latin expression *deus ex machina*, which Euripides introduced to the ancient theatre to expedite action through divine intervention; later, it came to mean an unexpected and out-of-the-blue turn of events.

134. **2005–2007, Rome** (IT, UK, US). Created by John Milius, William J. MacDonald, and Bruno Heller; directed by Michael Apted, Allan Coulter, Alan Poul, et al., prod. by B. Heller, J. Milius, W.J. MacDonald, John Melfi, and Ann Thomopoulos for HD Vision Studios, the BBC, and HBO; aired on HBO, BBC Two, and RAI 2 between August 28, 2005, and March 25, 2007.

Genre & length. Television series, Roman historical drama with some fictional characters; 2 seasons, 22 episodes, 44–65 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Fictionalized Roman history: the action of season 1 takes place between 52 and 44 BCE, and season 2 covers the years 44 to 30 BCE. Exorbitant production costs caused a shortening of the series from the planned 5 seasons to 2.

References. J. Richards, 2008, 187–190; Cyrino, 2008a, 130–140, 2008b, 1–10, 2015a, 1–10, 2017, 293–299; Solomon, 2008b, 11–28; Tatum, 2008, 29–41; Milnor, 2008, 42–48; Haynes, 2008, 49–60; Brice, 2008, 61–77, 2015, 25–35; Cooke, 2008, 78–86; Weiden Boyd, 2008, 87–99, 2015, 74–87; Futrell, 2008, 100–116; Augoustakis, 2008, 117–129, 2015, 117–127; Daugherty, 2008, 141–152, 2015, 182–192; Toscano, 2008, 153–167, 2013, 123–135, 2015, 48–60; Seo, 2008, 168–178; Allen, 2008, 179–192; Briggs, 2008, 193–206; Raucchi, 2008, 207–218, 2015, 105–116; Strong, 2008, 219–231; Lockett, 2010, 102–112; Chiu, 2015, 13–24; Pomeroy, 2015, 36–47; Almagor, 2015, 61–73; Maurice, 2015a, 88–102; A. McCullough, 2015, 128–140; Day, 2015, 141–154; Harrisson, 2015, 155–168; Kelly, 2015, 169–181; Johnston, 2015, 193–205; McAuley, 2015, 206–218; Potter, 2015, 219–230; Cufurovich, 2018, 1–15; Magerstädt, 2019, 221–248.

135. **2005–2006, Engineering an Empire** (US). Directed by Marc Cannon et al., written by Ted Poole et al., prod. by Randy Martin for KPI Productions, Kraylevich Productions Inc., and Mechanism Digital; aired on the History Channel, from September 13, 2005, to December 25, 2006.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, historical docudrama; 14 episodes, 52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Historical docudrama about the world’s empires. 6 episodes out of 14 are about empires flourishing during Classical Antiquity: “Rome” aired September 13, 2005; “Greece” aired October 16, 2006; “Greece: Age of Alexander” aired October 23, 2006; “Carthage” aired November 6, 2006; “The Persians” aired December 4, 2006; “The Byzantines” aired December 25, 2006.

136. **Orpheus** (US). Written and directed by Joel Rose (he also plays the title role), assisted by Gregory Gray (camera), prod. by Jo Harden, Corey Mesler, et al. for Matrix Production Services; released on October 23, 2005.

Genre & length. A short with significant music; 31 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern version: Orpheus is a rock star and flirts with Persephone. Eurydice dies in order to join Hades. Orpheus is shocked to remember that he loves her.

He descends to the Underworld, looking for her. It was shown at the Indie Memphis Film Festival on October 23, 2005.

- 137. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*** (UK, US). Directed by Mike Newell, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Heyman for Warner Bros. Pictures and Heyday Films; released on November 6, 2005.
Genre & length. 4th feature film in a cycle, fantasy, witch show, school story, coming of age; 157 min.
Comment. Adaptation of J.K. Rowling's 2000 *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* novel.
References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.
- 138. 2005–2008, *Class of the Titans*** (CA). Directed by Brad Goodchild, created and developed by Chris Bartleman and Michael Lahay, prod. by C. Bartleman, Blair Peters, and Scott Dyer for Studio B. Productions and Nelvana Ltd; aired on Teletoon from December 31, 2005, to June 22, 2008.
Genre & length. Animated television series, urban fantasy, action/adventure; 2 seasons, 52 episodes, 22 min. each.
Classical content & comments. All Greek gods, heroes, and the standard monsters, including Medusa and her sisters + Kraken. Cronus escapes Tartarus, and 7 teenage descendants of Greek heroes vanquish him, as prophesied. Season 1 was released on DVD in 2008. Available on Amazon Prime since 2016 and Retro Rerun (YouTube) since 2019.
- 139. *Hannibal: Enemy of Rome*** (UK). Atlantic Productions; released in 2005.
Genre & length. Docudrama, biopic, Roman history; 90 min.
Classical content & comments. 218 BCE. Hannibal took his army from Carthage to Rome, crossing the Alps with 38 elephants. The battle at Cannae was the tragedy of a commander betrayed by his troops. Rome is called the Roman Empire, even though it was still a republic.
- 140. *Herod: Behind the Myth*** (UK). Atlantic Productions; released in 2005.
Genre & length. Docudrama, biopic, Roman history; 60 min.
Classical content & comments. Based on the latest research and illustrated with impressive CGI, it presents the proverbial bad guy in a different light, as a techno visionary whose achievements are, e.g., the largest artificial harbour in the ancient world or the Temple of Jerusalem.
- 141. *Spartacus: Behind the Myth*** (UK). Atlantic Productions; released in 2005.
Genre & length. Docudrama, biopic, Roman history; 60 min.
Classical content & comments. 73 BCE. A successful revolt and a serious threat to Rome from a gladiator at the head of an army of rebellious slaves. Squashed by Crassus in a mercilessly brutal manner. An attempt to uncover the true events and reasons behind the layers of myth. Rome is prematurely called the Roman Empire in 73 BCE.
- 142. "Jason and the Golden Fleece."** S01E04. *In Search of Myths and Heroes* (UK). Directed by Sean Smith and Gregory Doran, written and presented by Michael Wood, prod. by Krishan Arora, Dalton Delan, Leo Eaton, et al. for the BBC and PBS; aired in 2005.
Genre & length. 4th episode of a television documentary miniseries; each episode is 55 min. long.
Classical content & comments. The last episode of the series previously presented the Queen of Sheba, the search for Shangri-La, and "Arthur: The Once and Future King." "Jason and the Golden Fleece" reviews the state of research on the myth and takes the viewers on a trip on the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea, looking at archaeological evidence. From there to Georgia, where M. Wood imagined to have found the origin of the myth in the sheepskin used in gold panning, as suggested by Strabo and taken up by Tim Severin, the author of another documentary and book about the Golden Fleece, in 1985. M. Wood published a companion volume, *In Search of Myths and Heroes* (2005).
References. Colavito, 2014, loc. 6149; Lovatt, 2021, vii, 134, 189.

143. *Spartacus* (IT). Directed by Orlando Corradi, written by Luciano Scaffa, prod. and distr. by Mondo TV; aired in 2005.
Genre & length. Animated television series, fictionalized history; 1 season, 13 episodes, 26 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Sanitized for young viewers, the series emphasizes the characters' sense of justice, honour, respect for others, and human dignity in conditions of debasement and injustice. The story of the uprising starts with Spartacus' condemnation to become a gladiator. It ends with his lieutenants, Gallus and Egizius, integrating the Roman society after the fall of the uprising.

2006

144. *The Women of Troy* (UK). Euripides' text adapted and co-prod. by Rob Faulkner and Wynn Moran, directed and co-prod. by Phil Hawkins for Philm Company; released on January 1, 2006.
Genre & length. Feature film released direct-to-video; 88 min.
Classical content & comments. Adaptation of Euripides' play produced as the 2004 staff film at the Catholic Xaverian College Manchester, played by A-level drama class students and directed by a recent alumnus. "Hawkins's version, *The Women of Troy*, is more interested in the psychology of the individual protagonists than women's struggle [contrary to Michael Cacoyannis's 1971 adaptation]" (Benady, 2006). Award for Best Direction at the New York Independent Film & Video Festival 2006. "Xaverian has covered the production budget by selling more than 100 copies of the film at £45 a piece to schools in the UK, US, Australia and Oman" (Benady, 2006).
145. *Astérix et les Vikings / Asterix og vikingerne / Asterix and the Vikings* (DK). Directed by Stefan Fjeldmark and Jesper Møller, written by S. Fjeldmark and Jean-Luc Gossens, prod. by Thomas Valentin for A Film A / S-M6 Films, Mandarin SAS, and 2D3D Animations; released on April 5, 2006.
Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, animated adventure, adaptation of a comic book, fictionalized history of Roman Gaul; 78 min.
Classical content & comments. The action takes place in Roman Gaul, in the Asterix-verse, but there are no other recognizable classical themes in the movie. Animation based on the comic book *Astérix et les Normands* (1966), minor elements come from other Asterix albums.
146. *Spartacus: Gladiator War* (US). Directed by Dan Oliver and Tom Pollock, prod. by Charlotte Wheaton for Atlantic Productions, TBC, and National Geographic Channel; aired on NGC on April 6, 2006.
Genre & length. Television film, docudrama, Roman history; 52 min.
Comment. Participation of historians, reconstruction of events, etc.
References. Dumont, 2013, 301.
147. *Hannibal: Rome's Worst Nightmare* (UK). Written by Matthew Falk and Mark Skeet, directed by Edward Bazalgette, prod. by Ailsa Orr for BBC One; aired on May 14, 2006.
Genre & length. Television film, docudrama, Roman history; 90 min.
Classical content. The Second Punic War and Hannibal's Italian campaign, including the crossing of the Alps with troops and war elephants.
148. *Pan's Labyrinth / El laberinto del fauno* (ES, MX). Directed, written, and prod. by Guillermo del Toro, co-prod. by Bertha Navarro, Alfonso Cuarón, et al. for Estudio Picasso, Tequila Gang, Esperanto Filmoj, and Sententia Entmt; released on May 20, 2006.
Genre & length. Feature film, dark fantasy, horror; 120 min.

- Classical content & comments.** Despite the translation of the title, the magical being in the film is not the Greek god Pan but the Roman Faunus. The mythological motifs of the Labyrinth, the Faun, and Persephone combine with a fairy-tale plot transferred to the 1944 Spanish Civil War – a significant box-office success. Among many prizes, it received 3 Academy Awards, 3 BAFTAs, 7 Goyas, and 7 Ariel Awards. The film was novelized in 2019 by G. del Toro and Cornelia Funke, under the title *Pan's Labyrinth: The Labyrinth of the Faun*, publ. by Katherine Tegen Books (New York).
- References.** Zipes, 2011, 355–359; Warner, 2016, 176; Cotta Vaz and Nunziata, 2016; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 187–219.
- 149. *The Minotaur: Curse the God, Slay the Beast*** (UK, LU, FR, DE, ES, IT, US). Directed and prod. by Jonathan English, written by Nick Green and Stephen McDool; released on DVD by Lions Gate on June 20, 2006.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, direct-to-video, mythological horror; 93 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Loosely based on the myth of the Minotaur. The action takes place in Crete during the reign of Deucalion.
- 150. *Medea 2*** (ES). Directed by Javier Aguirre, written by Jesús Luque Moreno, J. Aguirre, and Lucius Annaeus Seneca, prod. by J. Aguirre et al. for Actual Films; released in July 2006.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, adaptation of an ancient play; 86 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Medea's revenge on the faithless Jason as told by Seneca. Abandoned by her husband and exiled by Creon, Medea kills her sons, ruins the city of Corinth, and kills both Creon and his daughter, Creusa. An adaptation of Seneca's *Medea*.
- References.** Llagüerri and Sebastià, 2013, 491–521.
- 151. "Flesh & Blood."** S10E01. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by William Waring, written by Brad Wright, Jonathan Glassner, and Robert C. Cooper, prod by J. Glassner, B. Wright, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on Sci Fi on July 14, 2006.
- Genre & length.** 195th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.
- Classical content & comments.** An unattributed and slightly mangled quotation from Ovid, *Met.* 1.85–86 (see Olechowska, 2016, 408–409); *ex uno disce omnes*; Verg., *Aen.* 2.65–66: *Accipe nunc Danaum insidias, et crimine ab uno disce omnes*. The faithful Tomin, the husband of Vala Mal Doran, the unwilling mother of Adria the Orici, says: *From one, all will learn*.
- 152. "Morpheus."** S10E02. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by Andy Mikita, written by Brad Wright, Jonathan Glassner, and Joseph Mallozzi, prod. by J. Glassner, B. Wright, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on Sci Fi on July 21, 2006.
- Genre & length.** 196th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 44 min. per episode.
- Classical content & comments.** The title alludes to Teal'c remaining in a trance-like dream. Erebus is the name of a planet under Ba'al's control, where minerals required to construct a Goa'uld mothership are being mined.
- 153. "The Pegasus Project."** S10E03. *Stargate SG-1* (CA, US). Directed by William Waring, written by Brad Wright, prod. by Jonathan Glassner, B. Wright, et al. for Stargate SG-1 Productions (II) Inc. etc.; aired on Sci Fi on July 28, 2006.
- Genre & length.** 197th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Pegasus galaxy, the alleged location of Atlantis, could only be Pegasus Dwarf Irregular Galaxy – not to be confused with Pegasus Constellation, one of the patterns of stars on the sky visible from Earth and catalogued by Ptolemy (100–170 CE).
- 154. *Operation Lysistrata*** (US). Directed and prod. by Michael Patrick Kelly, co-prod. by Suzanne Hayes for Aquapio Films; released on September 7, 2006.

Genre & length. Documentary film; 85 min.

Classical content & comments. Operation Lysistrata was an international peace initiative of global readings of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* led by Kathryn Blume and Sharron Bower in March 2003, in New York City and 59 countries against the war on Iraq. M.P. Kelly's film documents this initiative.

References. Winkler, 2017, 163.

155. **"Greece: Age of Alexander."** E02. **"The Persians."** E08. *Engineering an Empire* (US). Directed by Mark Cannon and Hassan Ildari, prod. by KPI Productions, Kraylevich Productions, and Mechanism Digital; aired on the History Channel on October 23 and December 12, 2006. See listing no. 15 for the whole series.

Genre & length. Television series, docudrama, Greek history; 2 episodes, each 52 min.

Classical content. 3 themes from ancient history.

References. Dumont, 2013, 659.

156. *Ancient Rome: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (UK). Co-directed and co-written by Nick Murphy, co-directed by Nick Green, Christopher Spencer, et al., co-written by James Wood, Andrew Grieve, et al., prod. by Matthew Barrett and Mark Hedgcoe for the BBC, ZDF, and Discovery Channel; aired on BBC One between September 21 and October 26, 2006.

Genre & length. Television docudrama series, Roman history; 6 episodes, 60 min. each.

Classical content & comments. One of the purposes of the series was to correct all historical inaccuracies committed in the series *Rome*. 1. "Caesar": from the Battle of Alesia to the Ides of March. 2. "Nero": from the Great Fire of Rome to Nero's suicide. 3. "Rebellion": from the 1st Jewish war to the destruction of Jerusalem. 4. "Revolution": Tiberius Gracchus: from the distinguished service with Scipio Aemilianus in Africa to his murder in the riots caused by his alleged royalist ambitions. The brother Caius Gracchus does not appear in the episode. 5. "Constantine": from the victorious Battle of the Milvian Bridge to Licinius' defeat at Chrysopolis and the Council of Nicea. 6. "The Fall of Rome": Barbarians attack Rome, and the Goth Alaric takes the city; Honorius' sister, Galla Placidia, marries Athaulf after Alaric's death. Outstanding British historians served as consultants: Mary Beard was a consultant on "Caesar," "Nero," and "Revolution"; Martin Goodman consulted for "Rebellion"; Averil Cameron for "Constantine"; and Peter Heather for "The Fall of Rome."

157. **"The Fiendish Five."** S01E09–10. **"The True King."** S01E11–12. *Yu-Gi-Oh! Capsule Monsters* (US, JP). Based on a manga by Kazuki Takahashi; aired on 4-Kids Entmt on November 4–25, 2006.

Genre & length. 4 episodes of an animated television miniseries; 1 season, 12 episodes, 30 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Alexander the Great is a magical character split into a good and evil person. When his evil part, embodied by Dr. Alex Brisbane, is defeated, he is praised as a true king and his good soul is allowed to rest in the afterlife. The long fight involves various dragons, magicians with futuristic and magical weapons, and other quasi-mythical characters. A continuation of K. Takahashi's 2003–2004 *Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters*, season 4.

158. **"Greeks Bearing Gifts."** S01E07. *Torchwood* (UK). Directed by Colin Teague, written by Toby Whithouse, prod. by Russel T. Davies and Chris Chibnal for BBC Wales and CBC; aired on BBC Two on November 26, 2006.

Genre & length. 7th episode of a television series, SF, fantasy, time travel; 50 min.

Classical content & comments. An alien stranded on Earth calls herself Philoctetes – in Greek mythology (Trojan War), an archer abandoned for 10 years on the island of Lemnos because of an ill-smelling wound. A spin-off of *Doctor Who*.

References. Potter, 2010a, 79–93.



Chapter 2

159. **300** (US). Directed and co-written with Kurt Johnstad and Michael N. Gordon by Zack Snyder, prod. by Gianni Nunnari, Mark Canton, Bernie Goldman, and Jeffrey Silver for Legendary Pictures, Virtual Studios, Atmosphere Entmt, MM, and Hollywood Gang Productions; released in the US on December 6, 2006.
Genre & length. Feature film, adaptation of a comic book, epic historical action, Greek history; 117 min.
Classical content & comments. Fictionalized story of the 2nd Persian invasion and Battle of Thermopylae. Ephors, bribed by Xerxes, refuse their support to Leonidas. He takes his best 300 soldiers on an “excursion” to the Hot Gates of Thermopylae. Xerxes approaches Leonidas but fails to convince him to surrender. When Xerxes’ “Immortals” fail to take the pass, he launches a massive attack and forces allies to flee. A traitor shows Xerxes a secret trail, avoiding the pass of Thermopylae. In Sparta, Gorgo convinces the Council to form a coalition with Athens, Corinth, and Megara against Persia. At the Hot Gates, before all Spartans perish, Leonidas wounds Xerxes and then succumbs to Persian arrows. The Greek coalition celebrates Leonidas’ sacrifice. Based on Frank Miller and Lynn Varley’s 1998 comic book. Globally released in 2007.
References. Murray, 2007, 11–35; J. Richards, 2008, 184–186; Cyrino, 2011, 19–38; Blanshard and Shahabudin, 2011, 236–237; Beigel, 2013, 65–78; Lauwers, Dhont, and Huybrecht, 2013, 79–94; Jenkins, 2015, 113–119; Winkler, 2017, 24–296; Llewelyn-Jones, 2018, 191–205; Tomasso, 2018, 214–216; Davies, 2019, 75–112.
160. *Ἀλέξανδρος ο Μέγας* [**Alexander the Great**] (GR). Directed by Paul Pissanos for Pissanos Int’l Film & TV Productions; released in 2006.
Genre & length. Docudrama, Greek history; 82 min.
Classical content & comments. Docudrama re-enacting Alexander’s relations with his mother and his teacher Aristotle. The film covers his entire life.
References. Dumont, 2013.
161. *Alexander the Great* (IT, KR). Directed by Youngki Lee and Dea-Hong Kim for Orlando Corradi-Mondo TV Group-Difarm; released in 2006.
Genre & length. Animated video, Greek history; 80 min.
Classical content. History of Alexander the Great.

2007

162. *Who Killed Julius Caesar?* (UK). Atlantic Productions; released in 2007.
Genre & length. Television docudrama, Roman history; 60 min.
Classical content & comments. 44 BCE, the Ides of March, Caesar is murdered. In 2007, a forensic investigator of the Carabinieri, Luciano Garofano, conducts a state-of-the-art investigation into Caesar’s death and reaches an unexpected conclusion.
163. “D-Yikes!” S11E06. *South Park* (US). Created by Trey Parker and Matt Stone, written and directed by T. Parker, prod. by T. Parker, M. Stone, et al. for Parker-Stone Productions and South Park Studios; aired on Comedy Central on April 11, 2007.
Genre & length. 159th episode of an animated television sitcom; 22 min.
Classical content & comments. A parody of Zack Snyder’s 2006 film *300*. A lesbian bar called Les Bos is being taken over by Persians led by Rauf Xerxes, but its clients resist the takeover like the Spartans did at Thermopylae in 480 BCE. The teacher, Mrs Garrison, discovers she is a lesbian and seduces Xerxes, who is revealed to be a woman exercising at Curves (a women’s only gym), like Mrs Garrison.



164. **2007–2008, *The Roman Mysteries*** (UK). Directed by Paul Marcus, Jill Robertson, Marcus D.F. White, written by Olivia Hetreed, prod. by BBC TV; aired on BBC One between May 8, 2007, and August 13, 2008.
Genre & length. Television series, adaptation of books for children, fictional detective stories; 2 seasons, 10 episodes, 30 min. each.
Classical content & comments. In the port of Ostia, 4 adolescents under the care of a patrician woman, Flavia Gemina, solve a series of mysteries, save Pliny the Elder from drowning, observe the eruption of Vesuvius, are kidnapped by pirates, prevent an assassination of Titus in Rome, save Jewish captives who fled the destruction of Jerusalem, etc. A series for children, designed to provide information on 1st-c. Rome. Based on Caroline Lawrence's books published in 2002. Pliny the Younger, in his letter to Tacitus (*Epist.* 6.16.11), at the request of Tacitus, describes the death of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, who instead of fleeing from the vicinity of Mount Vesuvius, decided to join his friend Pomponianus at Stabiae and to the last moment refused to believe that a major volcanic eruption was indeed underway: "Fortune favours the bold; try to reach Pomponianus." Not this time. Episodes: 1. "The Secrets of Vesuvius," 2. "The Pirates of Pompeii," 3. "The Assassins of Rome," 4. "The Dolphins of Laurentum," 5. "The Enemies of Jupiter," 6. "The Gladiators from Capua," 7. "The Trials of Flavia Gemina," 8. "The Colossus of Rhodes," 9. "The Fugitive from Corinth," 10. "The Slave Girl from Jerusalem."
165. ***Last Stand of the 300*** (US). Directed and written by David Padrusch, co-written by Alexander Emmert and Matt Koed, prod. by D. Padrusch and M. Koed for Limulus Productions and Mechanism Digital; aired on the History Channel on May 27, 2007.
Genre & length. Television film, documentary; 91 min.
Classical content & comments. A documentary re-enactment of the Battle of Thermopylae.
166. ***United 300*** (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Andy Signore, co-written by Daniel Hartley and John Carreon for SecretSauce.tv; released on June 3, 2007.
Genre & length. A short, parody; 5 min.
Classical content & comments. A spoof of two 2006 movies, *United 93* and *300*. German terrorists led by Jerxes attempt to take over flight United 93. However, the access to the pilot cabin is defended by Spartans under the command of Leonidas. 2007 MTV Award for Best Filmic Parody.
References. Poole, 2013, 95–121.
167. **"Dominion."** S10E19. ***Stargate SG-1*** (CA, US). Directed by William Waring, written by Alex Levine, and Alan McCullough, prod. by Jonathan Glassner, Brad Wright, et al.; aired on Sci-Fi on June 15, 2007.
Genre & length. 213th episode of a television series, military SF, action/adventure; 42 min.
Classical content & comments. Starship *Odysey*, Clava Thessara Infinitas (ancient for 'Key to Infinite Treasure'). Two Goa'ulds, Athena and Quetesh (Vala), tried to find this treasure, named after the first of them, Athena's treasury. However, it was neither recovered nor proven to be a hoax.
168. ***Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*** (UK, US). Directed by David Yates, written by Michael Goldenberg, prod. by David Hayman and David Barron for Warner Bros. Pictures and Heyday Films; released on June 28, 2007.
Genre & length. 5th feature film in a cycle, fantasy, witch show, school story, a hidden world; 138 min.
Comment. An adaptation of J.K. Rowling's 5th novel, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003).
References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.



169. *Barbaren gegen Rom. Die Germanen. Meilensteine der Früh-geschichte Europas* (DE). Directed by Judith Voelker, Stefan Koester, Schoko Okroy, and Alexander Hogh, prod. by Christian Feyereabend and Uwe Kersken for Westdeutscher Rundfunk in co-prod. with Gruppe 5 Köln Film-produktion, Arte, and SBS-TV Australia; aired on Arte from July 21, 2007.
Genre & length. A television docudrama, fictionalized Roman history; 4-part series, 52 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Episodes: 1. “Barbaren gegen Rom,” 2. “Die Varusschlacht,” 3. “Entscheidung am Limes,” 4. “Im Zeichen des Kreuzes.” The story is told from the point of view of a fictional tribal priestess called Basena.
References. Dumont, 2013, 327.
170. *The Last Legion* (UK, IT, FR, TN, SK). Directed by Doug Lefler, written by Jez and Tom Butterworth, prod. by Dino, Martha, and Raffaella De Laurentiis for De Laurentiis Co.; released August 17, 2007.
Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized Roman history, action, adventure, adaptation of a novel; 102 min.
Classical content & comments. 5th-c. Western Roman Empire is taken over by the chief of the Goths, Odoacer, right after the coronation of Romulus Augustulus, who is imprisoned in Tiberius’ villa on Capri from where the 3 remaining Roman legions rescue him. He takes with him Caesar’s sword, which he found in the villa. The Senate and the Eastern Empire give their support to Odoacer. Romulus flees to Britain with his tutor Ambrosinus to rejoin the 9th legion there. He finds the legion disbanded, but when a war begins with the locals, the legionaries return to join the fight. Using Caesar’s sword, Romulus prevails and, after a victory, embeds the sword in a stone. Romulus marries a Celtic girl, Igraine, and takes the name Pendragon. They have a son, Arthur, who is guided by Ambrosinus/Merlin. The sword in the stone, inscribed “ES CALIBUR,” awaits him (from Greek *χάλυψ*, *khálups* – steel). Based on the 2002 novel *L’ultima legione* by Valerio Massimo Manfredi.
References. Davies, 2019, 129–144.
171. *Médée miracle* (FR, IT). Directed and prod. by Tonino De Bernardi, co-prod. by Stéphanie Andriot, Ronald Chamamah, and Richard Kravetz for Lontane Provincie Film, Stella Films, Les Films du Camélia, and Arte France Cinéma; released in September 2007.
Genre & length. Feature film, paraphrase of a myth; 81 min.
Classical content & comments. Modern paraphrase of the myth of Medea and Jason. Irene, a foreigner, is married to Jason, a Frenchman. They live in Paris and have 2 daughters. Jason leaves her for a French girl, and this betrayal destabilizes Irene.
172. *Lars and the Real Girl* (US). Directed by Craig Gillespie, written by Nancy Oliver, prod. by Sarah Aubrey, John Cameron, et al. for MGM, Sydney Kimmel Entmt, and Lars Productions; released on September 16, 2007.
Genre & length. Feature film, paraphrase of a myth; 106 min.
Classical content & comments. A modern version of the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea. An immature and fragile young man is unable to form a relationship with a girl and, as a safe substitute, orders a silicone doll. His family goes along with that. After some time, he tells them that she is dying and, after a period of grief, is able to begin a relationship with a colleague from work.
References. P. James, 2011, 259–266; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 337–359.
173. “The Eye of the Gorgon.” S01E03–04. *The Sarah Jane Adventures* (UK). Directed by Alice Troughton, written by Phil Ford, prod. by Phil Collinson, Russell T. Davies, Julie Gardner, and Matthew Bouch for BBC Cymru Wales; aired on CBBC on October 1 and 8, 2007.
Genre & length. 3rd and 4th episodes of a television series, SF fantasy; 5 seasons, 53 episodes, 25–30 min. each, a 60 min. special and a 5 min. short.



Classical content & comments. Rationalization of the myth of the Gorgons. Gorgons are an alien race; one of them lives in the body of an Abbess. 3 Gorgons came to Earth and enchanted the nuns at the Abbey to serve them. The snakes are energy, not real reptiles. Sarah Jane reads the myth of Perseus and Medusa to a child. She says that Greek mythology originates in reality: when Poseidon fell in love with Medusa, a jealous Athena transformed her into a monster. The Gorgon dies when she is shown a mirror. *Doctor Who's* spin-off for a younger audience.

References. Potter, 2018j, 168–186, 2018h.

174. *Sa Majesté Minor / His Majesty Minor* (FR, ES). Directed, co-written, and co-prod. by Jean-Jacques Annaud, co-written by Gérard Brach and Sandro Agénor, co-prod. by Jaume Roures and Xavier Castano for Repérages, Malvarrosa Media, Mediapro, and StudioCanal; released on October 10, 2007.

Genre & length. Feature film, a mythologically inspired comedy; 101 min.

Classical content & comments. On one of the Cyclades, in the 17th c. BCE, Minor, a mute half-wild orphan, lives with pigs. He explores a mythological forest where he encounters the god Pan. The god introduces him to the delights of sex. Back in his village, during the olive harvest, Minor climbs a tree to observe Clytia, a girl he fancies. He accidentally falls from the tree and dies but somehow revives and regains speech. The villagers consider it a miracle and make him King. He begins sweeping reforms and construction projects but is soon forced out. He flees to Pan to lead a life of fun and games. J. Annaud's impressive filmography includes *The Name of the Rose* (1986), *The Bear* (1988), *The Lover* (1992), *Seven Years in Tibet* (1997), *Two Brothers* (2004), *Wolf Totem* (2015), and the most recent *Notre-Dame brûle* (March 16, 2022). The 2007 film was a box-office flop.

175. *Cleopatra* (BR). Directed and written by Júlio Bressane, co-written by Rosa Diaz, prod. by Lucia Fares and Tarcisio Vidigal for Grupo Novo de Cinema e TV; released on November 23, 2007.

Genre & length. Feature film, a historical biopic; 116 min.

Classical content & comments. J. Bressane's "lyrical vision" of Cleopatra won 6 main awards at the Brasília Film Festival in 2007.

2008

176. *Astérix aux Jeux olympiques / Asterix bei den Olympischen Spielen* (FR, DE, ES, IT, BE). Directed by Frédéric Forestier and Thomas Langmann, an adaptation of René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo's comic book with dialogues by T. Langmann, prod. by Jérôme Lateur et al. for Pathé-Renn Productions, La Petite Reine, etc.; released on January 13, 2008.

Genre & length. Feature film prod. for television, fantasy, an adaptation of a comic book, fictionalized Roman history; 117 min.

Classical content & comments. Several characters were added to the original comic book: the 2 lovers, Lovesix and Princess Irina, as well as Brutus, who is the antagonist. Asterix and Obelix must win the Games to make it possible for the lovers to marry. Brutus is trying, on the one hand, to have his team win, and, on the other, to remove Caesar from the picture. Based on the 1968 album *Asterix at the Olympic Games* by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo. A number of real-life sports stars participated in the movie, e.g., Michael Schumacher, Jean Todt, Zinedine Zidane, Tony Parker, and Amélie Mauresmo.

177. "Gnothi seauton." S01E02. *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* (US). Directed by David Nutter, written by Josh Friedman, Ashley Miller, and Zac Stentz, prod. by J. Friedman, John Enbom, John Wirth, et al.; aired on Fox on January 14, 2008.

Genre & length. 2nd episode of a television series, SF fantasy; 2 seasons, 31 episodes, 44 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. The Greek title of the episode. The main character, Sarah, has her own version of the aphorism: “Know thyself, and thou shalt know all the mysteries of the gods and the universe.”

References. Wenskus, 2017, 457–458.

178. ***Absurdistan*** (DE, FR). Directed, written, and prod. by Veit Helmer, co-written by Zaza Buadze, Servet Golbol, and Gordan Mihic, co-prod. by Linda Valdez for Veit Helmer Filmproduktion, Südwestrundfunk (SWR), Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR), and Arte; released on January 20, 2008.

Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, a paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 88 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern version of Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*. There are problems with providing water to a remote village. Men are lazy and reluctant to repair the system. Women react by refusing to have sex until men fix the problem. V. Helmer received the 2008 Special Award at the Bavarian Film Awards, the 2009 International Fantasy Film Award at Fantasporto, and the 2009 Grand Prize for Best Feature Film at Mediawave, Hungary. Erwin Prib won the 2008 Film Award in Gold for Best Production Design at the German Film Awards.

References. Maurice, 2017, 212.

179. ***Meet the Spartans*** (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Jason Friedberg and Aaron Seltzer, co-prod. by Peter Safran for Regency ENT., New Regency, and 3 in the Box; released on January 25, 2008.

Genre & length. Feature film, a parody of a popular movie, Greek history; 83 min.

Classical content & comments. Xerxes is an evil god-king of Persia bent on conquering Greece. King Leonidas of Sparta and his dozen or so warriors are defending their country. Idiotic dialogues, visual allusions to celebrities. “A tired, unfunny, offensive waste of time, *Meet the Spartans* scrapes the bottom of the cinematic barrel” (RottenTomatoes, n.d. b). Nominated 5 times for the 29th Golden Raspberry Awards.

References. Blanshard and Shahabudin, (2011) 2013, 193; Poole, 2013, 95–121; McGeough, 2022, 161–162.

180. ***Odysseus and the Isle of the Mists*** (UK, CA, RO). Directed by Terry Ingram, written by Brook Durham and Kevin Leeson, prod. by Jamie Goehring and Kirk Shaw for Plinyminor and Sci-Fi Channel; released on February 15, 2008; DVD released in 2015 by Voltage Pictures under license from 101 Films.

Genre & length. Feature film, mythological horror, fantasy; 92 min.

Classical content & comments. Homer wrote an additional, very dark book of the *Odyssey*. Vampire-like creatures kill humans and drink their blood. They can be killed only with a wooden stake driven through their heart. They are children of a villainous version of Hades and Persephone.

181. **“Spartacus.”** S01E03. ***Heroes & Villains*** (UK). Directed by Tim Dunn and Al Imran Nilo, written by Colin Heber-Percy and Iyall B. Watson, prod. by Matthew Barrett et al. for the BBC and ERT (Hellenic Radio & Television); aired on February 29, 2008.

Genre & length. 3rd episode of a television anthology series, historical biopic, docudrama, Roman history; 1 season, 6 episodes, 55 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Rome, 73 BCE. Spartacus’ bio from the more favourable and sympathetic modern point of view. The tragedy of enslavement includes the separation of families and the hopeless life of gladiators. The story is narrated by a veteran gladiator, Oenameus, who took Spartacus under his wing. The series *Heroes & Villains* (2007–2008) features Napoleon, Attila the Hun, Spartacus, Hernán Cortés, Richard the Lionheart, and the Shogun (Tokugawa Ieyasu).

182. **“The Fires of Pompeii.”** S04E02. *Doctor Who* (UK). Directed by Colin Teague, written by James Moran and Steven Moffat, prod. by Phil Colinson for the BBC; aired on April 12, 2008, on BBC One and the next day on BBC Three.
Genre & length. 41st episode of the 2005 *Doctor Who* television series, SF, time travel, action/adventure, fictionalized Roman history; 45 min.
Classical content & comments. The day before the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE. The Doctor realizes that aliens have engineered the eruption. Based on the BBC’s 2003 *Pompeii: The Last Day* and the Caecilius family from *Cambridge Latin Course* first published in 1970 (the last edition issued in 2022).
References. Hobden, 2009, 147–163; Keen, 2010; Gierszewska, 2016, 305–314; Wenskus, 2017, 462–463; Potter, 2018j, 168–186.
183. *Cassandra* (MX, US). Directed, written, and prod. by Mauricio Chemovetzky for Like Fire Productions; released on April 22, 2008.
Genre & length. A short paraphrase of a myth; 27 min.
Classical content & comments. Poetic reinterpretation of *Trojan Women*: on the Mexican side of the US border, there is a shady bar frequented by American soldiers, Las Mujeres de Troya, owned by Doña Hecuba. General Agamemnon demands the company of Hecuba’s innocent daughter, Cassandra. She agrees to his request over the protestations of her mother because she wants to cross the border to the US. Based on Euripides’ play.
184. *Il ginocchio di Artemide / Le genou d’Artémide* (IT, FR). Directed by Jean-Marie Straub, written by Cesare Pavese, prod. by Martine Marignac for Pierre Grise Productions, filmed at the Teatro Francesco di Bartolo in Buti, May 24, 2007; released on May 1, 2008.
Genre & length. A mythologically inspired short; 27 min.
Classical content & comments. Mythological symbols – Orpheus and Demeter – related to the mystery of existence and human destiny. Based on Cesare Pavese’s *Dialoghi con Leucò* (1947). 2 older gentlemen exchange speeches on basic philosophical themes. The film is a recording of a stage performance. See also a continuation of Pavese’s *Dialoghi* in J.-M. Straub’s *L’inconsolabile* of 2011.
References. Winkler, 2020b, 258.
185. *Rome: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (US, UK). Directed by Robert H. Gardner, Rex Piano, Alexander Emmett, et al., written by A. Emmett, Carrie Gardner, and Kate Youngdahl, prod. by Beth Dietrich Segarra, R.H. Gardner, et al. for Gardner Films; aired on the History Channel from July 21 to October 13, 2008.
Genre & length. Television docudrama series, Roman history; 1 season, 13 episodes, 43–60 min. each.
Classical content & comments. 1. “The First Barbarian War.” 113 BCE, Marius repels the Ciberian attack. 2. “Spartacus.” 73 BCE. 3. “Julius Caesar.” From the conquest of Gaul. 4. “The Forest of Death.” 9 CE, the Varian disaster in the Teutoburg Forest. 5. “The Invasion of Britain.” 47 CE, Claudius’ attempt at conquest. 6. “The Dacian Wars.” 102 CE, Trajan takes Sarmizegetuza and its riches but fails in Parthia. 7. “Rebellion and Betrayal.” 161–180 CE, Marcus Aurelius’ reign. 8. “Wrath of Gods.” Early 3rd c. CE, the challenge of Christianity. 9. “The Soldiers’ Emperor.” Late 3rd c. CE, Roman borders are vulnerable to foreign invasions. 10. “Constantine.” Diocletian ends the crisis of the 3rd c. Constantine abolishes the tetrarchy and reunites the empire. 11. “The Barbarian General.” Theodosius’ valued general is the Vandal Stilicho. 12. “The Puppet Master.” 450 CE, Rome is at the mercy of barbarians. 13. “The Last Emperor.” 475 CE, *magister militum* Orestes makes his son Romulus Augustulus emperor. Flavius Odoacer deposes him after less than a year on the throne. Docudrama with a reconstruction of battles and the use of silent actors.
References. Dumont, 2013, 291.

- 186. 2008–2012, *Merlin*** (UK). Created by Julian Jones, Jake Michie, Johnny Capps, and Julian Murphy, prod. by Julie Gardner and Bethan Jones for Shine TV; aired on BBC One from September 20, 2008 to December 24, 2012.
Genre & length. Television series, early medieval fantasy, witchcraft, adventure; 5 seasons, 65 episodes, 45–50 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A when-they-were-young take on the Arthurian legend. Greek and Old English spells. Nominated for many awards, won BAFTA for visual effects in 2011. Sold to 180 countries, available on Netflix.
References. Nelson and Walton, 2014, 45–63; Marciniak, forthcoming a.
- 187. 2008–2009, *Valentine*** (US). Directed by Kevin Dowling, created and written by Kevin Murphy, prod. by K. Murphy, Courtney B. Conte, et al. for Media Rights Capital, Baked Goods Productions, and Valentine's Day; originally aired on The CW between October 5, 2008, and July 19, 2009.
Genre & length. Television series, comedy-drama; 1 season, 8 episodes, 42 min. each.
Classical content & comments. The Los Angeles-based Valentine family are, in fact, Olympic gods who try to ensure that mortals have happy romantic relationships. The gods may become mortals themselves if they are unable to bring soulmates together. The Valentines seek help from Kate, a romance novelist. Among the members of the family are Aphrodite (Grace), her husband, Ari (Ares), her previous husband, Ray (Hephaestus), and her son Danny (Eros), who is sweet on Kate. Phoebe (the Titan) functions as an oracle and seeks counsel from the Fates about the pairing of mortals. She is attracted to the barman Leo (Hercules). Aunt Circe is a marijuana dealer. There is also Bastet from the Egyptian pantheon, who may take a human or feline form and is hostile to the Valentines; at some point, she murders Ari using the Adamantium Blade stolen from Ray, the only weapon that can kill a god. 1st season was intended to include 13 episodes, but a production delay led to the cancellation of the show. The previously filmed episodes were aired in the summer of 2009.
References. Maurice, 2019b, 121–122.
- 188. *The Reader*** (US, DE). Directed by Stephen Daldry, written by David Hare, prod. by Bob and Harvey Weinstein, Anthony Minghella, et al. for the Weinstein Company, Mirage Enterprises, and Studio Babelsberg; released on December 10, 2008.
Genre & length. Feature film, an adaptation of a novel; 124 min.
Classical content & comments. Post-WW2 German generation's difficulties in dealing with the Holocaust and guilt, living among potential war criminals, the shame, atonement, and the banality of evil. An illiterate former Nazi concentration camp guard asks her young lover to read aloud to her. He reads scenes from Homer's *Odyssey*, which is emphasized more than in the novel. It reflects the fact that the German high-school curriculum included Homer. The film was heavily criticized for evoking sympathy for an Auschwitz guard. Adaptation of Bernhard Schlink's 1995 novel *Der Vorleser*. An Oscar for Best Actress and a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actress were awarded to Kate Winslet.
References. Niven, 2003, 381–396 (about the novel); Solomon, 2022, 41–42.
- 189. *Cyclops*** (US). Directed by Declan O'Brien, written by Frances Doell, prod. by Roger and Julie Corman and Israel Ringer for New Horizons Picture; aired on the Sci-Fi Channel on December 12, 2008.
Genre & length. Television film, action, adventure, fantasized Roman history; 94 min.
Classical content & comments. Rome, 1st c. CE. Tiberius is the emperor and rules as a tyrant. When his general Marcus Romulus captures a Cyclops ravaging the countryside, Tiberius sends him and the mythological creature to the Colosseum to fight, but they unite forces with revolted slaves and want to depose the emperor. Adaptation of the French *bande dessinée* writer Alexis Nolent's 2006 graphic novel *Cyclopes*.

190. *The Spirit* (US). Scripted and directed by Frank Miller, prod. by Deborah Del Prete, Gigi Pritzker, and Michael E. Uslan for OddLot Entmt and DarkLot Entmt; released on December 25, 2008; DVD released on April 14, 2009.
Genre & length. Neo-noir superhero mythological feature film, adaptation of a comic strip; 103 min.
Classical content & comments. A contemporary complex treasure hunt for Hercules' life-giving blood results in finding the Golden Fleece. The story is based on a newspaper comic strip by Will Eisner, *Spirit*. It appeared as a regular insert in 20 Sunday newspapers from June 2, 1940, to October 5, 1952. Later, some occasional new stories or stories by different authors were published.
191. **2008–2009, *Resonabilis echo. La légende d'Echo et de Narcisse*** (CH). Directed, written, and prod. by Claude Aubert; amateur movie shot in Lausanne, VD, Switzerland, 2008–2009.
Genre & length. A short film, a retelling of myths; 42 min.
Classical content. The myth of Narcissus and Echo according to Ovid, *Met.* 3.358–401. Echo, Narcissus, Jupiter, Juno, a dryad, and Ovid, as the narrator.
References. Dumont, 2013, 136; Winkler, 2020b, 304.
192. **2008–2013, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars***, Series 1–5 (US). Created by George Lucas, directed and written by Dave Filon et al., prod. by George Lucas et al. for Lucasfilm Ltd.; aired on the Cartoon Network from 2008 to 2013.
Genre & length. Animated 3D CGI television series; 108 episodes of ca. 22 min. each.
Classical content & comments. An amalgam of inspirations, among them Classical Antiquity, and in particular the theme of the ancient past, moral maxims similar to Hercules' choice, "know yourself," Stoic rejection of extremes, defying prophesied destiny, a political structure reminiscent of the Roman Republic, transformation into an empire, Jedai symbols and designs have a classical look, colonnades, and temples of classical inspiration, military equipment, monsters, labyrinths, names, slavery. 40th Daytime Emmy Awards: Outstanding Special Class Animated Program; 41st Daytime Emmy Awards: Outstanding Special Class Animated Program.
References. Parisi and Schepcke, 2009; Charles, 2015, 281–298; Nevin, 2018a.
193. *Rome Unwrapped* (UK). Exec. prod. by Anthony Geffen, series directed and prod. by Dan Oliver for Atlantic Productions; released in 2008.
Genre & length. Television series, docudrama, Roman history; 8 episodes, 60 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Experts revisit Roman history based on evidence. They focus on places and people (e.g., on ordinary people during Pompeii's last 24 hours as seen in recent digs), showing and discussing Caesar's bust found under the bed of the River Rhône, weapons and letters on tablets, the invasion of Britain and the Colosseum. Expert use of dramatization and CGI to illustrate the past.

2009

194. *Wonder Woman* (US). Directed by Lauren Montgomery, written by Michael Jelenic, prod. by Bruce Timm for Warner Premiere, DC Comics, and Warner Bros. Animation; released on March 3, 2009.
Genre & length. A direct-to-DVD animated superhero film; 73 min.
Classical content & comments. It is a mythologically inspired fantasy with Wonder Woman in modern-day America fighting the god of war, Ares, who escaped the Amazons' jail. Based on the 1987 *Gods and Mortals*, a comic book by George Pérez, scripted by Greg Potter and Len Wein.

195. *Cleopatra: Portrait of a Killer* (UK). Directed by Paul Elston, prod. by Richard Bradley and Steffan Boje for Lion Television; aired on the BBC on March 23, 2009.
Genre & length. Television film, docudrama, Roman history, Egyptian history; 59 min.
Classical content & comments. Docudramatic reconstruction of events prompted by the discovery of the skeleton of Arsinoe, the sister of Cleopatra, in a tomb. Cleopatra and Mark Antony are the main suspects in Arsinoe's violent demise.
196. *Cupid* (US). Created by Rob Thomas, directed by Bharrat Nalluri, Michael Fields, Michael Grossman, et al., prod. by R. Thomas, Jennifer Gwartz, et al. for ABC; aired from March 31 to June 16, 2009.
Genre & length. Television series, romantic comedy inspired by myth; 1 season, 7 episodes, 60 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A modern paraphrase of the myth of Eros and Psyche. A revival by R. Thomas and ABC of their 1998–1999 series *Cupid*.
197. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (UK, US). Directed by David Yates, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Heyman and David Barron for Warner Bros. Pictures and Heyday Films; released on July 7, 2009.
Genre & length. 6th feature film in a cycle of 8, an adaptation of a novel, fantasy, witch show, school story, coming of age; 153 min.
Comment. An adaptation of J.K. Rowling's 2005 novel, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*.
References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.
198. **2009–2014, Warehouse 13** (US). Created by Jane Espenson and D. Brent Mote, directed by Chris Fisher, Constantine Makris, et al., prod. by Jack Kenny, David Simkins, and Drew Z. Greenberg for Universal Cable Productions; aired on Syfy from July 7, 2009, to May 19, 2014.
Genre & length. Television series, SF mystery, fantasy, comedy-drama; 5 seasons, 64 episodes, 42–44 min. each; pilot runs for 87 min.
Classical content & comments. Magical artefacts from various periods of history, including ancient ones, are held at the Warehouse. The first Warehouse was allegedly built by Alexander the Great in 336–323 BCE to house magical objects acquired as spoils of war. It was later transferred to Ptolemaic Egypt and was run by Regents tasked with collecting artefacts and managing the Warehouse. When Egypt became part of Rome, Warehouse 3 was established in the Western Empire, Attila the Hun controlled Warehouse 4, and Warehouse 5 was located in Byzantium. 2010, “Reset.” S02E12: wings of Daedalus, Plato's originals, the rod of Asclepius, the Minoan trident. 2011, “The New Guy.” S03E01: statues of Zeus and Hera, the “Janus” device. “Emily Lake.” S03E11: Janus' coin. 2012, “A New Hope.” S04E01: Pandora's *pitios*. “Fractures.” S04E06: Spartacus' retiarius. “Endless Wonder.” S04E07: the rod of Asclepius, a bowl made from the ruined Colossus of Rhodes. “Second Chance.” S04E08: a shrapnel from Spartan armour. “The Ones You Love.” S04E09: Pliny the Elder's Amber Scroll. “Runaway.” S04E16: a Pompeii amphora dispensing hot lava. 2014, “Endless Terror.” S05E01: Theodosius of Bithynia's sundial. Passim, bastardized Latin slogans. Novelized by Greg Cox (*Warehouse 13: A Touch of Fever*, 2011), the author of many *Star Trek* novels and other SF novelizations, such as *The Librarians*. It was streamed on Peacock.
References. Olechowska, 2016, 407.
199. *Rome: The Last Frontier. 1: Onslaught. 2: Revolt. 3: Downfall/Y Rhufeiniaid* (UK). Directed by Jeff Morgan, prod. by Green Bay Media-Parthenon Entmt-S4C Greenbay, South Wales; aired on the History Channel on July 15, 2009.
Genre & length. Television miniseries, docudrama, Roman history, Roman Britain; 3 episodes of 49, 50, and 49 min.

Classical content & comments. Reconstruction of battles, silent actors. 1. Claudius, in need of a military victory, decides to invade Britain in 43 CE under the command of Aulus Plautius. Claudius visits Britain while riding an elephant. The Iceni, Silures, and Ordovices revolt against Governor Scapula. Caratacus heads the uprising but is betrayed and taken to Rome with his family. Claudius offers him clemency. 2. Later, the Iceni rise again under the leadership of Boudicca, threatening Roman rule in Britain. 3. Focus on the Roman administration of Britain. Produced in English and Gaelic versions.

200. *Hellhounds* (CA). Directed by Rick Schroder, written by Paul A. Birkett and Jason Bourque, prod. by Robert Halmi, Sr., Robert A. Halmi, et al. for Muse Entmt Ent. and RHI Entmt; aired on SyFy on July 19, 2009; DVD released on February 16, 2010.

Genre & length. Television film, direct-to-video, horror; 83 min.

Classical content & comments. At the wedding of Demetria and Kleitos, the groom's friend Theron, secretly in love with Demetria, decides to poison her wine and dispatch her to the Underworld. A witch tells Kleitos that Demetria is being forced to marry Hades. Kleitos descends there with his companions through a volcano. They drink an elixir to protect them from the fire they must traverse. They pass through a labyrinth after depositing her corpse outside the entrance. The maze is patrolled by demonic hounds partial to human flesh. Theron, unable to kill Kleitos, dies himself and wakes up in Hell. In exchange for a longer life, he promises Hades to deliver Demetria to him but fails and must return to Hell. 21st movie in the film-on-video series *Maneaters* of 28 installments (from June 7, 2007, to October 24, 2015) prod. by RHI Entmt for SyFy.

References. See Dumont, 2013, 653: "Du cinéma-bis horifique et bon marché, fabriqué en studio à Bucarest."

201. *Clash of the Gods* (US). Directed by Christopher Cassel and Jessica Conway, written by C. Cassel et al., prod. by Bill Hunt et al.; aired on the History Channel between August 3 and October 12, 2009; *Clash of the Gods: The Complete Season* released on 3 DVDs on February 16, 2010.

Genre & length. Television series, a documentary retelling of myths; 1 season of 10 episodes, 60 min. each.

Classical content & comments. "Zeus," "Hercules," "Hades," "The Minotaur," "Medusa," "Odysseus: Curse of the Sea," "Odysseus: Warrior's Revenge," and also, on the 3rd DVD disc: "Beowulf," "Tolkien's Monsters," and "Thor."

References. Hobden, 2022, 135–151.

202. *La guerre des fils de lumière contre les fils des ténèbres / The War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (FR). Directed by Amos Gitai, prod. by Agav Films and France 2; released at the Locarno International Festival on August 5, 2009.

Genre & length. Television film based on a spectacle that adapted Flavius Joseph's *The Jewish War*, Roman history; 102 min.

Classical content & comments. The title of the movie comes from the scrolls of the Dead Sea. Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and the rest of the Jewish War, according to Flavius Joseph. A reflection on the contemporary Middle East against the background of ancient history.

203. *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done* (US, DE). Directed by Werner Herzog, written by Herbert Golder and W. Herzog, prod. by Eric Bassett for Industrial Entertainment, Defilm, and Paper Street Films; released on September 5, 2009.

Genre & length. Feature film, crime drama, an adaptation of a true story inspired by a Greek tragedy; 91 min.

Classical content & comments. A Boston University classicist, Herbert Golder, was fascinated by the story of Mark Yavorsky, an actor at the University of San Diego, who was cast to play Orestes in Euripides' play, became mentally unstable, and murdered his mother with an antique



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sword. W. Herzog wrote the script with Golder and directed a movie only loosely rendering Yavor-sky's story but following his descent into madness triggered by Orestes' matricide.

References. Michelakis, 2013, 118–123.

204. **“Freaks & Greeks.”** S07E04b. *The Fairly OddParents* (US). Directed by Gary Conrad, written by Tom Krajewski for Nickelodeon Animation Studios, Frederator Studios, and Billionfold Studios; aired on September 30, 2009.

Genre & length. An episode of an animated television series, fantasy comedy for children; 12 min.

Classical content & comments. The parents of the main character, Timmy, leave for “a Toga Party” to eat alleged Greek food, and the Fairly OddParents take the child to Mount Olympus and the unending party of bored Olympic gods. Medusa's arrival causes destruction and the party moves to Timmy's apartment led by Elvis the Centaur. Zeus, Poseidon, and Artemis are fascinated by modern appliances. The party, scared by the Medusa-like evil babysitter who broke out of the basement where she was locked, moves back to the now-rebuilt Olympus, where life is a constant party with no accountability, responsibility, or consequences for the gods. The protagonist's parents, who leave him with an evil babysitter, behave as irresponsibly as the Olympians.

References. Mik, 2020c.

205. *Agora* (ES). Directed and written by Alejandro Amenábar, co-written by Mateo Gil, prod. by Fernando Bovaira for Telecinco Cinema and MOD Producciones Himenóptero; released on October 9, 2009.

Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized biopic, Greek history; 126 min.

Classical content & comments. The story of the astronomer Hypatia, 4th-c. Alexandria. An interesting background of the conflict between religion and science, ancient culture, and early Christianity. A number of inaccuracies: Hypatia was, in fact, around... 60 at the time of her death, no longer a young woman. Also, Alexandria of the late 4th and early 5th c. CE was already a Christianized area in an officially Christian empire and Christianity was not viewed there as uneducated, superstitious, backward forces. The film received 7 Goya Awards and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Feature Film Prize for 2009 at the Hamptons International Film Festival.

References. Dzielska, 1995; Dzielska and Ponikło, 2010; Paul, 2013b, 227–241; Wieber, 2015, 237–240; Strong, 2015, 195–206; Carlà-Uhink, 2017, 321–322; Davies, 2019, 159–168; Curley 2022b, 17–32.

206. *Cléopâtre – la dernière reine d’Égypte* (FR). Directed, written, and choreographed by Kamel Ouali, prod. by Jean-Claude Camus for CLN Spectacles-Bomba's Productions; released in December, 2009.

Genre & length. A live spectacle recorded on DVD, a musical comedy, Roman history, Egyptian history; 124 min.

Classical content & comments. Life of Cleopatra from her meeting with Caesar until her death. The musical was taped in Brussels where the super-spectacle was staged at the Forest National arena. Cleopatra is shown as a modern, independent woman; she sings: “Je suis une femme d’aujourd’hui, une femme qui se dévoile et qui suit ses envies, je vis sans faire de compromis, mon coeur est tout à moi, mon corps n’est pas soumis.” The spectacle included 22 musical tableaux in a contemporary style of music. Numerous CDs with songs from the musical were sold.

207. *Little Hercules in 3D* (US). Directed by Mohamed Khashoggi and Robert Boris, written by R. Boris, prod. by M. Khashoggi, Gary Fears, Marco Garcia, et al. for Little Hercules, Innovate Entertainment, and i.e. Effects; released in 2009.

Genre & length. Feature film, paraphrase of a myth; 92 min.

Classical content & comments. Zeus forbids a young Hercules from visiting mortals on Earth. Hera helps him to go there. He attends a school in Burbank and does well in a track and field



competition, although the Babylonian Marduk tries to interfere. His father is very proud of him and lets him experience life as a human. A somewhat poor production.

References. M. Lindner, 2017, 521.

208. *Medea/Medea* (RU). Directed, written, composed, and prod. by Natalia Kuznetsova; released in 2009.
Genre & length. Feature film, rhythmodrama, adaptation of a play; 66 min.
Classical content & comments. Based on Seneca's play. Medea speaks in Georgian, the language of Colchis.
References. Winkler, 2017, 82–84.

2010

209. *Caprica* (US, CA). Directed by Michael Nankin, Jonas Pate, et al., created by Remi Aubuchon and Ronald D. Moore, written by R.D. Moore, R. Aubuchon, Jane Espenson, et al., prod. by R.D. Moore, David Eyck, J. Espenson, and Kevin Murphy for Universal Cable Productions; aired on Syfy between January 22 and November 30, 2010.
Genre & length. Television series, SF space opera; 1 season, 19 episodes, 42 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Ancient and Modern Greek were used as the languages of the Taurons in *Caprica*. Not being focused on survival, it differs from *Battlestar Galactica*; it also is a story set among the rich and famous, like a high-life soap or a Greek tragedy setting. The time of action, 58 years before the destruction of the 12 colonies of the Lords of Kobol, is a natural moment to explore the ethics of artificial intelligence. A spin-off prequel to the 2004–2009 *Battlestar Galactica*, followed by the 2012 *Battlestar Galactica: Blood & Chrome*.
210. *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Steven S. DeKnight, Robert Tapert, et al. for Tapert-Donen-Raimi; aired on Starz from January 22 to April 16, 2010.
Genre & length. Television series; 1st season of a fantasized Roman history, 13 episodes, 60 min. each.
Comment. Beginning of the 3-season Starz series on Spartacus, with a 2011 prequel, *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena*.
References. Cyrino, 2017, 299–305; Magerstädt, 2019, 249–279; Hobden and Potter, 2020, 29–54; McGeough, 2022, 192, 296–297.
211. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (US). Directed by Chris Columbus, screenplay by Craig Titley, prod. by Karen Rosenfelt, C. Columbus, Michael Barthan, et al. for Fox 2000 Pictures, 1492 Pictures, Sunswep Entmt, and Dune Entmt; released on February 2, 2010.
Genre & length. Feature film, an adaptation of a novel for teens, school story, mythological fantasy adventure, coming of age; 119 min.
Classical content & comments. Today's Olympus is on the 600th floor of the Empire State Building in New York. Percy (a 21st-c. version of Perseus) Jackson, an American teenager, is Poseidon's son. He participates in quests (to recover Zeus' thunderbolt and Persephone's 3 pearls), descends to the Underworld to bring back his mother, and participates in various fights on the way. One of the movie's premises is the current interdiction (not fully adhered to) for the major gods to produce more children with mortals. The themes of absent parents and the fate of abandoned children are highlighted in the relations between demigods and their imperfect sires. Based on Rick Riordan's 2005 novel *The Lightning Thief*.
References. Blanshard and Shahabudin, (2011) 2013, 144–145; Paul, 2013a, 119–122, 2017, 231–242; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 307–332; MacNeill, 2018; Mik, 2019a, 130–146; Foster, 2020, 181–198.

212. **“Cleopatra.”** S01E10. *Mystery Files* (UK). Directed by Ben Mole, prod. by Richard Sattin, Carl Hall, et al. for Parthenon Entmt; aired on the National Geographic Channel on February 9, 2010.
Genre & length. 10th episode of a television series, docudrama, Roman history, Egyptian history; 30 min.
Classical content & comments. A docudrama with anonymous actors (Ptolemy XIII and XI, Caesar, and Octavian). How was a young girl able to manipulate 2 powerful Romans? See “Alexander the Great” in the same series (2011). The remaining episodes of season 1 did not deal with Classical Antiquity (Nostradamus, Jack the Ripper, Robin Hood, Princes in the Tower, Rasputin, Billy the Kid, King Arthur, Leonardo da Vinci, Abraham Lincoln, Man in the Iron Mask, the Romanovs).
213. ***Clash of the Titans*** (US, UK). Directed by Louis Leterrier, written by Travis Beacham, Phil Hay, and Matt Manfredi, prod. by Basil Iwanyk, Kevin De La Noy, and Richard D. Zanuck for Warner Bros.; released on April 2, 2010.
Genre & length. Feature film, myth paraphrased; 106 min.
Classical content & comments. Another variation on the myth of Perseus. A remake of Ray Harryhausen’s 1981 *Clash of the Titans*. Strong similarities, including the Norse mythological sea monster, Kraken. The use of CGI provides an obvious source of difference. The goddess Io, who protects and guides Perseus, is killed by Acrisius but given back a mortal life by the grateful Zeus; she becomes the hero’s wife; Andromeda will have to wait her turn in the *Wrath of the Titans*. Medusa is much better looking than in 1981 but becomes a monster when in her petrifying mode. In the remake, the gods do not play chess. Based on Beverly Cross’s script for the 1981 *Clash of the Titans*.
References. S.J. Green, 2013, 75–85; Paul, 2013a, 118–120; Gloyn, 2013, 64–75; Curley, 2018, 181–183; Tomasso, 2018, 216–218; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 12–143; Maurice, 2019b, 25–26 et passim; Kulpa et al., 2020, 47–82; McGeough, 2022, 212.
214. ***Ben-Hur*** (CA, ES, UK, US). Directed by Steve Shill, written by Alan Sharp, prod. by Roger Corbi and Simon Vaughan for Akkord Film Produktion, Drimtim Entmt, FishCorb Films, Muse Entmt Ent., and Zak Productions; first aired on the CBC on April 4, 2010.
Genre & length. Television mini-series, a biopic of a fictional character, a book adaptation; 2 parts, 90 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A sensational romance set in the 1st c. CE, a Bible soap opera with Jesus Christ, story of going from riches to rags to riches, pirates, slavery, faith, miracles, revenge à la Monte Cristo, crucifixion, redemption, a chariot race. Based on Lew Wallace’s 1880 novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. 2010 ACTRA Montreal Award for Outstanding Female Performance (Emily VanCamp), 2010 Gemini Award for Best Visual Effects, 2011 CSC Award for Cinematography in TV Drama (Ousama Rawi).
References. Solomon, 2016.
215. ***Centurion*** (UK, FR). Directed and written by Neil Marshall, prod. by Christian Colson and Robert Jones for Pathe, Celador Film, Canal+, and UK Film Council; released on April 23, 2010.
Genre & length. Feature film, action thriller, fictionalized Roman history, history of Roman Britain; 97 min.
Classical content & comments. 2nd c. CE, the 9th Legion’s disappearance in Caledonia. The fort Pinnata Castra is taken by Picts (ruled by King Gorlacon), who kill the entire garrison except for centurion Quintus Dias. The Roman governor sends Legio IX against the Picts, but their local scout leads them into an ambush, and all perish. Dias survives again; he reaches governor Agricola, who tries to have him killed to prevent the divulgation of what happened to Legio IX. He survives the attempt and rejoins his local Briton girlfriend, Arianna, who lives alone and is shunned by her people as a witch. A fast-paced and convoluted story of a manhunt through less-civilized regions of Roman Britain. Plenty of cruelty, brutality, gore, and human perfidy. One of several takes on

the mystery of the lost Legio IX Hispana popularized in the UK by Rosemary Sutcliff's novel; see the 2011 film *The Eagle*.

References. M. Lindner, 2015, 159–161; Gardner, 2018, 156–170; Davies, 2019, 129–158; Elliott, 2021; McGeough, 2022, 297–298.

216. **“Atlantis: The Evidence.”** S14E01. *Timewatch* (UK). Directed and prod. by Natalie Maynes, written by Bettany Hughes for BBC Northern Ireland; aired on BBC Two on June 2, 2010.

Genre & length. A special 2010 episode of a television documentary series; 60 min.

References. Foka, 2018, 187–202.

217. **“The Pandorica Opens.”** S05E12. **“The Big Bang.”** S05E13. *Doctor Who* (UK). Directed by Toby Haynes, written by Sydney Moffat, prod. by Piers Wenger, Beth Willis, et al. for BBC Wales; aired on BBC One on June 19 and 26, 2010.

Genre & length. 2 consecutive episodes of a television series, SF, time travel, adventure; 1st episode: 49 min., 2nd: 55 min.

Classical content & comments. An unknown Vincent van Gogh painting called *The Pandorica Opens* presents a mythical place where the most dangerous creature in the universe is kept locked. The Doctor travels to Roman Britain, where at Stonehenge, they find the Pandorica. Rory, the fiancé of the Doctor's assistant, Amy, is transformed into a Roman centurion. The dangerous creature hidden in the Pandorica is a younger Doctor who then attempts and succeeds in saving the world from collapse by jumping to different periods of time and fixing what needs to be corrected. The name of the painting alludes to the mythological Pandora's Jar, which held all the evils of humanity. The 2011 Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form.

References. Kłęczar, 2016, 267–285; Gierszewska, 2016, 305–314; Potter, 2018j, 168–186; Scully, 2018.

218. *Klioubatra / Cleopatra* (EG, SY). Directed by Wael Ramadan, battles directed by Ian Van Temperley, written by Kamar El Zaman Aloush, prod. by Arab Screen, Tarek Siam, Mostafa Shafiq, et al.; released on August 11, 2010.

Genre & length. Television series, fictionalized history, Ancient Roman/Egyptian history; 1 season, 30 episodes, 45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The 1st half of the series deals with Ptolemy XII's relations with his children, his court, and Rome, as well as with the royal children's conflicts and quarrels about succession. Caesar's meeting with Cleopatra happens only in episode 20, two-thirds into the series. Soon, she is the queen of Egypt and is expecting a child. In the next episode, she arrives in Rome with her son, and Caesar's assassination is being plotted leading up to the Ides of March. Cleopatra and Caesarion flee to Egypt with the help of Mark Antony, who confesses his love but returns to Rome to marry Octavian's sister. Cleopatra focuses on her son's education and later marries Mark Antony. Octavian attacks Egypt and wins the war. The Queen refuses to turn over her husband to Octavian in exchange for her continuing rule. Mark Antony and Cleopatra die in a double suicide, each upon hearing about the other's death. The 11 happy years Cleopatra spent with Mark Antony and their 3 children are barely mentioned. The 1st television series about Cleopatra, produced in Egypt, was broadcast as a Ramadan special in 2010. Zahi Hawass, head of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, criticized the series for historical inaccuracies in the plot (especially Cleopatra's affair with Karry), costumes, and sets (AFP, 2010).

219. **2010–2012, *Hispania, la leyenda*** (ES). Written by Ramón Campos, Natxo López, Gema R. Neira, et al., directed by Carlos Sedes, prod. by R. Campos, Pedro García Caja, et al. for Bambú Producciones; aired on Antena 3 from October 25, 2010, to June 25, 2012.

Genre & length. Television series, fictionalized Roman history, Roman Spain; 20 episodes, 60 min. each.



Classical content & comments. 150 BCE – the 3rd war with Carthage – the pretor, Servius Sulpicius Galba, is given Hispania as his province and continues fighting with Celtiberians. In Lusitania, in the western part of the Iberian Peninsula, he massacres the disarmed locals contrary to the Senate's directives. A shepherd, Viriatus, a survivor from the village of Caura, organizes a guerilla resistance against the Romans. Lusitanian troupes grow and defeat the legions. Viriatus travels to Rome in search of his daughter, Altea, sold as a slave to Galba's son, Fabius. He later rejoins the war in Lusitania and is nicknamed *terror Romanorum* after his many victories over the legions. He perishes murdered in 139 BCE by 3 defectors bribed by the Romans. Based on Diodorus Siculus. Premio Iris (Atv) 2012 Best Actor for Lluís Homar, Spanish Actors Union 2013 TV Male Lead Performance for Roberto Enriquez. A sequel: *Imperium*.

References. Cueto Asín and George, 2013, 117–129.

220. ***Gods and Monsters: Homer's Odyssey*** (UK). Directed and prod. by John Holdsworth, written and presented by Simon Armitage, exec. prod. by Jonty Claypole for the BBC; aired on BBC Four on November 8, 2010.

Genre & length. Television film, docudrama; 60 min.

Classical content. A British poet follows the travels of Odysseus.

References. Hobden, 2022, 135–151.

221. ***Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*** (UK, US). Directed by David Yates, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Heyman, David Barron, and J.K. Rowling for Warner Bros. Pictures and Heyday Films; released on November 11, 2010.

Genre & length. 7th feature film in a cycle of 8, an adaptation of a novel, fantasy, witch show, school story, a hidden world; 146 min.

Classical content & comments. An adaptation of the 1st half of J.K. Rowling's 2007 novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.

222. ***Greek Myths: Tales of Travelling Heroes*** (UK). Directed by Arif Nurmohamed, written and presented by Robin Lane Fox, prod. by Eamon Hardy and A. Nurmohamed for BBC Four; aired on November 15, 2010.

Genre & length. Television film, a documentary; 90 min.

Classical content & comments. A discussion on the origin of Greek myth with archaeologists Sylvian Fachard, Irene Lemos, Evangelia Tsoukala, and others.

223. ***Pompeii: Life & Death in a Roman Town*** (UK). Directed and written by Paul Elston, prod. by Richard Bradley and Cassian Harrison for Lion Television and Brave New Media; aired on BBC Two on December 14, 2010.

Genre & length. Television film, a documentary, Roman history; 60 min.

Classical content & comments. A discussion between experts, a historian, an archaeologist, and a bone expert about what we can learn about the lives of the victims of Vesuvius' eruption from their remains. Mary Beard (*Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town*, 2008), Cambridge archaeologist Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, Mattia Buondonno, a Pompeii guide, and Fabian Kanz, a forensic anthropologist, were all participants in the movie.

224. ***Young Alexander the Great*** (EG, UK, GR, US). Directed by Jalal Mehri, written by Dan Renton Skinner, prod. by Jeffrey Taylor, J. Mehri, Sam El-Adl, et al. for El-Adl Film Productions, Film One Media, etc.; released in December 2010.

Genre & length. Feature video, Greek history, a fictionalized biopic; 90 min.



Classical content & comments. Alexander's childhood in Pella (Macedon), his education with Aristotle, his first romantic relationships (only heterosexual), the taming of his horse, and the first battle at the age of 17, during which he saved his father's life and finally became regent of Macedon. Ancient history for teens, a "by-product" of Oliver Stone's 2004 movie.

References. Dumont, 2013, 246.

225. *Swimming Pool* (CZ). Animated and directed by Alexandra Hetmerová, prod. by Bára Příkaská for FAMU Production; released in 2010.

Genre & length. An animated short, mythological fantasy; 6:34 min.

Classical content & comments. A Centaur and a Mermaid. 2 strangers meet in a pool at night and swim together, performing a romantic dance. The pool guard comes and orders them to leave. When they are revealed as a Centaur and a Mermaid, he runs away screaming. They dive back into the pool. 17 international awards, including the Anima 2011 Award for Best Student Short Film (Brussels) and the 2011 Monstra Festival Best Short Audience Award (Lisboa). Part of an MA assignment at FAMU.

References. Zarzycka, 2018b.

226. **2010–2011, *I'm a Monster*** (IE). Directed by Alistair McIlwain, prod. by Deirdre Barry and Richard Morss for Monster Entmt, Ireland; aired in 2010–2011.

Genre & length. Animated television series, mythology; 52 episodes, 2 segments of 11 min. per episode. For children aged 4–8.

Classical content & comments. Greek mythology. A brief retelling of myths involving monsters. Episodes 6, 13, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 35, 38, 44, and 48 feature mythological monsters: Cyclops, Medusa, Basilisk, Echidna, Furies, Kraken, Minotaur, Centaur, Charybdis, Sirens, and Hydra.

References. Bazylczyk, 2018.

2011

227. *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena* (US, NZ, AU). Directed by Jesse Warn (1), Rick Jacobson (2), Michael Hurst (3), Brendan Maher (4), Brent Fletcher (5), Steven DeKnight (6), Sam Raimi, and Joshua Donen, prod. by Starz Media; aired on Starz Network from January 21 to February 25, 2011.

Genre & length. A television miniseries, fantasized Roman history; 6 episodes, 52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A prequel to the Starz *Spartacus* filmed during the interruption caused by the fatal illness of the main actor, Andy Whitfield. The miniseries was inspired by the video-games universe, focused on combat, gore, and sex. Dumont, 2013, 661: "Beaucoup de sang, peu d'Histoire. On est à des années lumière de Kubrick ou Freda." Ahl and Fau, (2011) 2016, 873: "un gigantesque défouloir sous perfusion de testostérone et ne prétend pas être plus."

References. In addition to Dumont and Ahl and Fau, Augoustakis and Cyrino, 2017; Magerstädt, 2019, 249–279; Hobden and Potter, 2020, 29–54.

228. *The Eagle / The Eagle of the Ninth* (UK, US). Directed by Kevin Macdonald, written by Jeremy Brock and Rosemary Sutcliff, prod. by Focus Features, Film4, Toledo Productions, and Twins Financing; released worldwide between February 9 and March 24, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, fantasized Roman history, history of Roman Britain, an adaptation of a novel; 114 min.

Classical content & comments. The 9th Spanish Legion disappeared in Caledonia in 120 CE along with its Eagle standard. 20 years later, the son of the legion commander, Marcus Flavius Aquila, wants to exonerate his father's name. Eventually, after many complications, he manages to do it. Discharged from the army because of an injury, he goes over the Hadrian Wall

to investigate in the company of his Brigante slave Esca, whom he has saved from death in the arena. The pair travels disguised as an itinerant eye doctor with his assistant, and, finally, they find a Roman soldier living among the Celts. Through him, they come in contact with a tribe of Seal warriors. They find the Eagle, take it from the Seal warriors, and flee South, meeting on the way deserters from the 9th Legion who tell Marcus that his father died a hero. When they return to Roman Britain, Esca regains his freedom, the Eagle is back in Roman hands, and Marcus restores his father's honour. Adaptation of Rosemary Sutcliff's book *The Eagle of the Ninth* (1954), or rather a movie remake of the British television series *The Eagle of the Ninth* (1977) for adolescents, based on Sutcliff. Arguably influenced by the HBO series *Rome* in the way it was filmed. Use of Gaelic for increased authenticity. An allusion to the present times: K. Macdonald shows the bravery of a Roman soldier adventuring into a deadly hostile terrain and his struggle with a cruel and completely different foe to an American soldier in Afghanistan.

References. Davies, 2019, 129–158; McGeough, 2022, 297–298.

229. *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa / The Malay Chronicles: Bloodlines / Clash of Empires: The Battle for Asia* (MY). Directed and co-written by Yusry Abd Halim, co-written by Amir Hafizi, prod. by Norman and Edry Abdul Halim, Johan Lucas, and Amaludin Syukri for KRU Studios; released on March 10, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized history, an action movie – between peplum and kung fu, Roman history; 110 min.

Classical content & comments. An instance of Roman presence in the 2nd c. CE, as recounted by the sultan of Kedah, Mudzafar Shah, chronicler of the kingdom. Year 120: Marcus Carpenius, a noble Roman in Goa at a Roman trading post, saves the life of Merong, a Malaysian adventurer, who undertakes to escort him to his Chinese princess bride. The union will reinforce the relationship between China and Rome. On the way to Langkasuka, in Malaysia, Garuda pirates abduct the princess; there is a naval battle won with Chinese and Roman help, also thanks to Merong, who voluntarily sacrifices his life. Based on a 10th–11th-c. Malay chronicle describing the story of King Merong Mahawangsa, an alleged descendant of Alexander the Great and of the Kingdom of Kedah from its foundation to the conversion to Islam. Under Augustus, Romans opened a sea route through the Canal of the Pharaohs to India and China because Parthians had closed caravan trails.

230. “My Heart Will Go On.” S06E17. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, directed by Philip Sgriccia, written by Eric Charmelo and Nicole Snyder, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Kripke Enterprises, Wonderland Sound & Vision, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on April 15, 2011.

Genre & length. 121st episode of a fantasy television series of 15 seasons, 327 episodes, usually 38–45 min. per episode. This one runs 60 min.

Classical content & comments. Angels changed the past, averting the sinking of the Titanic. Moira Atropos is furious that destiny can be interfered with and tries to restore the past.

231. 2011–2019, *Game of Thrones* (US). Created and exec. prod. by David Benioff and D.B. Weiss, co-prod. by George R.R. Martin, Carolyn Strauss, et al. for HBO Entmt, Television 360, Grok! Television, Generator Entmt, Startling Television, and Bighead Littlehead; aired from April 17, 2011, to May 19, 2019.

Genre & length. Television series, an epic fantasy in a medieval palette; 8 seasons, 73 episodes, of various lengths between 50 and 82 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on *A Song of Ice and Fire* by G.R.R. Martin (b. 1948). 5 volumes were published in 1996–2011, with 2 more volumes expected (*The Winds of Winter*, *A Dream of Spring*) but repeatedly delayed. A prequel to *Game of Thrones*, *House of the Dragon*, premiered on HBO on August 21, 2022.

References. Gardner, 2022, 152–167; Potter, 2022, 217–232.

232. **“Venger César.”** E01. **“Rêves d’empire.”** E02. *Le destin de Rome* (FR). Directed by Fabrice Hourlier, co-written by F. Hourlier and Stéphanie Hauville, prod. by Sylvie Barbe for Arte France, Dockside Production, and Indigènes; aired on May 4, 2011.
Genre & length. Docudrama television miniseries, Roman history; 2 parts, 52 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Languages: French, Latin, Modern Greek. The time frame corresponds to the 2nd season of *Rome*. The usage of original languages additionally reinforces the historically accurate scenography, including the visuals of the battles of Philippi and Actium. An excellent ancient history teaching aid. The historical accuracy was made possible by a final budget of €1.3 mln. This was followed by another miniseries by F. Hourlier, S. Hauville, and S. Barbe: *Au nom d’Athènes* in 2012; see below, under the airing date.
233. **“The Curse of the Black Spot.”** S06E03. *Doctor Who* (UK). Directed by Jeremy Webb, prod. by Marcus Wilson; aired on BBC One on May 7, 2011.
Genre & length. An episode of a television series, SF, fantasy, time travel; 45 min.
Classical content. A doctor from the future disguised as a siren who anaesthetizes sick sailors with music and transfers them to his spaceship sickbay for treatment.
234. *Atlantis: End of a World, Birth of a Legend* (UK, SA). Directed by Tony Mitchell, written by Rhidian Brook, prod. by BBC Northern Ireland, Moonlighting Atlantis Productions, Erste Weltweit Medien, Discovery Channel, France Télévisions, and ProSieben Entmt; aired on BBC One on May 8, 2011.
Genre & length. Television film, docudrama explaining an ancient natural disaster; 60 min.
Classical content & comments. A team of historians and archaeologists assisted in producing the story of a massive volcanic eruption on Thera, which could have been the reason for the myth of Atlantis. It is presented as the story of a couple, Yisharu and Pinaruti. Heavily criticized for poor acting and dialogue, as well as the failed attempt to equal the 2003 BBC docudrama *Pompeii: The Last Day*.
References. Foka, 2018, 187–202.
235. *Where Do We Go Now?* / وهلا لوين؟ (LB, FR, EG, IT). Directed and written by Nadine Labaki, prod. by Anne-Dominique Toussaint for Rotana Studios, Rotana TV, Pathé, and Les Films des Tournelles; released on May 16, 2011.
Genre & length. Feature film, dramedy, a modern paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 110 min.
Classical content & comments. Inspired by the universal theme of Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* of women preventing and ending violence through non-violent means and appealing to the basic solidarity of women. In an isolated Lebanese village, Christians and Muslims, a church and a mosque, maintain a delicate balance despite the strife in the country at large. The women try to keep their menfolk unaware of what goes on outside the village. However, when one of them is killed in sectarian violence during a trip to a neighbouring town, violence may erupt despite the efforts of women, the priest, and the imam. The men are fed pastries with hashish, and when they sleep, the women remove their weapons. In the morning, Christian women greet their husbands dressed as Muslims and vice versa. The tension is released, and the men appreciate their women’s efforts.
References. Maurice, 2017, 212.
236. *Sinbad and the Minotaur* (AU). Directed by Karl Zwicky, written by Jim Noble, prod. by Grant Bradley, Dana Dubovsky, and Mark L. Lester for Limelight International Media Entmt; released on May 21, 2011.
Genre & length. Feature film (B), fantasy; 88 min.
Classical content & comments. Sinbad seeks an ivory scroll with the logs of Captain Minos indicating the way to the head of the Colossus of Rhodes, allegedly made out of gold and guarded

by the Minotaur. The sorcerer Al-Jibar, who has the scroll, also kidnaps Princess Tara. Sinbad steals from him both the scroll and Tara. Sinbad, pursued by Al-Jibar, arrives at the island where the head is hidden and finds an underground labyrinth guarded by the Minotaur.

237. *La source des femmes / The Source* (FR, BE, IT). Directed, written, and prod. by Radu Mihaileanu, co-written by Alain Michel Blanc, co-prod. by Luc Besson for Elzevir Films Oï Oï Oï Productions; released on May 21, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, a paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 135 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern, free paraphrase of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. The elements of the plot are similar to the 2008 *Absurdistan*. In an isolated North African village, women go on a sex strike against having to fetch water from a faraway well.

References. Maurice, 2017, 212.

238. "Alexander the Great." S02E04. *Mystery Files* (UK). Directed by Ben Mole, prod. by Joy Galane, Carl Hall, B. Mole, and Richard Sattin for Parthenon Entmt; aired on the National Geographic Channel on June 7–8, 2011.

Genre & length. An episode of a television series, docudrama, Greek history; 23 min.

Classical content & comments. Docudrama with anonymous actors playing Ptolemy, Diocletian, and Zenobia Septimia of Palmyre. Inquiry into the tomb of Alexander the Great in Alexandria, its disappearance or later destruction. One of the historians taking part in the episode was Andrew Michael Chugg (see Chugg, 2020, 65–74). The remaining episodes of season 2 did not deal with Classical Antiquity: the birth of Christ, Hitler, Marco Polo, Taj Mahal, Isaac Newton, Saladin, Captain Kidd, Pope Joan, Sitting Bull, the Virgin Queen, Zorro, Lawrence of Arabia.

239. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2* (UK, US). Directed by David Yates, written by Steve Kloves, prod. by David Heyman, David Barron, and J.K. Rowling for Warner Bros. Pictures and Heyday Films; released on July 7, 2011.

Genre & length. 8th feature film in a cycle, an adaptation of a novel, fantasy, witch show, school story, hidden world; 130 min.

Comment. An adaptation of the 2nd half of J.K. Rowling's 2007 novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

References. Hofmann, 2015, 163–175; Shafer, 2016; Alberti and Miller, 2018; Nisa and Sutrisno, 2018; Goldie, 2019; Cuny-Le Callet, 2022, 407–420.

240. *Morituris* (IT). Directed, written, and prod. by Raffaele Picchio, co-written by Gianluigi Perrone and Tiziano Martella, co-prod. by Vincenzo Manzo, G. Perrone, et al. for Fingerchop Movie Production; released on July 30, 2011; DVD released in 2013.

Genre & length. Feature film, a fantasy/horror take on Roman history; 85 min.

Classical content & comments. Spartacus' army of gladiators, crucified by the Romans, comes to life in contemporary Rome in reaction to 2 women being gang-raped and beaten. As a result, almost all of the characters end up crucified. The critics called it a gorefest, but the creators tried to explain: "The tagline of the film is 'evil prevails.' So happens. We didn't mean to make a horror-comedy but a surreal metaphor about the realistic process of evil actions. When a nuclear bomb falls, everybody dies" (Miska, 2011). Initially inspired by the 1976 gang rape, torture, and murder – the Circeo massacre – which occurred in Circeo, 100 km south of Rome. It was the topic of a *poliziotesco* movie directed by Sergio Greco and Massimo Felizatti, *I violenti di Roma bene* (1976). *Morituris* was banned in Italy until 2013.

241. *L'inconsolable* (FR, CH). Directed by Jean-Marie Straub, written by Cesare Pavese, prod. for Les Fées Productions and Belva GmbH; released on August 5, 2011.

Genre & length. A short, philosophy/mythology; 15 min.

Classical content & comments. A continuation of reflections on the myth of Orpheus based on Cesare Pavese's *Dialoghi*. See also *Il ginocchio di Artemide / Le genou d'Artémide* in 2008.

References. Winkler, 2020b, 258.

242. *The Legend of Awesomest Maximus / 301: The Legend of Awesomest Maximus Wallace Leonidas* (US). Directed by Jeff Kanew, prod. by National Lampoon, Farah Films, Vision Entmt, and Velvet Steamroller; released on August 5, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, a parody of peplum, Greek history; 90 min.

Classical content & comments. Foldingus, the King of Troy, commanded obese and clueless General Superplus Maximus to push back Greeks below the walls of the city but allowed the entry of a giant wooden phallus constructed by the enemies – a vulgar and silly parody of peplum, especially targeting *300* by Zack Snyder.

243. *Box Office 3D – Il film dei film / The Filmmest of Films* (IT). Directed, written, and prod. by Ezio Greggio, co-written by Fausto Brizzi, Marco Martani, Rudy De Luca, and Steve Haberman, for Mendips Productions, Mondo Home Entmt, Nimar Studios, and Talents Factory; released on August 30, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, a parody of popular blockbusters; 90 min.

Classical content & comments. A parody of box-office hits, including *Gladiator*, as segment 2. Other spoofs: *The Da Vinci Code*, *The Godfather*, *Twilight*, *Fast & Furious*, *Grease*, James Bond films, *Das Boot*, *Zorro*, *Avatar*, *Harry Potter* films, and *The Lord of the Rings*.

References. Dumont, 2013, 541.

244. “The God Complex.” S06E11. *Doctor Who* (UK). Directed by Nick Hurran, written by Toby Whithouse and Steven Moffat, prod. by S. Moffat, Piers Wenger, Beth Willis, et al. for BBC Cymru Wales; aired on BBC One, September 17, 2011.

Genre & length. An episode of a television series, time travel, fantasy, SF; 49 min.

Classical content & comments. The Doctor and his companions wander into a Labyrinth-like hotel, where a Minotaur is trapped. He feeds on people's strong convictions, and the lack of such beliefs starves him.

References. Potter, 2018j, 168–186.

245. “Finding Atlantis.” S01E22. *Expedition Week* (CA, US). Directed and co-written by Graeme Ball, co-written by Charles E. Anderson, prod. by Kathryn Liptrott-Galligan and Javier Quintana for Associated Producers of Canada and National Geographic Canada; aired on the National Geographic Channel on November 9, 2011.

Genre & length. 22nd episode of a television documentary series; 60 min.

Classical content & comments. The documentary discusses Prof. Richard Freund's (Hartford University, CT) contention that Atlantis was located in Spain's Doñaña National Park, north of Cadiz, and was destroyed by a tsunami. This claim has been dismissed as a misinterpretation of partial research results.

246. *Immortals* (US). Written by Vlas and Charley Parlapanides, directed by Tarsem Singh, prod. by Gianni Nunnari, Marc Canton, and Ryan Kavanaugh for Virgin Produced, Rogue, and Atmosphere Entmt; released on November 11, 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, mythological fantasy; 110 min.

Classical content & comments. A free paraphrase of known mythological motifs and heroes mashed with SF (e.g., the Epirus bow as an ultimate weapon of mass destruction). Titans are let out of Tartarus and want to destroy the Olympians. Details of the convoluted plot are difficult to grasp, which does not seem to matter anyway. Roger Ebert (2011), who already called T. Singh's



Chapter 2

2006 film, *The Fall*, “the extravagant visual orgy, a free-fall from reality into uncharted realms,” saw *Immortals* as its unexpected “twin.”

References. Tomasso, 2015b, 154–155; Toscano, 2018, 113–115; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 157–180.

247. *Psyche perspicua pulchritudine / Amour et Psyche* (CH). Directed, written, and prod. by Claude Aubert, Lausanne, VD; released in 2011.

Genre & length. Feature film, presentation of a myth; 90 min.

Classical content & comments. A retelling of the myth of the beautiful Psyche and the problems caused by Venus’ jealousy. An amateur movie shot near Lausanne, Switzerland.

References. Dumont, 2013, 136.

2012

248. *Mia und der Minotaurus* (DE). Directed and written by Florian Schnell, co-written by Jan Galli, prod. by Friedemann Goetz and Christian Hergenröther for Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg; released on January 1, 2012.

Genre & length. A short feature film, elements of anime, mythological fantasy; 33 min.

Classical content & comments. An 8-year-old girl and her teenage brother mourn their father and go through the drama of addiction. Greek myths allow the girl to understand the situation of her addicted brother and the toxic role of his dealer. Ultimately, she is able to help her family recover. It won the Children Jury Golden Sparrow Award at the 2012 German Children’s-Film and TV Festival in Erfurt.

References. Marciniak, 2020b, 25–26.

249. *Thermae Romae* (JP). Directed by Hideki Takeuchi, written by Mari Yamazaki and Shōgo Mutō, prod. by Fuji TV; aired from January 12 to January 26, 2012.

Genre & length. Anime television series, based on a time-travelling historical manga comedy; 6 episodes, 24 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. In 128 CE, a Roman designer and architect, Lucius Modestus, stressed by a commission loss, goes to a bathhouse and from there time-travels to 21st-c. Japan, where he visits modern bathhouses; after his return to Ancient Rome, he applies their solutions to Roman *thermae*. M. Yamazaki claims that the 2 cultures in the world “that have loved baths the most: [are] the Japanese and the Romans!” (Loo, 2011). Based on a 2009 manga by Yamazaki.

References. Kovacs and Marshall, 2016, xxvi–xxviii; Wang, 2018; Kawana, 2018, 259–286; Chang, 2023.

250. “Time after Time.” S07E12. *Supernatural* (US). Created and written by Eric Kripke, directed by Philip Sgriccia, co-written by Robbie Thompson, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Kripke Enterprises, Wonderland Sound & Vision, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on January 13, 2012.

Genre & length. 138th episode of a television series of 15 seasons, fantasy with supernatural and mythological elements; 43 min.

Classical content & comments. Chronos, the god of time, is the monster of the week and is killed with a 1,000-year-old olive tree branch cut by the Vestals and covered in blood.

251. “The Slice Girls.” S07E13. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, directed by Jerry Wanek, written by Eugenie Ross-Leming and Brad Buckner, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Kripke Enterprises, Wonderland Sound & Vision, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on February 3, 2012.

Genre & length. 139th episode of a 15-season series, supernatural-mythological fantasy, horror; 42 min.



Classical content & comments. Amazons, daughters of Ares and Harmonia, made a deal with Harmonia and became monsters. Their gestation length was 36 hours, and their offspring matured almost immediately. As a right of passage, these new Amazons had to kill their fathers. Dean has a daughter with the Amazon Lydia. She is prevented from killing her father by Sam, who shoots her.

252. *Cesare deve morire / Caesar Must Die* (IT). Directed and written by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, prod. by Grazia Volpi for Rai Cinema, La Talee, and Stemal Entmt; released at the Berlin International Film Festival on February 19, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, docudrama; 76 min.

Classical content & comments. Inmates of the Rebibbia Penitentiary in Rome rehearse and stage Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* in 2011. Using actual inmates as actors adds an emotional dimension to the movie. It is filmed mainly in black and white. The film highlights the humanity of prisoners serving long sentences for serious crimes. Golden Bear for the Best Film at the 2012 Berlin Festival.

253. *Titans of Newark* (US). Directed, written, and exec. prod. by Michael J. Marino, prod. by Raisa Machado for Chapman University (grad. diploma); released on March 12, 2012.

Genre & length. A short, comedy, mythologically inspired fantasy; 25 min.

Classical content & comments. On Mount Olympus, the Greek gods wonder whether their power over humans has waned. Zeus bets with Poseidon that he can still rule humans by selecting a man at random and making him a test subject. M.J. Marino won an award for Best Humor Film at the San Diego Comic-Con International Independent Film Festival in 2013.

254. *The Hunger Games* (US). Directed and co-written by Gary Ross, co-written by Suzanne Collins and Billy Ray, prod. by Nina Jacobson and Jon Kilik for Lionsgate and Color Force; released on March 12, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, dystopic SF, action movie, adaptation of a novel, the first film in a cycle of 4; 142 min.

Classical content & comments. Panem is a state composed of 12 districts. As an annual reminder of a failed uprising, each district must send 1 girl and 1 boy, aged 12–18, as a tribute to compete in games to the death of all but 1 survivor. Similar to the Athenian tribute paid to Minos, the King of Crete, the story we know from the myth of Theseus. 1st film in the 2012–2015 cycle under the same title. The movie was followed by *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (2013), *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay. Part 1* (2014), and *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay. Part 2* (2015). See under years of release. Based on S. Collins's 2008 trilogy, *The Hunger Games*. The film cycle received 51 nominations and won 28 awards.

References. Henthorne, 2012; Pharr and Clark, 2012; Franko, 2013, 24–26; Harrisson, 2014, 321–338; Makins, 2014, 339–357, 2015, 280–306; Kaczmarek, 2016, 77–88; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 279–306; Janka and Stierstorfer, 2022.

255. *Spartacus: Vengeance* (US). Directed by Michael Hurst, written by Steven S. DeKnight, prod. by S.S. DeKnight, Sam Raimi, Rob Tapert, et al.; aired on Starz Network from January 27 to March 30, 2012.

Genre & length. 2nd season of a television series, fictionalized Roman history; 3 seasons, 10 episodes, 52 min. each.

Comment. See under the first part of the series aired in 2010 and its 2011 prequel, *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena*.

References. Magerstädt, 2019, 249–279.



256. ***Wrath of the Titans*** (US, ES). Story by Greg Berlanti, David Leslie Johnson, and Dan Mazeau, directed by Jonathan Liebesman, written by D. Mazeau and D.L. Johnson, based on characters by Beverley Cross, prod. by Basil Iwanyk and Polly Cohen Johnson for Legendary Pictures, Thunder Road Pictures, Cott Productions, and Furia de Titanes II A.I.E.; released on March 30, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, fast action, mythological fantasy, a sequel; 99 min.

Classical content & comments. 10 years after the events of the 2010 *Clash of the Titans* and after his wife Io's death, Perseus lives in a fishing village along with their son Helios. Perseus, riding Pegasus, attempts to save Zeus, who is incarcerated in Tartarus. He asks Queen Andromeda for assistance, as well as Agenor, Poseidon's son, and Hephaestus. He fights the Cyclopes, is almost lost in the Minotaur's Labyrinth, attacks, and vanquishes Cronus with the spear of Triam (Zeus' thunderbolt combined with Poseidon's trident and Hades' pitchfork) he got in the previous movie. He then marries Andromeda, as he was supposed to 10 years earlier. *Wrath of the Titans* is a sequel to the 2010 film, *Clash of the Titans*.

References. Gloyn, 2013, 69–70; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 143–155; Maurice, 2019b, 62, 157; McGeough, 2022, 210.

257. ***Prometheus*** (UK, US). Directed by Ridley Scott, written by John Spaihts and Damon Lindelof, prod. by R. Scott, David Giler, and Walter Hill for Dune Entmt, Scott Free Productions, and Brandywine Productions; released on April 11, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, SF horror, action; 124 min.

Classical content & comments. R. Scott explains his choice of title: "It's the story of creation; the gods and the man who stood against them" (Bamigboye, 2011). According to the designers, Neville Page and Carlos Huante, the appearance of the Engineers, the race responsible for the existence of humans, was influenced by classical statues of Graeco-Roman gods, Joseph William Turner and William Blake, the Statue of Liberty, Michelangelo's David, and Elvis Presley. A prequel to R. Scott's 1979 movie *Alien*, which became a franchise producing films (8 films as of 2022) and 1 television series (*Alien*) announced to premiere in 2023 but delayed until 2025.

References. Nero, 2021; Ruiz, 2023.

258. ***Thermae Romae*** (JP). Created by Mari Yamazaki, directed by Hideki Takeuchi, written by Shôgo Mutô, prod. by Kaoru Matsuzaki, Miyoshi Kikuchi, and Naoto Inaba for Fuji TV; aired on April 28, 2012.

Genre & length. Television film, an adaptation of the anime television series; 108 min.

Classical content & comments. In 128 CE, a Roman designer and architect, Lucius Modestus, stressed by the loss of his job, goes to a bathhouse and from there time-travels to 21st-c. Japan, where he visits modern bathhouses and applies their solutions to Roman *thermae* once he is back in Ancient Rome. Live-action film adaptation of anime series *Thermae Romae*, and prequel to *Thermae Romae II*, produced in 2014.

References. Kovacs and Marshall, 2016, xxvi–xxviii; Cyrino, 2022b, 82–97.

259. **"Dipper vs. Manliness."** S01E06. ***Gravity Falls*** (US). Created by Alex Hirsch, creative director: Michael Rianda (season 1), prod. by Disney Television Animation; aired on Disney Channel on July 20, 2012.

Genre & length. 6th episode of an animated television series; 23:01 min.

Classical content & comments. A boy, Dipper, is not strong, which, for him, means that he is not a real man. He meets a Minotaur (called Manotaur) in the forest, who takes pity on him and helps him with his *mansformation* by passing trials like the other Manotaurs. His last task is to cut off one of the heads of Multi-Bear, which he almost does, but when the Multi-Bear asks to listen to a song before he dies, the 2 young people become friends. Dipper understands that



physical strength is not required in a man but rather inner strength to be who you are. An example of classical reception helping to change a monster into a positive creature.

References. Mik, 2019b.

260. *Ruby Sparks* (US). Directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, written by Zoe Kazan, prod. by Albert Berger and Ron Yerxa for Bona Fide Productions; released by Fox Searchlight Pictures on July 25, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, romantic comedy, fantasy, paraphrase of a myth; 104 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern paraphrase of the myths of Pygmalion and Narcissus. A female character, Ruby, created by a young writer, comes alive. At first, the writer gives her traits he considers desirable, adding them to the novel, but eventually, he releases her from his control. After she is gone, he writes a book entitled *The Girlfriend*. Later, he meets Ruby in the park. She is reading his novel. Although she has no memory of him, she enjoys the book.

References. Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 361–386; Winkler, 2020b, 178.

261. *Argo* (US). Directed, prod., and starred by Ben Affleck, written by Chris Terrio, co-prod. by George Clooney and Grant Heslov for GK Films, Smokehouse Productions, and Warner Bros. Pictures; released on August 31, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, spy story, action, recent history; 120 min.

Classical content & comments. A movie about the so-called Canadian Caper (1979–1980). The US-Canadian covert operation to extract 6 American diplomats from Iran used the cover of an alleged movie production – *Argo* – with the fleeing diplomats pretending to be the film crew. Based on Tony Mendez’s *The Master of Disguise* (1999) and Joshua Bearman’s 2007 *Wire* article “The Great Escape: How the CIA Used a Fake Sci-Fi Flick to Rescue Americans from Tehran.” The film was, in fact, previously planned as a SF/fantasy production by Barry Geller based on Roger Zelazny’s 1967 novel *Lord of Light* but had to be abandoned because of financial irregularities. The title was changed for the operation to reinforce the idea of a mythological fantasy. The film won 3 Oscars in 2012: Best Film, Best Adapted Screen Play, and Best Film Editing.

262. *Imperium, poder de vida y muerte* (ES). Directed by Carlos Sedes and Jorge Torregrassa, prod. by Bambú Producciones and Antena 3; aired between September 5 and October 11, 2012.

Genre & length. Television series, the Iberian Peninsula in Roman times, Roman history; 1 season, 6 episodes, 60 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Sued by Cato the Elder for having massacred the Lusitanian population, Servius Sulpicius Galba (Roman emperor in 68–69 CE) was supported by various corrupted senators. Quintus Servilius Caepio, a Roman praetor, ordered him to eliminate continuing resistance in the Celtiberian town of Numantia. He was defeated, his legions crashed, Roman support ended, and his family was dishonoured. He also lost his wife, Claudia, and their son, who both lived with his enemy, Quintus Servilius. Galba also had to face Cora de Capua, the daughter of senator Tiberius, jailed for having denounced the corruption of the oligarchs; she wanted revenge for her father but also the death of her mother and brother. In the end, Galba’s son Fabius died, and his brother, Octavius, betrayed him by becoming a supporter of Quintus Servilius. It was a well-produced series, a sequel to the 2010 *Hispania, la leyenda*. Low ratings caused a reduction in the number of episodes from the planned 13 to only 6.

263. *The Ship of Theseus* (IN). Directed and written by Anand Gandhi, prod. by Sohumi Shah for Recyclewala Films; released on September 6, 2012.

Genre & length. Feature film, contemporary drama about an ancient paradox applied to today’s ethics; 143 min.

Classical content & comments. The title alludes to a famous paradox first related by Plutarch in the *Lives* (*Theseus*, 23.1): Theseus’ voyage to Crete and back to Athens; if all the parts of his



decaying ship rot and are gradually replaced, when will the ship cease to be Theseus' ship? The last scene alludes to the Platonic cave – the ethics of organ transplants and similar procedures. The film won a couple of prizes for best film (Transilvania International Film Festival Award and 61st National Film Award) and other awards.

References. Toscano, 2018, 115–124.

264. **“What’s Up, Tiger Mommy?”** S08E02. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, written by Andrew Dabb and Daniel Loflin, directed by John F. Showalter, prod. by Todd Aronauer et al. for Wonderland Sound & Vision and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on October 10, 2012. **Genre & length.** 151st episode of a 15-season series, SF fantasy, horror, supernatural and mythological elements; 42 min. **Classical content & comments.** The monster of the week is Plutus, the god of greed, who is auctioning a tablet with “the word of god,” which can close the entry to Hell and keep all the demons inside. His assistant, Beau, an unknown minor deity, stabs him with a stake covered in blood and kills him. However, Sam kills Beau soon after with Thor’s hammer, Mjöllnir.
265. *Astérix et Obélix. Au service de Sa Majesté / Asterix and Obelix: God Save Britannia* (FR, ES, IT, HU). Co-written by Laurand Tirard and Grégoire Vigneron, directed by L. Tirard, prod. by Olivier Delbosc et Marc Missonnier for Fidélité Films; released on October 17, 2012. **Genre & length.** Feature film, live action, comedy, Roman history, based on a comic book; 110 min. **Classical content & comments.** A fictionalized, satirical history of Caesar’s conquest of Britain. Adaptation of Albert Uderzo and René Goscinny’s comic books: *Asterix in Britain* (1965) and *Asterix and the Normans* (1966).
266. *Battlestar Galactica: Blood & Chrome* (US). Directed by Jonas Pete, written by Michael Taylor, David Eyck, Bradley Thompson, prod. by D. Eyck et al. for Canal+, David Eyck Productions, and Universal Cable Productions; aired November 9, 2012 (online); aired on SyFy on February 10, 2013. **Genre & length.** Aired either as a web series of 10 short episodes or as 1 television film, military SF, space opera; 131 min. **Classical content & comments.** In the 10th year of the 1st Cylon War, William Adama is assigned as a pilot to a freighter. The ship is transporting a scientist, Dr. Becca Kelly, but her destination changes en route, and they must fly into Cylon-controlled space. Dr. Kelly’s secret mission is to upload a virus to the Cylon communication array, but wanting to end the war, she sends information about the fleet to the Cylons. She is shot by a member of the crew, and when the Cylons arrive, one of them breaks her neck. The ship returns to *Galactica*, where Adama learns that Commander Nash expected Kelly’s betrayal and counted on the Cylons’ absence to attack their defenceless bases. A prequel to the remake of the 1978 series *Battlestar Galactica*. **References.** Bataille, 2014, 465–482; Garvey, 2014, 215–228; L’Allier, 2014, 285–297; Tomasso, 2015a, 243–259.
267. *Au nom d’Athènes: 1. Vaincre à Marathon 2. Divine Salamine* (FR). Directed by Fabrice Hourlier, prod. by Sylvie Barbe and Stéphanie Hauville for Docside Productions and Indigènes Productions; aired on Arte on November 24, 2012. **Genre & length.** Educational docudrama miniseries, Greek history; 51 min. and 53 min. **Classical content & comments.** Following F. Hourlier’s *Le destin de Rome* (2011), 2 episodes of Greek history, Marathon and Salamina, were recreated with Greek and Persian actors speaking Ancient Greek and Persian (with subtitles) and appearances of a few experts – an educational movie, very well designed and produced.
268. *Mitos & leyendas* (ES). Directed by Eulogio Romero, created, written, and prod. by Nestor Hernandez and Eulogio Romero for Koncept Company; aired on RTVE in 2012.



Genre & length. Television series, a retelling of myths; 1 season of 14 episodes, 25 min. each.

Classical content & comments. 1. "El destino." 2. "Edipo." 3. "Prometeo." 4. "Eneas." 5. "Perseo." 6. "Orfeo." 7. "Medea." 8. "Dedalo." 9. "El Triunfo de Hércules." 10. "Heracles." 11. "Electra." 12. "Ulises." 13. "Aquiles y la Guerra de Troya." 14. "Dioses y héroes." Excessive violence, gore, and brutality. Certainly not suitable for a young audience.

2013

269. *Spartacus: War of the Damned* (US). Directed by Michael Hurst, prod. by Rob Tapert and Chloe Smith; aired on Starz Network from January 25 to April 12, 2013.

Genre & length. 3rd season of a television series, fictionalized Roman history; 10 episodes, 52 min. each.

Comment. See listings for season 1, 2, and the 2011 prequel, *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena*.

References. Magerstädt 2019, 249–279, comparatively analyses and discusses the entire series as 1 of 8 case studies.

270. "Remember the Titans." S08E16. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, directed by Steve Boyum, written by Daniel Lofin, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Wonderland Sound & Vision and Warner Bros. Films; aired on The CW on February 27, 2013.

Genre & length. 165th episode of a 15-season series, SF fantasy, supernatural-mythological elements, horror; 42 min.

Classical content & comments. Prometheus is the first benevolent god in the series. Artemis, like Atropos, is one of the few not killed at the end of the episode. Cursed by Zeus, Prometheus dies every day and resurrects; the same curse afflicts his son from a union with a mortal woman. Sam and Dean try to summon Zeus to force him to lift the curse and set a Zeus' Trap according to the ritual used by an ancient hunter, Drakopoulos, involving the symbol of infinity and a stake carved from a tree struck by lightning. Artemis' arrows and her blade could also kill Zeus. In the end, Artemis, outraged by Zeus torturing Prometheus, shot an arrow at him, but Zeus pushes Prometheus in front to take the arrow instead. Prometheus forced the arrow through his chest and into Zeus. Both died. Zeus' death lifted the curse, ending the threat to Oliver.

271. 2013–2022, *Plebs* (UK). Written by Sam Leifer and Tom Basden, directed by S. Leifer, prod. by T. Basden, Caroline Leddy, S. Leifer, and Teddy Leifer for Rise Films; aired on ITV2 from March 2, 2013 to November 11, 2019, a special aired on ITVX on December 8, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, a sitcom; 5 seasons, 38 episodes, 25 min. each + 1 special of 85 min. Season 1: 2013, season 2: 2014, season 3: 2016, season 4: 2018, season 5: 2019, special: 2022.

Classical content & comments. Everyday life of young people from the provinces who came to the capital, i.e., Ancient Rome; themes recall contemporary issues. It is very amusing but occasionally excessively vulgar and gross. The title reflects the social status of the characters – no mythological inspiration. In the style of Talbot Roswell's *Up Pompeii!*, aired in 1969–1970, and Rory McGrath and Jimmy Mulville's *Chelmsford 123* (1988–1990). *Plebs* won the 2013 Best New Comedy Program at the British Comedy Awards, the 2014 Royal Television Society Award for Best Scripted Comedy, and was nominated for several other awards. The special (feature-length) *Plebs: Soldiers of Rome* functions as the show's finale and tells the story of the main characters joining the army hoping for various benefits but instead serving without distinction in far-away unsettled lands.

272. 2013–2017, *Orphan Black* (CA, UK). Directed by John Fawcett, written by Graeme Manson, prod. by G. Manson, David Fortier, and Ivan Schneeberg for Temple Street Productions, BBC America, and Bell Media; aired on Space and BBC America between March 30, 2013, and August 12, 2017.

- Genre & length.** Television series, SF, thriller; 5 seasons, 50 episodes, 43 min. each.
- Classical content & comments.** Mythical allusions: Project Castor, Project Leda, Swan Man, Helena. Over 60 awards, 23 for the actress Tatyana Maslany, who plays the roles of all the clones.
273. **“The Deep End.”** S01E15. *Gravity Falls* (US). Created by Alex Hirsch, creative director: Michael Rianda (season 1), prod. by Disney Animation Television; aired on Disney Channel on May 11, 2013.
- Genre & length.** 15th episode of an animated television series; 22:06 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Mermando the Merman, a descendant of Sirens – half human (Mexican), half Siren – was caught by a fisherman and almost sold to a bait shop. He was saved and lay in a public swimming pool. Mabel, a girl who falls in love with Mermando, helps him return to the ocean. He sings and plays the guitar and has no bad intentions towards people.
- References.** Mik, 2019c.
274. *Odysseus. La vengeance d’Ulysse* (FR, DE, IT, PT). Created and written by Frédéric Azémar, directed by Stéphane Giusti, co-written by Frédéric Krivine and Olivier Kohn, prod. by Christophe Valette, Stéphane Drouet, and Massimiliano La Pegna for GMT Productions, Makingprod, Sunflag, Movihheart, Arte F, RAI Fiction, RTP Radio and Portuguese Television, and TV5 Monde ; aired on Arte from June 13 to July 11, 2013.
- Genre & length.** Television series, a free retelling of the myth; 1 season, 12 episodes, 45 min. each.
- Classical content & comments.** The budget for the series was €14 mln, equivalent to the cost of the pilot of the series *Rome*. Myth of Odysseus, as seen by Ithacans waiting 10 years for him during the Trojan War and 10 years of his return journey. Penelope is pressured to marry one of the suitors, who is to replace Odysseus on the throne. A shipwrecked Odysseus, accompanied by a young secretary named Homer, who writes down all the events, arrives secretly on the island. Telemachus and Nestor, trying to stall the suitors, spread a rumour that Odysseus has returned. The most aggressive suitor, Antinoos, usurps power. Odysseus’ family is at the point of being executed when Menelaus, King of Sparta, arrives to save the queen and to bring back order and justice under Sparta’s protection. Odysseus reveals himself, and suitors who refuse to swear allegiance to him are eliminated. To guarantee an alliance with the Pheacians, Odysseus wants Telemachus to marry Nausicaa, even though she loves the slave Clea. An unhinged Odysseus begins to see traitors everywhere. When Menelaus’ fleet becomes a threat to Ithaca, Telemachus arrests Odysseus and takes command of the army. Odysseus comes to his senses and faces Menelaus in single combat in which they both die – the Spartans retreat. Telemachus becomes king and marries Clea. After the initial 5 slow-paced episodes, the action leads rapidly to the final climax, the dying Odysseus tells Telemachus how much he loves and admires him. Characters are well developed, and the plot is psychologically convincing even if mythical elements do not follow the sources; it is logically constructed and well told. Universal themes, e.g., absolute power vs democracy, lust for power, and relations between father and son.
- References.** Dumont, 2013, 656–657; Winkler, 2017, 361–363.
275. *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters* (US). Directed by Thor Freudenthal, written by Marc Guggenheim, prod. by Karen Rosenfelt and Michael Barnathan for Sunswept Entmt, 1492 Pictures, and TSG Entmt; released on August 7, 2013.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, fantasy, adventure for teens; 106 min.
- Comment.** Adaptation of Rick Riordan’s 2006 novel, *The Sea of Monsters*.
- References.** Paul, 2017, 231–242; MacNeill, 2019; Foster, 2020, 181–198.
276. *Hercules: The Brave and the Bold* (US). Directed and written by David A. Malone, co-written by Tim Holmes, prod. by D.A. Malone, Denita Malone, and Bernard Malone for 3 Kings Productions and 5 Star Productions; released on August 13, 2013.

Genre & length. Feature film, revised mythology, comedy; 75 min.

Classical content & comments. Hades and Ares organized a failed attempt to attack Olympus and its main defender, Hercules, and take power from Zeus. Low production and performance values, lack of professionalism.

277. **“Troy Story.”** S04E24. *Phineas and Ferb* (US). Directed by Robert F. Hughes, prod. for Disney Television Animation; aired on September 20, 2013.

Genre & length. An episode of an animated television series; episodes are 12 min. long.

Classical content. *Iliad*, Trojan War, Agamemnon, Helen, Paris, Trojan Horse.

References. Mik, 2020b.

278. **2013–2015, *Atlantis*** (UK). Created and written by Johnny Capps, Julian Murphy, and Howard Overman, directed by Justin Molotnikov (8 episodes), Declan O’Dwyer (6), Alice Troughton (5), Lawrence Gough (3), Jeremy Webb (2), J. Murphy (1), prod. by Urban Myth Films, co-prod. with BBC America for BBC Cymru Wales; aired from September 28, 2013, to May 16, 2015; DVD released on May 25, 2015.

Genre & length. Television series, a mash-up of modified versions of the myths of Atlantis, Minotaur, Theseus, Medusa, and others; 2 seasons, 25 episodes, 45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Jason, a 21st-c. young man, looks for his missing father. He is magically transported to Crete/Atlantis during Minos’ reign, and there plays the role of the mythological Theseus. After volunteering to die for a friend, he kills the Minotaur, who is revealed to have been an enchanted man. The romance between Jason and Ariadne leads to a conflict with Pasiphae, Ariadne’s stepmother, who wants to marry her to her nephew. She is slowly poisoning Minos and wants to take power for herself. New versions of many myths evolve around Jason, in addition to the Cretan myth. Maenads, Medusa, baby Oedipus, Circe: love “potion” – song of the Sirens, Circe forces Jason to promise to kill Pasiphae; Furies, Pandora’s Box – the girl Medusa becomes a Gorgon, Hecate – eating food sacrificed to her transforms Jason into a wolfish hound during the night, Pasiphae condemns Ariadne to death. Season 2: Minos is dead, Ariadne is queen but must fight Pasiphae. Palladium, the magical protection of Atlantis, is stolen. Pasiphae resurrects an army of zombies. The Gray Sisters tell Jason that only the blood of a living Gorgon can cure mortally wounded Ariadne. Pasiphae attempts to stop Jason and Ariadne’s wedding; she catches Jason and will execute him for allegedly killing the Oracle, whom Medusa petrified. Hercules is jailed, too, but Ariadne helps both escape. The gods refuse to confirm Pasiphae as queen; she tortures Ariadne, hoping she will declare her the ruler. Medusa feels guilty and again opens Pandora’s Box, turning into a Gorgon. Jason enters Atlantis carrying her cut-off head. He learns that Pasiphae is his mother; at the urging of his friends, he seeks his father, Aeson, in the leper colony. He is attacked by soldiers and miraculously saved by Medea. Back in Atlantis, he is a prisoner again, but Pasiphae, warned by Cassandra that the gods are against his execution, orders him to fight in the arena from where he is saved by his father, who, as a leper, removes bodies of fallen gladiators. Jason returns to save people oppressed by Pasiphae’s rule – the only way is to kill the queen. Ariadne and Jason regain power. Medea returns to Colchis and sends a magical call to Jason – what saves him is the BBC’s decision to axe the series.

References. Potter, 2018a, 125–140; Olechowska, 2020b.

279. **2013–2014, *Witches of East End*** (US). Developed by Maggie Friedman, written by M. Friedman, Josh Reims, et al., directed by Mark Waters, Allan Arkush, et al., prod. by M. Friedman, Erwin Stoff, A. Arkush, et al. for 3 Arts Entmt, Curly-Girly Productions, and Fox 21; aired on Lifetime between October 6, 2013, and October 5, 2014.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, witch show, a hidden world; 2 seasons, 23 episodes, 44 min. each.

- Classical content & comments.** Latin spells, Latin grimoire. S01E06: “Potentia Noctis.” Based on Melissa de la Cruz’s 2011 novel, *Witches of East End*.
- References.** Olechowska, 2016, 407–408.
- 280. *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (US).** Directed by Francis Lawrence, screenplay by Simon Beaufoy and Michael deBruyn [Michael Arndt], prod. by Nina Jacobson and Jon Kilik for Lionsgate and Color Force; released on November 11, 2013.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, dystopian SF adventure; 146 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Classically sounding names: Plutarch Heavensbee, Romulus Thread, Claudius Templesmith, Brutus, Flavius, Octavia, Venia, Seneca Crane, Cinna, Caesar Flickerman, Messala, Castor and Pollux, Fulvia, Crassus Xanthos Snow, Coriolanus Snow, Darius. Based on Suzanne Collins’s novel *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. 2nd movie in the cycle.
- References.** Harrison, 2014, 321–338; Makins, 2014, 339–357, 2015, 280–306.
- 281. *Gods Behaving Badly* (US).** Directed and prod. by Marc Turtletaub, written by Marie Phillips and Josh Goldfaden, co-prod. by Peter Saraf and Caroline Jaczbo for Big Beach Films and Red Hour Films; released on November 13, 2013.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, comic mythological fantasy; 90 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Based on Marie Phillips’s 2007 novel under the same title. Greek gods (Zeus, Hades, Demeter, Persephone, Aphrodite, Artemis, Apollo, Ares, Hermes, Dionysus, Eros), having lost all their believers, live in disgrace in New York. Apollo falls in love with their human cleaning lady, Alice, who already has a boyfriend, Neil, and all sorts of unfortunate events happen modelled on a version of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Apollo tricks Zeus into killing Alice with his thunderbolt, and Neil embarks on a katabasis to bring her back to the world of the living.
- 282. *Mitópolis / Mythopolis* (CZ).** Directed by Aleksandra Hetmerová, prod. by Bára Příkaská for FAMU Productions; released in 2013.
- Genre & length.** Animated short, a revised version of ancient monsters; 11:36 min.
- Classical content & comments.** Cerberus, Chimera, Cyclops, Harpies, Medusa, Minotaur, Satyrs, Sirens, and Sphinx are integrated into everyday modern life.
- References.** Zarzycka, 2018a.
- 283. *Artémis, cœur d’artichaut* (FR).** Written, directed, and prod. by Hubert Viel, music by H. Viel, for Artisans du films (II) and Cinéma 93; released in 2013; DVD released by Potemkine Films on April 1, 2014.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, comedy, fantasy adventure; 64 min.
- Classical content & comments.** It is an original story of the goddess Artemis, who appears in contemporary Caen as a student of literature. She is bored until she meets the nymph Kalie Steaux (*sic!*), and they become friends. It was lightly inspired by Callimachos’ *Hymn to Artemis* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. She maintains her divine qualities and powers, guards her solitude, and defends herself from unwanted male attention. She defends Kalie from 2 policemen. In black and white, influenced by the French Nouvelle Vague. The film received the 1st prize at the Festival du Moyen Métrage in Brive-la-Gaillarde. H. Viel, the writer, director, and producer, admitted to being influenced by Jean-Luc Godard, Éric Rohmer, Maurice Pialat, and Philippe Garrel, as well as by the Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki (Gautreau, 2014).

2014

284. *The Legend of Hercules* (US). Directed by Renny Harlin, written by Sean Hood and Daniel Giat, prod. by Danny Lerner et al. for Millennium Films, Nu Boyana Film Studios, and GEM Entmt KFT; released on January 10, 2014.

Genre & length. Feature film, mythological fantasy; 99 min.

Classical content & comments. The life of Hercules from birth to a happy end with Hebe, a Cretan princess, as his wife. His older brother, Iphicles, and Amphitryon, his alleged mortal father, try to kill him many times. After several dramatic twists in the plot, Hercules kills Amphitryon avenging his murdered mother, Alcmene, and marries Hebe; they have a child and live happily ever after.

References. Blanshard, 2018, 28–42; Curley, 2018, 185–187; Alvares and Salzman-Mitchell, 2020, 545–566; Gordon, 2020, 591–612; Janka, 2021, 241–243; McGeough, 2022, 223.

285. *Pompeii* (US, DE, CA). Directed and prod. by Paul W.S. Anderson, written by Janet Scott Batchler, Lee Batchler, Michael Robert Johnson, prod. for TreeStar Pictures, FilmDistrict, Constantin Film, etc.; released on February 18, 2014.

Genre & length. Feature film, historical fiction with a strong romantic element, disaster/action movie, Roman history; 102 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on the account of the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE preserved in 2 of Pliny's letters to Tacitus, on archaeological excavations, and aerial photography. The story begins in Roman Britain and then moves to Rome and finally to Naples. The couple of protagonists, Cassia and Milo, were inspired by the famous cast of the so-called twin lovers from Pompeii. In 2017, archaeologists discovered that the 2 victims of the eruption were most probably both men. Pliny the Younger, in his letter to Tacitus (*Epist.* 6.16.11), describes the death of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, who instead of fleeing from the vicinity of Mount Vesuvius, decided to join his friend at Stabiae and to the last moment refused to believe that a major eruption was indeed underway and instructed the ship's captain: "Fortune favours the bold; try to reach Pomponianus." Fortune did not favour him.

References. Hobden and Potter, 2020, 29–54.

286. *300: Rise of an Empire* (US). Directed by Noam Murro, written by Zack Snyder and Kurt Johnstad, prod. by Marty P. Ewing, Frank Miller, Z. Snyder, et al. for Warner Bros., Legendary Entmt, Cruel & Unusual Films, Atmosphere Entmt MM, Hollywood Gang Productions, and Nimar Studios; released on March 4, 2014.

Genre & length. Feature film, fictionalized Greek history; 102 min.

Classical content & comments. 10 years after Darius died, ending the first Persian invasion of Greece, his son Xerxes attacked on land through Thermopylae and by sea under the command of a Greek commander, Artemisia. Themistocles asks Leonidas, King of Sparta, to fight the Persians on land, and he commands the Athenian navy against Artemisia, who admires his performance and proposes an alliance, which he refuses. Xerxes fights the defenders of Thermopylae for 3 days, kills them all (including Leonidas), and marches on Athens. Themistocles, on the other hand, wins the Battle of Salamina, and his alliance with the Spartans results in a definitive Persian retreat. Based on Frank Miller's graphic novel *Xerxes: The Fall of the House of Darius and the Rise of Alexander*, which was, in fact, published only in 2018. It serves as a prequel and a sequel to *300*.

References. Llewelyn-Jones, 2018, 191–205; McGeough, 2022, 278.

287. "Blade Runners." S09E16. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, directed by Serge Ladouceur, written by Brad Buckner and Eugenie Ross-Leming, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Kripke Enterprises, Wonderland Sound & Vision, and Warner Bros. Films; aired on The CW on March 18, 2014.

- Genre & length.** 188th episode of a 15-season series, SF fantasy, horror, supernatural and mythological elements; 42 min.
Classical content & comments. Medusa can only be killed by decapitation with a silver blade, and the Winchester brothers try to find such a blade. Peter Paul Rubens's painting of Medusa's severed head (Viennese Kunsthistorische Museum) is shown in the episode.
288. *Thermae Romae II* (JP). Created by Mari Yamazaki, directed by Hideki Takeuchi, written by Hiroshi Hashimoto, prod. by Miyoshi Kikuchi, Dominique Combe, Antonello Rubino, et al. for Fuji Television Network, Toei Company, Dentsu, Kadokawa, and Tea Time Film; released on April 26, 2014.
Genre & length. Feature film, time travel, SF, historical comedy; 112 min.
Classical content & comments. A sequel to the 2012 *Thermae Romae* live-action adaptation of M. Yamazaki's popular comic. 2nd part of the adventures of a 2nd-c. CE Roman designer and architect, Lucius Modestus, who time-travels to 21st-c. Japan and its bathhouses.
References. On the manga model, see Kovacs and Marshall, 2016, xxvi–xxviii.
289. *Hercules Reborn* (US). Directed by Nick Lyon, written by Jim Hemphill and Jose Montesinos, prod. by David Rimawi, David Michael Latt, et al. for The Asylum direct to DVD; released on July 15, 2014.
Genre & length. Feature film, action/adventure, mythological fantasy; 95 min.
References. Blanshard, 2018, 28–42; Alvares and Salzman-Mitchell, 2020, 545–566; Gordon, 2020, 591–612.
290. *Boudicca: Warrior Queen of Ancient Britain* (UK). Directed by Liam Dale, prod. by Wolfgang Fetten and Michelle Justice; released in July 2014.
Genre & length. Documentary, historical reconstruction; 86 min.
Classical content & comments. Celtic Queen of the Iceni heading the revolt against Rome – the woman behind the legend.
291. *Hercules* (US). Directed and prod. by Brett Ratner, written by Ryan J. Condal and Evan Spiliotopoulos, co-prod. by Barry Levine and Beau Flynn for Paramount Pictures, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Flynn Picture Company, Radical Studios, and Film 44; released on July 25, 2014.
Genre & length. Feature film, action movie, mythological fantasy; 98 min.
Comment. Based on the 2008 graphic novel *The Thracian Wars* by Steve Moore.
References. Blanshard, 2018, 28–42; Chiu, 2018, 60–73; Curley, 2018, 185–187; Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 103–128; Gordon, 2020, 591–612; Cyrino, 2020, 650–655; Janka, 2021, 241–243; McGeough, 2022, 223–224.
292. *Amori e metamorphosi* (IT, FR). Directed by Yanira Yariv and Natalie Dana, written by Ovid and Yanira Yariv, prod. by Marco Alessi and Vanessa Ramonbordes for Dugong Production and Acis Productions; released at the Locarno Film Festival on August 13, 2014; released in France on November 30, 2015.
Genre & length. Feature film, an original view of myths; 88 min.
Classical content & comments. Inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and performed by transgender people discussing their experiences.
References. Winkler, 2020b, 304.
293. *Métamorphoses* (FR). Directed and written by Christophe Honoré, prod. by Philippe Martin for France 3 Cinéma, Les Films Pelléas, and Le Pacte; released on August 26, 2014, at the Venice International Film Festival.
Genre & length. Feature film, an adaptation of an ancient narrative poem, mythological fantasy; 102 min.

Classical content & comments. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* championed by Europe, a contemporary school girl who meets a young Jupiter. You must believe in myths or suffer gods' anger, explains Bacchus. Orpheus collects a group of ardent supporters and dies a tragic death. Europe witnesses all that happens.

References. Winkler, 2020b, 127–128, 164–165, 378–379.

294. **2014–2018, *Star Wars: Rebels*** (US). Created by Simon Kinberg, Dave Filoni, Carrie Beck, prod. by D. Filoni et al. for Lucasfilm, distributed by Disney and ABC Television; aired from October 3, 2014, to March 5, 2018.

Genre & length. Animated television series, 3D animation; 74 episodes, 22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Obvious classical influences in settings: buildings, military designs. Value of ancient heritage, classical names, Greek alphabet, slavery. Awards: Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films, USA (2017 and 2018), Best Animated Series or Film on Television.

References. Nevin, 2018b.

295. **“Fan Fiction.” S10E05. *Supernatural*** (US). Directed by Phil Sgriccia, written by Robbie Thompson, prod. by Todd Aronauer for Kripke Enterprises and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on November 11, 2014.

Genre & length. 200th episode of a television series composed of 15 seasons, fantasy, horror, supernatural and mythological elements; 43 min.

Classical content & comments. The monster of the week is the Muse Calliope, called here the Goddess of Epic Poetry. She tries to interfere with the performance of a musical fan-fiction version of the show. Sam kills her with a Blessed Wooden Stake, preventing her from devouring the players and the author.

296. **“Nosh of the Titans” in “Calm Down and Think, Elmo.” S45E10. *Sesame Street*** (US). Prod. by Sesame Workshop; released on November 17, 2014. Available on the *Sesame Street* YouTube channel.

Genre & length. 3rd segment of an episode of an animated television series, 26 min. This segment (5:17) is a spoof of a mythological feature film.

Classical content & comments. Cookie's Crumby Pictures presents “Nosh of the Titans,” a spoof of *Clash of the Titans*. Cookie Monster as Furzius travels with PegaFish to meet his father, Zeus, at Mount Olympus Diner. A cow puppet, Moo-dusa, blocks his way and challenges him to guess which of 3 lids hides food for her snakes. Moo-dusa has the power to petrify, temporarily, whoever looks her in the eye. Furzius succeeds in answering her question after several attempts, thanks to being able to focus and remember. Moo-dusa petrifies herself by looking at her reflection in one of the shiny lids and leaves the road to Olympus open for Furzius, who joins Zeus at the diner. Zeus then commands: “Release the Cracker!” And a gigantic cookie appears. My thanks to Katarzyna Marciniak for showing me this episode.

297. **2014–2015, *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay. Parts 1–2*** (US). Directed by Francis Lawrence, screenplay by Danny Strong and Peter Craig, Part 2 adapted by Suzanne Collins, prod. by Nina Jacobson and Jon Kilik for Lionsgate, Studio Babelsberg AG, and Color Force; Part 1 was released on November 21, 2014, Part 2 on November 20, 2015.

Genre & length. A 2-part feature movie, dystopian SF adventure; Part 1: 123 min., Part 2: 137 min.

Comment. Based on Suzanne Collins's novel *Mockingjay*, the last in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. A 2-part sequel and finale in a movie cycle.

References. Makins, 2015, 280–306; Janka and Stierstorfer, 2022.



Chapter 2

- 298. “Atonement.”** S04E10. *Revenge* (US). Created by Mike Kelley, directed by John Terlesky, written by Ted Sullivan, prod. by Mike Kelley, Sunil Nayar, et al. for Page Fright Productions, Temple Hill Productions, and ABC Studios; aired on ABC Television on December 7, 2014.
Genre & length. 76th episode of a television series, action, thriller; 4 seasons, 89 episodes, 43 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Momus, a personified god of blame, disliked and criticized everybody and was expelled from Olympus. Conrad: “So, do you remember the fable of Momus?” Daniel: “Yeah, the god of writers and poets. He criticized his fellow gods for their shortcomings.” C.: “And how was he rewarded for his honesty?” D.: “They banished him from Olympus.” The plot of the series is modelled on Alexandre Dumas’s *Le comte de Monte-Cristo* (1844). The series aired from September 21, 2011, to May 10, 2015.
References. Bakogianni, 2017, 484–485: “contemporary mirror of the ancient Electra”; Curley, 2019.
- 299. 2014–2018, *The Librarians*** (US). Developed by John Rogers, exec. prod. by Dean Devlin, Mark Roskin, Noah Wyle, and J. Rogers for Kung Fu Monkey Productions and Electric Entmt; aired on TNT from December 7, 2014, to February 7, 2018.
Genre & length. Television series, fantasy; 4 seasons, 42 episodes, 42–58 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Ancient mythological objects stored in the Library: the Golden Fleece, Medusa’s head, King Midas, Pan’s pipes, Pandora’s Box, Poseidon’s trident, Hades’ cap of invisibility, Theseus’ Labyrinth thread, Apple of Discord, Sirens, Cupid’s bow, Aphrodite’s magic girdle, the Trojan Horse, Aesop’s lyre, the lantern of Diogenes of Sinope, and Homer’s sandal. In antiquity, the entrance to the Library was located in the Library of Alexandria. A spin-off from David Titcher’s movie franchise *The Librarian* (2004–2008).
- 300. *Ex machina*** (US). Directed and written by Alex Garland, prod. by Andrew Macdonald and Allon Reich for Film and DNA Films; released on December 16, 2014.
Genre & length. Feature film, SF, paraphrase of a myth; 108 min.
Classical content & comments. A programmer who wants to save a female AI from the ill-intentioned project owner. She kills the owner and traps the programmer in the lab. She escapes outside and disappears.
References. Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares, 2018, 336.
- 301. *Ронда-капрычыўза [Rondo-Capriccioso]*** (BY). Directed and written by Igor Volchek, music by Andrei Ledenev, prod. by Belarusfilm; released in 2014.
Genre & length. Animated short, paraphrase of a myth; 13 min.
Classical content. A paraphrase of the myth of Daedalus and Icarus placed in a rural setting in Belarus.
References. Paulouskaya, 2018.

2015

- 302. *Athena: The Goddess of War*** (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Patrick Desmarattes, co-written by Kevin Jordan for Maiden Comics Studio; released on Maiden Network on January 1, 2015.
Genre & length. Feature film, mythological fantasy; 86 min.
Classical content & comments. Hades plans to forcibly integrate humans into his army to fight against Zeus. Zeus blocks the passage from the Underworld to protect the mortals, but Persephone has already been sent to find the key to open the passage and let Hades’ Harbinger of Death attack. Athena, the Goddess of War, and her team of human heroes save the world.
References. Maurice, 2019b, 107–108.



303. **“Poor Unfortunate Soul.”** S04E16. *Once Upon a Time* (US). Directed by Steve Pearlman, written by Andrew Chambliss and Dana Horgan, prod. by Adam Horowitz and Kathy Gilroy for ABC Studios and Kotsis/Horowitz; aired on ABC on March 22, 2015.
Genre & length. 81st episode of a 7-season television series, fantasy, fairy tale; 44 min.
Classical content & comments. Poseidon, the father of Ursula, the mermaid, lost his wife; a pirate killed her. To get revenge, he orders his daughter to lure pirate ships to their death. She lets the *Jolly Roger* escape and is banished by her father. She steals a magical bracelet and leaves the sea. Later, her father asks Hook to take away her voice, forcing her to remain at sea. Furious at Poseidon, Ursula becomes a sea witch more powerful than him. Based on several Disney films.
304. **2015–2018, *For the Love of Zeus*** (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Arlene Humm for Backlot Studios Production Company; aired from February 1, 2015, to June 7, 2018.
Genre & length. Television series, mythological fantasy, comedy; 3 seasons, 5 episodes, length unknown.
Classical content & comments. There are 2 series by A. Humm, one in 3 seasons and 5 episodes from 2015 to 2018 and one in a single season composed of 4 episodes aired during December 2018. There is also a film labelled as a pilot to the 2018 series entitled *For the Love of Persephone*, but it seems to be simply the 1st episode. I was unable to view any of the episodes. The general impression is of a semi-amateur, community production. The premise seems to be the return of the Olympic gods after a 3,000-year absence.
References. Maurice, 2019b, 73.
305. *Jupiter Ascending* (US, AU). Directed, written, and prod. by Lana and Lilly Wachowski, co-prod. by Grant Hill for Village Roadshow Pictures, RatPac-Dune Entmt, and Anarchos Productions; released on February 6, 2015.
Genre & length. Feature film, space opera, SF; 127 min.
Classical content & comments. According to Lana Wachowski, the main inspirations were the *Odyssey* and *The Wizard of Oz*. The plot of the film reverses the classical theme of the hero into a new form of female hero for the space-opera genre. Golden Raspberry Award for the Worst Supporting Actor for Eddie Redmayne.
306. *Olympus* (UK, CA). Created and written by Nick Willing, directed by N. Willing (4 episodes), Martin Wood (3), Amanda Tapping (4), Andy Mikita (2), prod. by N. Willing, Andrew Boswell, and Grant Rosenberg for Reunion Pictures, Great Point Media, and LipSync Production; aired from April 2, 2015, to July 2, 2015; DVD released on October 20, 2015.
Genre & length. Television series, a retelling of myths; 1 season, 13 episodes, 46 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A mash-up of Greek myths: Aegeus, Ariadne, Chronos, Circe, Cyclops, Daedalus, Dionysus, Gaia, Hades, Medea, and Minos. Mythical creatures, Nymphs, Olympian gods, Oracle of Gaia, oracles, Pandora, Pandora’s tomb, Ring of the Magi, Zeus. The protagonist is called Hero, even though he is, in fact, Theseus.
References. Winkler, 2017, 92–94, 98; Olechowska, 2018b; Magerstädt, 2019, 287–288; Magerstädt, 2022, 119–134.
307. *Lost Girl* (CA). S05E09–16. Created by Michelle Lovretta, directed by Gail Harvey, Paolo Barzman, Bruce McDonald, et al., written by Sandra Chwiałkowska, Alexandra Zarowny, Michael Grassi, et al., prod. by Jay Firestone for Prodigy Pictures and Shaw Media; aired on Showcase from August 21 to October 25, 2015.
Genre & length. Episodes 69–77 of a television series, supernatural fantasy; 5 seasons, 77 episodes, 44 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A hidden world of supernatural creatures: Fae, dark and light, werewolves, Walkyries, Ancient Fae = Greek gods called Zee, Heratio, Hades, Iris/Nyx. The series ran from 2010 to 2015.

References. Tresca, 2014, 64–81; Stuller, 2014, 31–44.

308. *Sleepy Hollow* (US). S03E01–18. Created and prod. by Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orci, Len Wiseman, et al., directed by Peter Weller, Russel Fine, Kate Davies, et al. for Fox; aired from October 1, 2015, to April 8, 2016.

Genre & length. Season 3 of a television series, fantasized American history, supernatural; 4 seasons, 62 episodes, 41–43 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Pandora and her Box – called *píthos* by the god (the Hidden One), who was her lover and gave it to her along with divine powers – appear in the serial during the entire season 3 as the main evil force. Allegedly, at the beginning of time, the gods collaborated to collect all the powerful evils in a Box, and the Hidden One was tasked with guarding it. Pandora, originally a mortal, did not fully trust the Hidden One and gave the mortals a talisman against potential abuses of the god’s divine power. However, they used it to put to sleep and imprison the Hidden One. Pandora was trying to revive her lover and succeeded after 4,000 years by using the evils in her Box. However, she soon realized that he cared only about his power. She then allied herself with humans to bring him down, but when she recovered divine powers, she became indifferent and even hostile to humans. In a combination of mythology and American folklore, she put the essence of the Headless Horseman from Sleepy Hollow into the Box, and then she used the Box to call up monsters to do her bidding. Ichabod Crane, an apprentice to Benjamin Franklin, who awoke from a supernatural sleep after 200 years, was a “witness of revelation” and, with another 21st-c. witness, coordinated the contemporary fight against evil.

309. **2015–2019, *The Deep*** (AU, CA). Created by Tom Taylor and James Brouwer, directed by Trent Carlson, prod. by Avriil Stark, Asaph Fipke, and Anne Loi for DHX Studios Vancouver, Technicolor S.A., and A Stark Production Company; aired on 7TWO and WildBrain TV between December 1, 2015, and March 15, 2019.

Genre & length. Animated television series; 3 seasons, 52 episodes, 22 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. A quest for a lost civilization, Atlantis? Mermaids, Minotaur, Nereus, Proteus, Sirens. An Australian-Canadian series based on comic books by T. Taylor, ill. by J. Brouwer, *The Deep: Here Be Dragons* and *The Deep: The Vanishing Island*.

References. Hale, 2018.

310. *Chi-Raq* (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Spike Lee, co-written by Kein Willmott, prod. by Amazon Studios and 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks; released on December 4, 2015.

Genre & length. Feature film, musical dramedy, a modern paraphrase of an ancient comedy; 127 min.

Classical content & comments. A modern version of Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* set in South Chicago. The Spartans, led by the rapper Demetrius Dupree Chi-Raq, fight with the rival gang of Trojans led by Cyclops. The violence intensifies, resulting in the death of a child. Chi-Raq’s girlfriend, Lysistrata, organizes women on both sides, convincing them to withhold sex until the violence stops: “No peace, no pussy.” After 3 months of conflict, first the Trojans and then the Spartans lay down their guns. The film won the 2015 AAFCA Awards for Best Independent Film and Best Actress and the 2016 Black Reel Award for Best Actress.

References. Maurice, 2017, 212–213.

311. *Auf den Spuren von Odysseus* (CH). Written and presented by Nina Mavis Brunner, prod. by Corinne Eisenring for Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen; aired on December 16–18, 2015.

Genre & length. Television series, documentary; 6 episodes, 52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. N.M. Brunner follows Odysseus' travels and visits Turkey, Tunisia, Italy, Spain, Gibraltar, and Greece, talking to people she meets on the way. The French version was produced in 2017 for Radio Télévision Suisse and was rebroadcast on TV5 Monde.

References. Hobden, 2022, 135–151.

312. **2015, *Последний человек Атлантиды* / 2018, *Last Prince of Atlantis*** (RU). Directed and written by Vladlen Barbe, co-written and prod. by Igor Lapatonok, co-prod. by Jane Kapriss, Igor Kobzev, et al. for Grading Dimension Pictures; released in Russia in 2015, in the US on February 8, 2018. Available on YouTube.

Genre & length. Feature film, a 3D animated fantasy with a mythological element, a love story; 84 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on the 1925 novel *Последний человек Атлантиды* [The Last Atlantean] by the Russian SF writer Aleksandr Belyaev (1884–1942). A contemporary story of the brutal treatment of an old pearl fisher by a powerful man who controls the police as well as organized crime. The pearl fisher is forced to sell his boat, and his daughter Adrianna is being courted aggressively by the tycoon. She is saved by a prince of Atlantis, who revives after thousands of years spent in a stone sarcophagus and promptly falls in love with her. The film was brought to my attention by Hanna Paulouskaya.

313. **2015–2020, *The Magicians*** (US). Created by Sera Gamble and John McNamara, written by Chris Fisher, James L. Conway, et al., prod. by Mitch Engel for MacNamara Moving Company, Man Sewing Dinosaur, Groundswell Productions, Universal Cable Productions, and Universal Content Productions; aired on Syfy from December 16, 2015, to April 1, 2020.

Genre & length. Television series, an adaptation of a trilogy, fantasy with mythological elements, witch show, school story, hidden world; 6 seasons, 65 episodes, 41–52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on Lev Grossman's 2009 novel *The Magicians* and its 2 sequels, *The Magician King* (2011) and *The Magician's Land* (2014). Enrolled in a school of magic, a group of students undergo rigorous and dangerous training and realize that the land of magic they read about in their children's book exists in reality and can be entered at great risk. In season 5, Hades leaves the Underworld, grieving for Persephone. He says that if gods die, which is against their immortal nature, they have nowhere to go. Deicide as a theme. The show was nominated for 8 awards, but only Ava Telek won the Joy Award in Vancouver in 2017 for Best Recurring Principal or Guest Star Actress in a TV Series Age 10–12 Years.

2016

314. **2016–2019, *Shadowhunters: The Mortal Instruments*** (US). Developed by Ed Dexter, Todd Slavkin, and Darren Swimmer, prod. by T. Slavkin, D. Swimmer, et al. for Constantin Film; aired on Freeform from January 12, 2016, to May 6, 2019.

Genre & length. Television series, an adaptation of a cycle of novels, fantasy, witch show, hidden world; 3 seasons, 55 episodes, 42 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Next to the world of humans (the “mundanes”), there is a hidden world. The Nephilim – creatures with angelic blood; a biblical hell – Lilith; a hierarchy of devils; the *downworlders*: vampires, werewolves, and warlocks. Latin spells and phrases. Daedalus' Cretan loom. Lycaon and his daughter Psophis. Adaptation of a 6-book cycle of novels, *Shadowhunters*, published between 2007 and 2014 by Cassandra Clare (pseud. of Judith A. Lewis née Rumelt).

315. **2016–2022, *DC's Legends of Tomorrow*** (US). Developed by Greg Berlanti, Marc Guggenheim, Andrew Kreisberg, and Phil Klemmer, prod. by Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; aired from January 21, 2016, to March 2, 2022.

- Genre & length.** Television series, DC Comics, SF time travel; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. each.
- Classical content & comments.** A mixture of fairy tales and mythology straight from Disney movies. 3 episodes directly inspired by antiquity are listed under the year of broadcast (S03E01, S03E06, S03E18), as well as episodes S04E06, S04E14, S05E11, S06E01; inspirations also in S05E09. The series began in 2016 as a spin-off from *Arrow* and *The Flash*; like the 2 parent shows, *Legends of Tomorrow* is based on characters from DC Comics.
- References.** Olechowska, forthcoming a.
- 316. *Hail, Caesar!*** (UK, US, JP). Directed, written, and prod. by Ethan and Joel Coen, co-prod. by Tim Beavan and Eric Fellner for Universal Pictures, Working Title Films, Dentsu, and Mike Zoss Productions; released on February 1, 2016.
- Genre & length.** Feature film, comedy; 101 min.
- Classical content & comments.** A satirical look at the 1951 Hollywood studio system during the filming of one of the Roman epic extravaganzas of the period, hinting at Mervyn LeRoy's *Quo vadis* and Stanley Kubrick's 1960 *Spartacus*. The subtitle to *Hail, Caesar!*, the movie being filmed in the movie, is *A Tale of the Christ*, the actual subtitle to Lew Wallace's novel *Ben-Hur*.
- References.** Winkler, 2020a, 243–244; McGeough, 2022, 148–149.
- 317. *Once Upon a Time*** (US). S05E12–22. Created by Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz; directed by Ralph Hemecker (E12), Billy Gierhart (E13), Alrick Riley (E14), Eagle Egilsson (E15), Steve Pearlman (E16), Romeo Tirone (E17, E19, E22), Eriq La Salle (E18), Ron Underwood (E20), Craig Powell (E21); written by E. Kitsis and A. Horowitz (E12), Dana Horgan and Andrew Chambliss (E13), Jane Espenson (E14, E20), Jerome Schwartz and David H. Goodman (E15), Tze Chun and D. Horgan (E16), J. Schwartz (E17, E21), A. Chambliss and Bill Wolkoff (E18), D.H. Goodman and Brigitte Hales (E19), D.H. Goodman and A. Chambliss (E22); prod. by Kitsis/Horowitz for ABC Studios; aired from March 6 to May 15, 2016.
- Genre & length.** A 10-episode story arc in a television series, fantasy mixed with fairy tales and mythologies; 7 seasons, 155 episodes, 43 min. each. The entire series of 7 seasons aired from 2011 to 2018. DVD of season 5 was released: in Region 1 on August 16, 2016, and in Region 2 on October 18, 2016.
- Classical content & comments.** Intertextuality with Disney animations, including the 10 episodes with classical inspirations in season 5. Features characters and concepts such as Hercules, Hades, the Underworld, Cerberus, Orpheus and Eurydice, and deicide. The show concluded on May 18, 2018.
- References.** For the series from 2011 to 2012, see Hay and Baxter, 2014, 316–335; Schwabe, 2014, 294–315; Skowera, 2014, 168–188. For later seasons, see Olkusz, 2017, 81–113; Maurice, 2019b, 59–60; Olechowska, 2020c, 2021, 593–610; Bartsevich, 2022, 271–287.
- 318. *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*** (US). Directed by Zack Snyder, written by Chris Terrio and David S. Goyer, prod. by Charles Roven and Deborah Snyder for Warner Bros. Pictures, Rat-Pac-Dune Entmt, DC Entmt, Atlas Entmt, and Cruel and Unusual Films; released on March 19, 2016.
- Genre & length.** Superhero feature film, action, adventure, paraphrase of comic books; 152 min.
- Classical content.** Greek mythology, Amazons, Icarus, Prometheus, Zeus. Based on DC Comics characters.
- References.** Potter, 2019a.
- 319. *Magi: Adventure of Sinbad* / マギ シンドバッドの冒険** (JP). Directed by Shinichi Masaki, written by Taku Kishimoto and Yoshikazu Miyao, prod. by Lay-Duce Productions and Netflix; aired on BS-Tokyo Broadcasting System from April 23 to July 2, 2016.

Genre & length. Anime television series, a manga adaptation, action/adventure; 1 season of 13 episodes, 25 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Episodes 7 (“Sinbad the Merchant”) and 8 (“Household Vessel”) are part of the Reim Empire story arc. The empire strongly resembles the Roman Empire: the name is reminiscent of Rome; in the capital, there is an amphitheatre, a colosseum, and bathhouses; a laurel wreath is the emblem of the city. Additionally, the favourite entertainment is provided by gladiatorial games, and, like any empire, Reim relies on its army. Based on the 2013 manga by Shinobu Ohtaka and Yoshifumi Ohtera. Blu-ray and DVD were released on August 24, 2016. A sequel to *Magi: The Labyrinth of Magic*. Available on Netflix.

References. Gordon, 2018a.

320. ***Ben-Hur*** (US). Directed by Timur Bekmambetov, written by Keith Clarke and John Ridley, prod. by Sean Daniel, Joni Levin, and Duncan Henderson for Sean Daniel Company and Lightworkers Media; released on August 19, 2016; McGeough, 2022, 324–325.

Genre & length. Feature film, adaptation of a sensational historical romance novel; 125 min.

Comment. Based on Lew Wallace’s 1880 novel *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. A box-office failure.

References. Solomon, 2016; McGeough, 2022, 324–325.

321. ***Prisoner Zero*** (AU). Created by Jason Haigh-Ellery and Austen Atkinson, directed by Sean Zwan, Christian Barkel, Josh Campbell, et al., written by Gary Russell, Scott Handcock, David Breen, et al., prod. by G. Russel and J. Campbell for Planet 55 Studios Telegael Teoranta Bramall Productions; aired on ABC 3 from September 19 to October 14, 2016.

Genre & length. Animated television series, SF, time travel, alternative timelines, action/adventure; 1 season of 26 episodes, average length 24 min., for children aged 8–12.

Classical content & comments. Planet Arcadia, planet Tartarus (episode 18), space station Ouroboros. S05E01 of *Doctor Who*, “The Eleventh Hour,” featured an extremely dangerous multi-form shapeshifter called Prisoner Zero. G. Russell, one of the writers and producers of *Prisoner Zero*, has been involved in the *Doctor Who* show for a long time.

References. Gordon, 2018b.

322. ***Dieux et héros de la mythologie grecque***. S01E01–20. ***Les grands mythes*** (FR). Written and presented by François Busnel, co-written by Gilbert Sinoué, prod. by Sylvain Bergère, Gaëtan Chabanol, et al. for Arte France and Rosebud Production; aired on Arte from October 1 to December 3, 2016.

Genre & length. 1st season of a documentary television series, a retelling of myths; 20 episodes, 26 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on ancient sources, such as Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Diodorus Siculus; illustrated by famous art and animated silhouettes of figures from Greek vases. 1. “Zeus ou la conquête du pouvoir.” 2. “Les amours de Zeus.” 3. “Prométhée, le révolté de l’Olympe.” 4. “Hadès, le roi malgré lui.” 5. “Athéna, la sagesse armée.” 6. “Apollon, l’ombre et la lumière.” 7. “Aphrodite, sous la loi du désir.” 8. “Dionysos, l’étranger dans la ville.” 9. “Hermès, le messager indéchiffrable.” 10. “Tartare, les damnés de la terre.” 11. “Psyché, la belle et la bête.” 12. “Persée, la mort dans les yeux.” 13. “Orphée, l’amour impossible.” 14. “Médée, l’amour assassin.” 15. “Bellérophon, l’homme qui voulait être dieu.” 16. “Thésée, les ravages de l’oubli.” 17. “Dédale et Icare, le rêve éclaté.” 18. “Héraclès, l’homme qui devint dieu.” 19. “Céipe, le déchiffreur d’énigmes.” 20. “Antigone, celle qui a dit non.”

323. **2016–2019, *Roman Empire*** (US, AU). Directed by Richard Lopez and John Ealer (seasons 2 and 3), written by Jeremiah Murphy, Peter Sherman, et al., prod. by Stephen David Entmt and Netflix; aired on Netflix, from November 11, 2016, to April 5, 2019.



Genre & length. Television anthology series, docudrama, fictionalized Roman history; 3 seasons, 15 episodes, 6 in season 1, 5 in season 2, and 4 in season 3; 48 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. Rome, in 3 different periods of history; episodes are not presented in chronological order. Season 1, *Commodus: Reign of Blood*, deals with the reign of Commodus (180–192 CE), son and successor of the philosopher emperor, Marcus Aurelius – the period covered in the 2000 *Gladiator*. Season 2, *Julius Caesar: Master of Rome*, is a biopic of Caesar (100–44 BCE), and season 3, *Caligula: The Mad Emperor*, tells the story of Caligula's reign (37–41 CE). The following scholars and writers appear in the series: Tom Holland, author of *Rubicon: The Last Years of the Roman Republic*; Mike Duncan, author of *The Storm before the Storm*; David Levene, Professor of Classics, New York University; Anthony Everitt, author of *The Rise of Rome*; Kathryn Tempest, Senior Lecturer in Classics, University of Roehampton; Barry Strauss, author of *The Death of Caesar*; Amanda Ruggeri, BBC Editor and Journalist; Adrian Murdoch, Fellow, Royal Historical Society; Corey Brennan, Associate Professor of Classics, Rutgers University; Caitlin Gillespie, Lecturer, Columbia University; Aaron Irvin, historian, Murray State University.

324. **Soutaisei Riron: Cerberus** (JP). Directed by Tagashi Yamaguchi, music by Soutaisei Riron; released in 2016.

Genre & length. Black-and-white animated short music video; 4 min. Available on YouTube.

Classical content & comments. The title is spelled in Greek characters: Κέρβερος. A cute 3-headed dog dances on the screen to a joyful tune. It plays with a ball, walks, runs, and at a later point runs so fast that its heads fall off, one by one, but they seem to grow back. No other characters. Some barely sketched scenery.

2017

325. **“Child’s Play.”** S04E09. *Sleepy Hollow* (US). Directed by Michael Goi, written by Francisca X. Hu, prod. by Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orci, Len Wiseman, et al. for Mark Goffman Productions, Sketch Films, 20th Century Fox Television, etc.; aired on Fox on March 3, 2017.

Genre & length. 58th episode of a television series, supernatural, a fantasized version of American history; 4 seasons, 62 episodes, 41–43 min. each. This episode runs for 43 min. Available on Disney+.

Classical content & comments. An imaginary friend from Molly’s childhood comes to life as a golem and tries to kill people he perceives as Molly’s enemies. Jenny performs a ritual to vanquish the golem invoking in (Ancient?) Greek the Muses Clio, Euterpe, and Thalia. The ritual succeeds, but the incantations are garbled, except for the 3 names.

326. **Before I Fall** (US). Directed by Ry Russo-Young, written by Maria Maggenti and Gina Prince-Bythewood, prod. by Matthew Kaplan, Brian Robbins, and Jonathan Shestack for Awesomeness Films and Jon Shestack Productions. Released in theatres on March 3, 2017.

Genre & length. Feature teen drama film, adaptation of a novel, SF time-loop story; 99 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on Lauren Oliver’s novel *Before I Fall*. Samantha wakes up on Cupid’s Day (February 12) and spends it with her friends, first at school, where they learn about Sisyphus, and later at a party. During the drive back from the party, they all die in a car crash. Next, Samantha wakes up again on the same day and it all happens again many times. She tries to prevent the tragedy and, at each loop, learns more about her friends and their problems. She ends the loop by saving them but dies herself. A surprisingly optimistic take on the hopeless repetitiveness of Sisyphus’ punishment.

References. Bazylczyk, 2017.



327. **“Come voleva la prassi” / “As Per Procedure.”** S11E02. *Il commissario Montalbano / Inspector Montalbano* (IT). Directed by Alberto Sironi, written by Francesco Bruni, Andrea Camilleri, and Salvatore de Mola, exec. prod. by Gianfranco Barbagallo for RAI Fiction and Palomar; aired on RAI on March 6, 2017.
Genre & length. An episode of a television series, adaptation of detective stories, ongoing since 1999; 14 seasons, 39 episodes, all above 90 min. This episode runs for 112 min.
Classical content & comments. Adaptation of novels and short stories by A. Camilleri. S11E02 is based on *Morte in mare aperto ed alter imagini del giovane Montalbano*, *Gli arancini di Montalbano*, and *Un meso con Montalbano*. Montalbano saved the life of a Mafia hitman from a car crash he accidentally witnessed. Sometime later, the hitman receives an order to kill Montalbano but only pretends to have done it for the benefit of his Mafia boss. Risking his own life, he spares Montalbano, whose girlfriend compares this situation to the story of Androkles and the lion in Aulus Gellius’ *Noctes Atticae* 5.15. Montalbano finds that the story applies to his contacts with the hitman and tells it to his 2 colleagues.
328. **“Insatiable.”** S04E10. *Sleepy Hollow* (US). Directed by Steven A. Adelson, written by Keely McDonald, prod. by Clifton Campbell and Albert Kim for Fox Network etc.; aired on Fox on March 10, 2017.
Genre & length. 59th episode of a television series, fantasized American history, supernatural; 4 seasons, 62 episodes, 41–44 min. each.
Classical content & comments. A mysterious hunger demon is released by the demon Jobe. He kills people by starvation during an eating orgy. Ichabod Crane recalls a Greek mythological figure, Erysichthon of Thessaly, who was cursed with an insatiable hunger and thirst by Demeter and Dionysus. The food the unfortunate man ingested only fuelled the fire that consumed him.
329. **“The Way of the Gun.”** S04E11. *Sleepy Hollow* (US). Directed by Russell Lee Fine, written by Roberto Orci, Alex Kurtzman, and Phillip Iscove, prod. by Clifton Campbell and Albert Kim for Fox Network etc.; aired on Fox on March 17, 2017.
Genre & length. 60th episode of a television series, fantasized American history, supernatural; 4 seasons, 62 episodes, 41–44 min. each.
Classical content & comments. An ultimate weapon – *arma mutata* – looking like a fancy gun, was allegedly “cast on the same anvil used by Ares [*sic!*] to forge his armour. It is said that the ironwork contains shards of legendary blades: Asi, Kusanagi-no Tsurugi, and Excalibur.” “The Flame of the Eternals. Legend posits that this is an offshoot of the forge used by Hephaestus, the blacksmith of the gods, to hammer out his mythical weapons.”
330. **“Freedom.”** S04E13. *Sleepy Hollow* (US). Directed by Russell Lee Fine, written by Roberto Orci, Alex Kurtzman, and Phillip Iscove, prod. by Clifton Campbell and Albert Kim for Fox Network etc.; aired on Fox on March 31, 2017.
Genre & length. 62nd and final episode of a television series, fantasized American history, supernatural; 4 seasons, 62 episodes, 41–44 min. each.
Classical content & comments. An Atlantean spell crystal is used to call the demon Jobe: “Quasi per aquam!” Jobe’s advice on how to kill an immortal: “Via ad Infernum” (Go to Hell). Katabasis. “Ostium apertum. Aditum ad Pueros... Flamma ignis.” Hell looks like the battlefield at Valley Forge after the battle – the most terrible sight in the life of the traveller. Crane gets the Philosopher’s Stone from the devil that will make the death of the immortal possible because it was instrumental in making him immortal in the first place. A siren was sighted close to the seashore. Crane: “Sirens, the daughters of Achelous, the sirens would lure sailors to their doom. [...] a little wax in the ears, lashed to a mast, and we’ll be home in time for supper. That is not a Siren. That is a Kraken. Are you sure?” Crane is sure it was not a Bakunawa or Scylla and Charybdis.

- 331. “Sic transit imperium.”** S02E09. *Billions* (US). Created and prod. by Brian Koppelman, David Levien, Andrew Ross Sorkin, et al., directed by Colin Bucksey, written by Wes Jones, prod. for Best Available! and TBTF Production Inc.; aired on April 16, 2017.
Genre & length. 21st episode of a television series; 7 seasons, 84 episodes, 54–60 min. each; this episode runs for 58 min.
Classical content & comments. *Sic transit gloria mundi* has been part of the rituals of papal coronations from 1409 to 1963, involving the burning of a flax tow as a symbol of the transitory nature of worldly power. Also, a quote from Thomas à Kempis, *De imitatione Christi*. “Wags” Wagner gives Axe a birthday present, a golden coin engraved with the motto *Sic transit imperium*, which he translates as “So passes the empire.” It reserves a place on a survival capsule in case of a global apocalypse. Axe refuses the gift at the end of the episode. Available on VOD networks, such as HBO.
- 332. 2017–2021, *American Gods*** (US). Developed and exec. prod. by Bryan Fuller and Michael Green (season 1), Jesse Alexander (season 2), and Charles H. Eglee (season 3), with the participation of Neil Gaiman et al., for Living Dead Guy/J.A. Green Construction Corp., The Blank Corp., Fremantle North America, Starz Originals, and United Bongo Drums; aired on Starz from April 30, 2017, to March 21, 2021.
Genre & length. Television series, SF fantasy with mythological elements, a creative adaptation of a novel; 3 seasons, 26 episodes, 52–63 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Based on Neil Gaiman’s novel *American Gods* (2001). Conflict between the Old and the New Gods. 3 Old Gods from classical mythology: Vulcan (season 1), who builds arms and a magic sword for Odin and enjoys the worship of many followers, and Demeter (season 3), the Greek goddess of agriculture, harvest, and fertility. Argus Panoptes, the one with 100 eyes, joined the New Gods as the god of surveillance; none appear in the novel. The main role in the conflict is played by the Norse god Odin – Wotan. The Old Gods came to America with the immigrants, and if they returned to Europe, they would cease to exist. The New Gods embody technology and media; they want to eliminate the Old ones to keep all potential worshippers to themselves. The creators, including Gaiman, had prepared the season 4 scenario, but Starz cancelled the show: “*American Gods* will not return for a fourth season. Everyone at Starz is grateful to the dedicated cast and crew, and our partners at Fremantle who brought author and executive producer Neil Gaiman’s ever-relevant story to life that speaks to the cultural climate of our country” (Starz’s announcement, see Patten, 2021).
References. Besson, 2014, 497–508; Felton, 2015, 1; Zajko, 2020, 299–322; Olechowska and Pszczolińska, 2023, 131–147.
- 333. *Wonder Woman*** (US). Directed by Patty Jenkins, written by Zack Snyder, Allan Heinberg, and Jason Fuchs, prod. by Charles Roven, Deborah and Z. Snyder for Warner Bros. Pictures, DC Comics, Atlas Entmt, and Cruel and Unusual Films; released on May 25, 2017.
Genre & length. Superhero feature film, action, strong romantic element, paraphrase of comic books; 141 min.
Classical content & comments. Wonder Woman, the daughter of Hippolyta, the Queen of Amazons, is forced by conflicts beyond her kingdom to leave her native paradise. The movie shows Wonder Woman’s childhood and early training on the Amazons’ island of Themyscira. A pilot whose plane crashes offshore is the reason for her participation in WW1, where she saves humanity from extinction by killing Ares (who took the form of Sir Patrick, a British general) as she was designed and fated to do by Zeus. The pilot, unfortunately, dies in a successful attempt to destroy a lethal gas. Based on DC Comics characters. It is the 2nd live-action film for the character of Wonder Woman after the 2016 *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, and a prequel to *Wonder Woman 1984*

released in 2020. It won the 2018 Hugo Award for the best dramatic presentation and many other prizes. A huge box-office success.

References. Potter, 2018i, 30–57, especially 17–54.

- 334. 2017–2020, *Riviera*** (UK). Created and written by Neil Jordan, directed by Phillipp Kadelbach, Hans Herboth, Paul Norton Walker, et al., co-written by John Banville, Guy Bert, Gabbie Asher, et al., exec. prod. by N. Jordan, Liza Marshall, Kris Thykier, and Paul McGuinness for Archery Pictures and Primo Productions; aired on Sky Atlantic from June 15, 2017, to December 3, 2020.
Genre & length. Television series, a thriller; 3 seasons, 28 episodes, between 42 and 50 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Based on an idea by P. McGuinness. Recurring mentions of Greek mythology, mainly related to a painting of Juno confiding Io to the care of Argus, painted by Claude Lorrain (1600–1682) in 1660. S01E01: Constantine, a Greek billionaire and art collector, says about the painting: “Every myth has been painted a thousand times, but that’s what makes them special; it’s how the painter chooses to retell the story that makes it interesting.” A rather blunt summary of the myth is also provided: “Argus and Io. Do you know the story? Some god fucked a maiden. Greek kind of thing. Jupiter fucked Io. His wife found out. Everyone fucked everyone then. Perhaps Jupiter thought that his wife would discover the truth. Perhaps he wanted her to.” The show was nicknamed *Dynasty sur Mer* to highlight its similarity with American soaps about the lives of the super-rich. N. Jordan “disowned” the series, claiming he could not recognize his scripts.
- 335. “The Eaters of Light.”** S10E10. *Doctor Who* (UK). Directed by Charles Palmer, written by Rona Munro, prod. by Nikki Wilson for BBC One; aired on June 17, 2017.
Genre & length. 274th episode of a television series, SF fantasy, Roman Britain; 42 min.
Classical content & comments. The Doctor travels to 2nd-c. CE Britain to check what happened to the lost Legio IX Hispana and discovers that the legion sacrificed itself to stop alien light-eating locusts from escaping the portal situated in an old Pictish cairn.
- 336. *Bromans*** (UK). Created by Shaun Parry, Natalie McArdle, Peter Howell, and Matt Marsh, prod. by Ben Kelly, Karl Warner, and Meredith Chambers for Electric Ray; aired on ITV 2 from September 13 to November 2, 2017.
Genre & length. A competitive reality show; 1 season, 8 episodes, 42 min. each.
Classical content & comments. 8 young men live in a simulated Ancient Rome with their girlfriends and fight as gladiators preparing for the Emperor’s Games. 1 participant wins £10,000; the others are gradually eliminated. Lots of near nudity; the “reality” element is achieved by showing vulgar and gross aspects of the excessive importance of fitness in young-adult contemporary culture.
References. Hobden and Potter, 2020, 29–54.
- 337. 2017–2024, *Star Trek: Discovery*** (US). Created by Bryan Fuller and Alex Kurtzman, prod. by Gretchen J. Berg, Aaron Harberts, et al. for Secret Hideout, Roddenberry Entmt, Living Dead Guy Productions, and CBS Studio; seasons 1–5 aired from September 24, 2017, to May 30, 2024.
Genre & length. Television series, military SF, space opera; 5 seasons, 65 episodes of varying lengths (37–65 min.).
Classical content & comments. Based on *Star Trek* by Gene Roddenberry. Titles of episodes. Quotation from Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, trans. Edith Hamilton. Chronologically, it is a prequel to *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episodes inspired by antiquity are listed under the year of release.
- 338. “Aruba-Con.”** S03E01. *DC’s Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by Rob Seidenglanz, written by Phil Klemmer and Marc Guggenheim, prod. by Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on ABC on October 10, 2017.



Chapter 2

Genre & length. 34th episode of a television series, SF, time travel, comic book superheroes; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. This episode is 42 min.

Classical content & comments. Julius Caesar, straight from his march from Gaul in 49 BCE, appears in 2017 on Aruba as an anachronism, steals a history book from the Legends, and as a result, avoids assassination on the Ides of March and conquers North America. Inspired by DC Comics' universe, a spin-off of the DC Comics shows *Arrow* and *Flash*.

References. Olechowska, forthcoming a.

339. *Troy: The Odyssey* (US). Directed by Tekin Girgin, written by Eric Forsberg, prod. by David Michael Latt for Benetone Films, Slightly Distorted Productions, and The Asylum; released on October 15, 2017.

Genre & length. Feature film, mythological epic; 90 min.

Classical content & comments. A retelling of the *Odyssey* with the end of the *Iliad* added as an intro. 1184 BCE: Priam curses Odysseus ordering the Kraken to follow him wherever he goes and to destroy Ithaca. Trojan warrior-woman Circe is taken for protection because the Kraken will not kill a Trojan. Odysseus is forced to take a route through the Underworld. Since the 1981 *Clash of the Titans*, reinforced by the 2010 *Clash*, the Kraken of Norse origin replaced a *bona fide* Greek mythological monster.

340. “Lethe.” S01E06. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Directed by Douglas Aarniokoski, written by Joe Menosky and Ted Sullivan, prod. by Gretchen J. Berg, Aaron Harberts, et al.; aired on October 22, 2017.

Genre & length. 6th episode of a television series, military SF, time travel; 5 seasons, 65 episodes; this episode runs for 44 min.

Classical content. Lethe, the River of Oblivion, is one of the rivers in Hades.

341. “*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*” S01E08. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Directed by John S. Scott, written by Kirsten Beyer, prod. by Gretchen J. Berg, Aaron Harberts, et al.; aired on CBS on November 5, 2017.

Genre & length. 8th episode of a television series, military SF, time travel; 5 seasons, 65 episodes; this episode runs for 42 min.

Classical content & comments. Originally, a quotation from Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus' *De re militari* (ca. 430 CE), Book 3, later used widely by politicians, the so-called doctrine of “peace through strength.”

342. *Justice League* (US). Directed by Zack Snyder, by Joss Whedon in post-prod., written by Chris Terrio and J. Whedon, prod. by Charles Roven, Deborah Snyder, Jon Berg, and Geoff Jones for RatPac-Dune Entmt, DC Entmt, Atlas Entmt, and Cruel and Unusual Films, distr. by Warner Bros. Pictures; released on November 13, 2017.

Genre & length. Feature film, superhero film; 120 min.

Classical content & comments. Amazons, Artemis, Atlanteans, Greek mythology, Hestia, Zeus. Based on DC Comics characters. Sequel to *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*. Called ironically “Justice League” because of J. Whedon's involvement. Z. Snyder, unhappy with Whedon's version, produced a director's cut for HBO in 2021, including reshoots and other additions, which doubled the length – incredibly long and tedious to watch.

References. Potter, 2019b.

343. “Helen Hunt.” S03E06. *DC's Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by David Geddes, written by Keto Shimizu and Ubah Mohamed, prod. by Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on ABC on November 14, 2017.



Genre & length. 39th episode of a television series, fantasy, SF, time travel, comic book superheroes; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. each. This one is 42 min. long.

Classical content & comments. Helen of Troy considers her beauty a curse as it incites men to war. Inspired by DC Comics' Arrowverse, it is a spin-off of the DC Comics shows *Arrow* and *Flash*.

References. Olechowska, forthcoming a.

344. **2017–2020, *Dark*** (DE). Created by Baran bo Odar and Jantje Friese, directed by B. bo Odar, written by J. Friese, Ronny Schalk, Marc O. Seng, et al., prod. by Justyna MÜsch, J. Friese, Quirin Berg, et al. for Wiedemann & Berg Television; aired on Netflix from December 1, 2017, to June 27, 2020.

Genre & length. Television series, SF thriller, tragedy; 3 seasons, 26 episodes, 44–77 min. each.

Classical content & comments. It is a complex story of a family struck by tragedy. Themes and modes of presentation borrowed from Greek tragedy. A father tries to bring back to life his son and his family, who died tragically in an accident. He has invented and used a time-travelling machine that severs the world into 2 mirror-image worlds connected by tunnels allowing time travel—called Sic Mundus (*creatus est*) and Erit Lux. There is a struggle for the control and blocking of the tunnels. The main female character, Marta, is associated with the mythical Ariadne.

References. Teti, 2019; Curley, 2023, 8–17.

2018

345. **2018–2021, *Britannia*** (UK, US). Created by Jez Butterworth, Tom Butterworth, and James Richardson, prod. by Rick McCallum et al. for Sky, Amazon Prime Video, Vertigo Films, and Neal Street Production; aired on Sky Atlantic from January 18, 2018, to October 12, 2021.

Genre & length. Television series, historical fantasy, Roman history, Roman Britain; 3 seasons, 27 episodes, 40–73 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A fictionalized history of the Roman conquest of Britain. English, Welsh, and some Latin spoken.

346. ***Troy: Fall of a City*** (UK). Directed by Owen Harris, Mark Brozel, and John Strickland, written by David Farr, Nancy Harris, Mika Watkins, and Joe Barton, prod. by D. Farr and Derek Wax for the BBC, Kudos, Wild Mercury, and Netflix; aired on BBC One and Netflix from February 17 to April 7, 2018.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, a retelling of a mythological epic; 8 episodes, 56 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on the *Iliad*, it is not a straightforward adaptation but rather a rearrangement of myths presenting the “whole” story, from the courting of Helen of Sparta to the early life of Paris and until after the sack of Troy.

References. Maurice, 2019b, *passim* (focusing on the gods in the series), 2022, 25–36; Magerstädt, 2022, 119–134; Augoustakis and Cyrino, 2022; Curley, 2022a, 13–23; Cyrino, 2022a, 37–50; Safran, 2022b, 51–64; Stafford, 2022a, 65–75; Kennedy, 2022, 79–95; Day, 2022, 97–109; Jenkins, 2022, 111–125; Penrose, 2022, 127–139; Raucci, 2022, 141–152; Bakogianni, 2022, 155–168; Prince, 2022, 169–182; Norgard, 2022, 183–196; Burns, 2022, 197–210; Cooke, 2022, 211–221; D. Burton, 2022, 223–231; Olechowska, 2023; Hinds Scott and Paprocki, 2023, 32–33.

347. ***Akala's Odyssey*** (UK). Directed by John O'Rourke, written and starred by Akala, exec. prod. for the BBC by Nadine Marsh-Edwards and Amanda Jenks (Greenacre Films), co-prod. by Immoveable Ltd.; aired on BBC Four on February 18, 2018.

Genre & length. Television documentary; 58 min.



Classical content & comments. Writer and hip-hop singer Akala, planning to compose his own reaction to Homer's *Odyssey* – *Blind Bard's Vision* – retraces Odysseus' steps, visiting Delphi, Mycenae, Greek colonies on Sicily, and Odysseus' kingdom of Ithaca. He also talks to various classicists, such as Katharine Earnshaw, who explains dactylic hexameter; John Bennet, who shows the so-called Mask of Agamemnon; and Nikos Xanthoulis, who talks about the role of music in the ancient epic; he also plays the beginning of the *Odyssey* on a phorminx.

References. Hobden, 2022, 135–151.

348. **2018–2021, *Harrow*** (AU). Created and written by Stephen M. Irwin and Leigh McGrath, directed by Tony Tilse, Peter Andrikidis, Grant Brown, et al., prod. by L. McGrath, Tracey Robertson, and Nathan Mayfield for Hoodlum Entmt and ABC Signature; aired on ABC from March 9, 2018, to April 11, 2021.

Genre & length. Television series, police-forensic procedural; 3 seasons, 30 episodes, 52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The only “ancient” elements are Latin titles of all 30 episodes—some are aphorisms, others are legal formulas of Roman origin, e.g., “Actus reus,” “Finis vitae sed non amoris,” “Aurum potestas est,” “Pia mater,” “Peccata patris,” “Lex talionis,” “Mens rea,” “Abo imo pectore,” “Audere est facere,” “Pater familias,” “Tarde venientibus ossa,” etc.

349. **“The Good, the Bad, and the Cuddly.”** S03E18. *DC's Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by Dermott Downs, written by Phil Klemmer and Marc Guggenheim, prod. by Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on ABC on April 9, 2018.

Genre & length. 51st episode of a television series, SF, time travel, comic-book superheroes; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. each, but this one runs for 41 min.

Classical content & comments. 2 characters from Classical Antiquity. Helen of Troy and Julius Caesar, who already figured in the series as the so-called anachronisms, i.e., brought to the present due to time travel improperly activated by the Legends, come back to fight. Caesar, on the side of evil, and Helen, freshly trained in combat by the Amazons, on the side of the Legends. Inspired by DC Comics' Arrowverse, a spin-off of the DC Comics shows *Arrow* and *Flash*.

References. Olechowska, forthcoming a.

350. ***Troy: The Resurrection of Aeneas*** (US). Virgil's *Aeneid* was adapted, directed, and prod. by Aeneas Middleton for Burnin Rubber Music Publishing and Royal Middleton Publishing; released on May 11, 2018.

Genre & length. Animated film; 60 min.

Comment. See any of the 10 outraged reviews at IMDb (n.d. b).

351. **“The Riddle of the Sphinx.”** S02E04. *Westworld* (US). Directed by Lisa Joy, written by Gina Atwater and Jonathan Nolan, prod. by Cherylanne Martin, Michael Polaire, Carly Wray, et al. for HBO Entertainment, Kilter Films, and Bad Robot Productions; aired on HBO on May 13, 2018.

Genre & length. 14th episode of a television series, SF dystopian fantasy; 4 seasons, 36 episodes, 48–91 min. per episode. This one is 71 min.

Classical content & comments. James Delos is an Oedipus figure who tries to avoid his fate but runs straight towards it.

References. Day, 2023, 18–28.

352. **“Vanishing Point.”** S02E09. *Westworld* (US). Directed by Stephen Williams, written by Roberto Patino, prod. by Cherylanne Martin, Michael Polaire, Carly Wray, et al. for HBO Entertainment, Kilter Films, and Bad Robot Productions; aired on HBO on June 17, 2018.

Genre & length. 19th episode of a television series, SF dystopian fantasy; 4 seasons, 36 episodes, 48–91 min. per episode, this one runs for 59 min.



Classical content & comments. “William is identified with Oedipus, when his wife commits suicide after recognizing her husband’s true nature, and William murders his own kin through a failure of recognition, while quotations from Plutarch and Plotinus highlight the issues of identity, fate, and self-knowledge that resound throughout the episode. [...] In the end, much like its Sophoclean predecessor, *Westworld* works as an implicit criticism of unbridled ambition, patriarchal narcissism, and lack of self-awareness” (Day, 2023, 19).

353. **2018–2022, *A Discovery of Witches*** (UK, US). Written by Kate Brooke, Tom Farrelly, Charlene James, and Sarah Dollard, directed by Juan Carlos Medina, Alice Troughton, and Sarah Walker, prod. by Edoardo Ferretti for Bad Wolf Sky UK and Sky Studios; 1st aired on Sky One from September 14, 2018, to January 7, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, magic, time travel, witch show, demons, vampires, witches, a hidden world, an adaptation of a novel; 3 seasons, 25 episodes, 45 min. each. Season 3 aired on Sky Max.

Classical content & comments. Artemis and her temple at Sept-Tours. Philippe de Clermont speaks Ancient Greek, Latin, and Old French. Strong connections to Classical Antiquity present in the novels are downplayed in the television series. Adaptation of the 2011 *All Souls Trilogy* by Deborah Harkness. All 3 seasons are currently (2024) available on HBO Max.

354. **2018–2023, *Titans*** (US). Developed, written, and exec. prod. by Akiva Goldsman, Geoff Johns, and Greg Berlanti, directed by Brad Anderson, Carol Banker, Boris Mojsovski, et al. for Weed Road Pictures, Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; seasons 1 and 2 aired on DC Universe, seasons 3 and 4 on HBO Max from October 12, 2018, to May 11, 2023.

Genre & length. Television series, superhero action, adventure, SF; 4 seasons, 49 episodes, 40–50 min. each

Classical content & comments. The only openly mythological element is the Amazon girl. Otherwise, the title “Titans” refers to heroes with special powers; these heroes are the main link to Greek mythology. Comic books and mythology share this common characteristic. Based on the comic book (DC Comics) *Teen Titans* by Bob Haney and Bruno Premiani. B. Mojsovski won the 2019 award from the Canadian Society of Cinematographers for TV Drama Cinematography in the pilot.

355. **2018–2022, *Charmed*** (US). Developed by showrunners and writers Jessica O’Toole, Amy Rardin, and Jennie Snyder Urman, directed by Brad Silberling, Vanessa Parise, et al., prod. by J. O’Toole, A. Rardin, et al. for Poppy Productions, Reveal Entmt, Still Married Productions (season 2), Propagate, CBS Studios, and CBS Media Ventures; aired on The CW from October 14, 2018, to June 10, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, witch show with some time travel; season 1 of 22 episodes, season 2 of 19, seasons 3 and 4 of 13 episodes each, 40–43 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. A remake of the 1998–2006 WB series by Constance M. Burge, allegedly more “feminist” and “ethnically diversified” – although seemingly for marketing reasons. The same showrunners and writers as *Jane the Virgin*. The motif of Tartarus, the deepest part of hell “where the worst incarcerate their worst,” is one of the favourite classically inspired concepts occurring in audiovisual series of the 21st c. However, here, apart from the name, it bears no similarity to the Greek mythological Underworld. S01E15, “Switches and Stones”: Medusa is a former witch who has changed into a demon from 800 BCE and petrifies those who avoid her gaze. A victim of rape who was unjustly punished and now wants people to see her and acknowledge her pain. S04E03: “Unlucky Charmed”: the monster Lamia – only the name is classical. S04E09, “Truth or Cares”: 3 Graiae at a party on campus were supposed to give good advice to the Charmed Ones about a prophecy in exchange for true confidences but they lied. Latin incantations and spells are



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easy to understand in season 1, but sound garbled in later seasons. A “toga” party is considered here to be Greek, like in *DC’s Legends of Tomorrow*.

- 356. 2018–2022, *Legacies*** (US). Created, co-written, co-directed, and co-prod. by Julie Plec, co-directed by Chris Grismer, co-written, co-directed, and co-prod. by Brett Matthews et al. for My So-Called Company, Alloy Entmt, CBS Television Studios, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW from October 25, 2018, to June 16, 2022. Available on Netflix.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, school story, a hidden world of vampires, werewolves, witches, and the Greek gods; 4 seasons, 68 episodes, 45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Medusa (S01E14: Nia is a Gorgon, her dreads turn into snakes, 3 sounds of a bronze bell disrupt the power of the snakes); Cyclops (S02E02: looks like a troll and disintegrates into sparks); Minotaur (S02E05: is killed; a bracelet protects from his power), Sphinx (S02E07: is an oracle, asks riddles, cannot lie); Cupid (S02E11: turns out not to be Cupid but Pothos, one of the Erotes; Sphinx prophesied the return of 7 Erotes monsters); Charon, the ferryman (S03E08: he is a psychopomp); the Muse Cleo (S03E10: she has the gift of inspiration, uses Latin incantations); Pandora (S03E11: Project Pandora); Latin incantations (S03E12). Mythological creatures appear in atypical roles in seasons 1, 2, and 3. Still, several Olympic gods and 1 mythological hero arrive only in season 4, from episode 10 to 20, which ends the season and the series. Mythology with a twist: an eagle is not devouring Ben’s (Prometheus), Zeus’ bastard son, fast-regenerating liver. Instead, he is cursed with attracting monsters who almost kill him, but he recovers before the next attack. Jen (Hephaestus) also fears their father, Zeus, here called Ken. Jen locked all the gods in the sarcophagi of her invention to protect them from Malivore, an evil entity known from previous seasons, who threatened the gods that their worshippers would forget them. When Malivore was killed, Jen did not release the gods, because they were far from pleasant. Only Chronos was better than the others – he never forgot her birthday. With her school friends, she wants to find Chronos’ sarcophagus to release him, but Ben, hoping that the grateful Ken would lift his curse, betrays them and opens all the sarcophagi. Ken demands that his daughter Jen be released to him, and she surrenders herself to avoid Ken’s revenge on her friends. It is based, in part, on characters and settings from the *Vampire Diaries* novels by Lisa Jane Smith, published in 1991–1992 (1–4) and 2009–2014 (5–13). A final spin-off of the television series *The Vampire Diaries* (2009–2017) and *The Originals* (2013–2018), which are not listed in the Survey because the only ancient element they contain are occasional Latin incantations.

- 357. 2018–2020, *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*** (US). Developed by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, directed by Lee Toland Krieger et al., prod. by Archie Comics, Warner Bros. Television, Berlanti Productions, and Muckle Man Productions; aired on Netflix from October 26, 2018, to December 31, 2020.

Genre & length. Television series, supernatural satirical fantasy for teens, a witch show, school story; 2 seasons (in 4 parts), 36 episodes, 49–63 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on R. Aguirre-Sacasa and Robert Hack’s comic book under the same title, a coming-of-age, dark satirical fantasy, featuring witchcraft, horror, and Latin incantations. Mythological characters and places: Circe, Hecate, Medusa, Pan, the Underworld.

References. Spanke and Parton, 2019, 104–105; Mik, 2020a; Borriello, 2020a, 2020b, 2022; Bravo, 2022, 109–119.

- 358. *A Bread Factory, Part Two: Walk with Me a While*** (US). Written and directed by Patrick Wang, prod. by Matt Miller, Daryl Freimark, and P. Wang; released on October 26, 2018.

Genre & length. 2nd part of a feature film, stand-alone but closely connected to the 1st part, social comedy/musical; Part 1: 122 min., Part 2: 120 min.



Classical content & comments. The Bread Factory, an art centre in a small NY state town, is threatened with closure. Euripides' *Hecuba* is being rehearsed in a new translation, allegedly by someone local (in fact, by a classicist, Diane Arnson Svarlien). The fragments of the play show Hecuba's grief without motifs of rage and revenge. The fears of the characters in the play mirror those of the movie characters, which highlights the value and role of art in today's world combined with its precarious economic position. Inspired by Time & Space Limited, an arts centre in Hudson, NY. DVD contains a 23-minute featurette on *A Bread Factory's* creation: *Filming Hecuba*.

359. **"Calypso."** S01E02. *Star Trek: Short Treks* (US). Directed by Olatunde Osunsanmi, written by Sean Cochran and Michael Chabon, prod. by Alex Kurtzman, Heather Kadin, Akiva Goldsman, et al. for Secret Hideout, Roddenberry Entertainment, and CBS Television Studios; aired on CBS All Access on November 8, 2018.

Genre & length. 2nd episode of an anthology, series of shorts, military SF; 17 min; a 2-season series related to *Star Trek: Discovery* aired between seasons 1 and 2 of that show.

Classical content & comments. USS *Discovery* has been abandoned by its crew and left under the command of its computer, Zora, to maintain its position for 1,000 years. During this time, Zora became sentient. She saves the life of a fugitive whose escape pod she retrieves when it passes by *Discovery*. Their relationship slowly develops into friendship and then becomes romantic, but when Zora realizes the meaning of love and learns that her companion misses his wife, she lets him depart to his planet on *Discovery's* last shuttle – a parallel to Calypso's relationship with Odysseus.

References. DeBoer, 2023.

360. **"Tender Is the Nate."** S04E06. *DC's Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by Dean Choe, written by Phil Klemmer and Matthew Maala, prod. by Greg Berlanti, Phil Klemmer, et al.; aired on The CW on November 26, 2018.

Genre & length. 57th episode of a television series, SF, time travel, superheroes; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. This episode returns an anachronism to its time: a Minotaur, whom the Legends first fight and then put to sleep by playing music. The episode is inspired by DC Comics' Arrowverse, a spin-off of the DC Comics shows *Arrow* and *Flash*.

361. *Aquaman* (US). Directed by James Wan, written by Will Beall, prod. by Warner Bros. Pictures; released on November 26, 2018.

Genre & length. Feature superhero film; 143 min.

Classical content & comments. Atlanteans, Atlantis, Atlas, Critias, Plato, Poseidon, Poseidon's Trident, prophecy, Timaeus. Aquaman is a DC Comics character known from *Justice League*, although here he has empathy for people. A sequel, *Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom*, was released in December 2023; see the listing for 2023. Chinese American Film Festival: the Most Popular US Film in China, 2019.

References. Maciejewska, 2020a.

362. *L'Iliade*. S02E01–10. *Les grands mythes* (FR). Created, written, and presented by François Busnel, co-written by Gilbert Sinoué, Jean Charles Paugam, prod. by Sylvain Bergère, Nathalie Amsellem, et al. for Arte France, Rosebud Productions, and Musée du Louvre; released in 2018.

Genre & length. 2nd season of a documentary television series, a retelling of Homer; 10 episodes, 26 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A mix of storytelling, animation, and mythologically inspired art from various periods. 1. "La pomme de la discorde." 2. "L'heure des sacrifices." 3. "La colère d'Achille." 4. "Le sang de la déesse." 5. "Le glaive et la balance." 6. "La ruse d'Héra." 7. "Patrocle et les Myrmidons." 8. "La vengeance d'Achille." 9. "Vaincre ou mourir." 10. "Le cheval de Troie."

363. *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation* (US). Written and directed by Genndy Tartakovsky, co-written by Michael McCullers, prod. for Sony Pictures Animation; released in 2018.

Genre & length. 3rd installment in an animated feature film cycle, fantasy; 97 min.

Classical content & comments. Atlantis, Colosseum, Critias, Cyclops, Hydra, Kraken, Plato, Timaeus. The following, 4th installment in the cycle, *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania* or *HT4*, was released on January 22, 2022, written by G. Tartakovsky but directed by Derek Drymon and Jennifer Kluska, produced by Alice Dewey Goldstone; it had not been in any way inspired by antiquity. Kids' Choice Awards (2019): Favourite Male Voice and Favorite Female Voice from an Animated Movie for Adam Sandler and Selena Gomez. Sequel to: *Hotel Transylvania*, September 28, 2012; *Hotel Transylvania 2*, September 25, 2015.

References. Maciejewska, 2020b.

2019

364. *Io* (US). Directed by Jonathan Helpert, written by Clay Jeter, Charles Spano, and Will Basanta, prod. by Jason Michael Berman and Laura Rister for Mandalay Pictures, Sunset Junction Entmt, Untitled Entmt, and Great Point Media; released on Netflix on January 18, 2019.

Genre & length. Feature film, post-apocalyptic SF; 98 min.

Classical content & comments. When Earth becomes toxic to human life, people find shelter on a space station orbiting Io, one of Jupiter's moons with high volcanic activity, which provides power for the station. A young researcher, Sam, continues her father's research into immunity to the toxic fog. She succeeds when the last transport leaves for Io. Earth will be renewed. The minimalistic format – 2 actors and a voice – relies on quotations from Plato, *Symposium*, from Aristophanes' speech about love and its origins, from William Butler Yeats's 1924 sonnet "Leda and the Swan" about how Helen, the cause of the Trojan War, was conceived, from T.S. Eliot's 1942 poem "Little Gidding" (the last of the *Four Quartets*) influenced by Dante, Yeats, and other non-ancient poets.

References. Bazylczyk, 2019.

365. *Il primo re / Romulus v Remus: The First King* (IT). Directed, co-written, and co-prod. by Matteo Rovere, co-written by Filippo Gravino and Francesca Manieri, co-prod. by Andrea Paris for Groenlandia, Gapbusters, and Rai Cinema; released on January 31, 2019.

Genre & length. Feature film, mytho-historical drama, Roman history; 127 min.

Classical content & comments. A retelling of Rome's mythical origin and the story of its legendary founders, Romulus and Remus. All dialogues in early Latin were reconstructed by Donatella Gentili and her team from Sapienza University in Rome. Nominated for multiple awards, won 10, the most important in 2019: BIFEST (Bari International Film Festival) Best Cinematography for Daniele Cipri, and at Busto Arsizio Film Festival – Best Film for M. Rovere.

References. Rodriguez-Mayorgas, 2010, 89–109.

366. "An Obol for Charon." S02E04. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Directed by Lee Rose, written by Jordon Nardino, Gretchen J. Berg, Aaron Harberts, Alan McElroy, Andrew Colville, prod. by G.J. Berg, A. Harberts, et al.; aired on February 7, 2019.

Genre & length. 19th episode of a television series, military SF; 51 min.

Classical content & comments. Price of the fare for the Styx ferry to the Underworld the dead need: an obol is placed in the mouth of the corpse. The title announces the episode's theme of the passage from the world of the living to the world of the dead.

367. **“The Sound of Thunder.”** S02E06. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Directed by Doug Aarniokoski, written by Bryan Fuller, Alex Kurtzman, et al., prod. by Gretchen J. Berg, Aaron Harberts, et al.; aired on CBS All Access on February 21, 2019.

Genre & length. 21st episode of a television series, military SF; 5 seasons, 65 episodes, 56 min. each.

Classical content & comments. 23rd c. CE. Michael Burnham talks to Commander Saru at the end of the episode, in which his Kelpian nation is liberated from centuries of terrible oppression. She asks him if he knows Aeschylus and starts the quote, which he finishes: “He who learns must suffer, and even in our sleep pain that cannot forget, falls drop by drop upon the heart.” The quote from Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, 176–183 (“God, whose law it is that he who learns must suffer. And even in our sleep pain that cannot forget, falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despite, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God”) became part of American popular culture when on April 4, 1968, after Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination, Robert F. Kennedy spoke to crowds in Indianapolis quoting Aeschylus: “In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.” He knew the quote from Edith Hamilton’s book *The Greek Way*, in which she cited Aeschylus twice ([1930] 1942, 61, 194). The quote is inscribed on R.F. Kennedy’s memorial in Arlington.

368. **2019–2020, *The Order*** (CA, US). Created by Dennis Heaton, directed by David von Ancken, Kristin Lehman, Leslie Hope, et al., written by D. von Ancken, Shelley Eriksen, Jennica Harper, et al., prod. by D. Heaton, S. Eriksen, et al. for Netflix and Nomadic Pictures Entmt; aired from March 7, 2019, to June 18, 2020.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, horror, magic, witch show, secret society, hidden world, coming-of-age/school story; 2 seasons, 20 episodes, 42–52 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A hidden supernatural world full of witches, demons, werewolves, and various magical objects, such as Daedalus’ loom. An elite American university prepares new leaders for the country. Their success is due to the activities of 2 secret societies, the Hermetic Order of the Blue Rose (witches and warlocks) and Knights of St. Christopher (werewolves guarding against the abuses of magic). The societies go through phases of collaboration and hostility. A 3rd organization, The Esoteric Sons of Prometheus, a cult group communicating telepathically, is another source of conflict. The first 2 groups must save the world from an apocalypse engineered by an outside group, Praxis, led by a witch/werewolf seeking revenge for the death of her father. Witches have a relatively good grasp of the Latin they use in the incantations. They even claim to distinguish between medieval Latin and “Hiberno” Latin, whatever that may be. The main character is studying mythology and can identify the daughter of Lycaon, who wants to cause a fatal Tartarus eruption.

369. **“Ouroboros.”** S14E14. *Supernatural* (US). Created by Eric Kripke, directed by Aymn Kaderali, written and prod. by Steve Yockey for Wonderland Sound & Vision and Warner Bros. Television; aired on March 7, 2019.

Genre & length. 301st episode of a television series (2005–2020), fantasy, horror, mystery; 15 seasons, 327 episodes; this episode runs for 42 min.

Classical content & comments. Gorgon Medusa is also mentioned earlier in the series, for the 1st time in S08E16, “Remember the Titans” (2013); in the same episode, Oliver, the son of Prometheus, is also cursed by Zeus. S09E16, “Blade Runners” (2014) shows Medusa’s portrait by Peter Paul Rubens; in S08E13, “The Scorpion and the Frog,” a fossilized Gorgon’s tooth of monstrous size is mentioned. In S14E14, “Ouroboros,” the Gorgon is a creature modified in comparison with the ancient one. It is a human called Noah Opus, who paralyzes his victims with his venom before cooking and eating them, which is shown in particularly gross detail. He can also predict the



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future, and instead of snakes as hair, he has a snake named Felix. Noah is a half-god but is killed when his head is removed with a silver blade.

370. **“Project Daedalus.”** S02E09. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Created by Bryan Fuller and Alex Kurtzman, directed by Jonathan Frakes, written by Michelle Paradise, prod. by April Nocifora, Thom J. Pretak, et al. for CBS All Access and Netflix; aired on March 14, 2019.

Genre & length. 24th episode of a television series, military SF; 5 seasons, 65 episodes, 51 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Mike and Gabrielle Burnham designed a suit that allowed the wearer to time-travel. Wings made it possible to fly in the air, like Daedalus. The suit was the main element of Project Daedalus. Long considered lost, it surfaced again as Gabrielle’s costume of the Red Angel.

371. **“The Miracles of Sabrina Spellman.”** S02E07. *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (US). Directed by Antonio Negret and written by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Christianne Hedtke, et al.; aired on Netflix on April 5, 2019.

Genre & length. 18th episode of a television series, supernatural fantasy for teens, a satirical witch show, a hidden world of witches, demons, etc.; 57 min.

Classical content & comments. Sabrina tells the story of Pandora and her Box to Father Faustus Blackwood of the Church of Night to warn him of the risks of opposing her.

372. **“Nip/Stuck.”** S04E14. *DC’s Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by David Geddes, written by Ray Utarnachitt and Matthew Maala, prod. by Greg Berlanti and Phil Klemmer; aired on The CW on May 6, 2019.

Genre & length. 65th episode of a television series, SF, time travel, superheroes; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 41–45 min. each; this one is 41 min. long.

Classical content & comments. The year of the 1st Roman invasion of Britain and the destruction of the Roman fleet by storms engineered by King Kon-sten-tyn (*sic!*), a magical ancestor of the contemporary warlock Constantine. He used fear as the source of magic. This is a part of the DC Comics’ Arrowverse, a spin-off of *Arrow* and *Flash*.

373. *The Lighthouse* (US). Written by Robert and Max Eggers, directed by R. Eggers, prod. by Rodrigo Teixeira, Jay Van Hoy, R. Eggers, Lourenço Sant’Anna, and Youree Henley for A24, Regency Ent., and RT Features; released on May 19, 2019.

Genre & length. Feature film, a gothic horror; 109 min.

Classical content & comments. Ephraim sees Thomas as Proteus. Howard falls down the stairs of the lighthouse, and his corpse is picked out by seagulls, bringing to mind the myth of Prometheus. Thomas Wake is based on Proteus, a seer. He also resembles Albrecht Dürer’s *Seamonster* (Zuckerman, 2019).

374. *Boudicca: Rise of the Warrior Queen* (UK). Directed and written by Zoe Morgan, co-written by Victor Mawer and David Shillitoe, prod. by D. Shillitoe and Olivia Bruford for Warrior Films; released on September 16, 2019.

Genre & length. Feature film, history of Roman Britain; 82 min.

Classical content & comments. Fictionalized story of Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni, and her revolt against Rome.

375. *Wonder Woman: Bloodlines* (US). Directed by Sam Liu and Justin Copeland, written by Mairghread Scott, prod. by S. Liu and Amy McKenna for Warner Bros. Animation and DC Entmt; released on October 5, 2019.

Genre & length. A direct-to-video animated superhero film, mythological SF fantasy; 79 min.



Classical content & comments. A Minotaur was enchanted to defend the memory-restoring fountain at Pasiphaë's temple. Diana drinks from the fountain and destroys it. By doing so, she frees the Minotaur, whom Steve nicknames Ferdinand, alluding to Munro Leaf's story or later movies based on it. Steve and Diana return to Themyscira and find the island under the attack of Villainy Inc., who brought a replicated Medusa as their weapon. However, they cannot control her, and she kills indiscriminately, forcing them to look into her eyes until Diana vanquishes her with the help of Vanessa, whom she liberated from the control of Villainy Inc. Based on the 1941–1942 comic book *Wonder Woman* by William Moulton Marston and Harry George Peter. Pasiphaë, the goddess of mazes (goddess of pacifiers – a joking suggestion of Steve).

References. For the nickname Ferdinand, see Marciniak, 2018, 247–262.

376. **2019–2022, *His Dark Materials*** (UK). Written by Jack Thorne, directed by Tom Hooper, Jamie Childs, Leane Welham, Amit Gupta, et al., prod. by Laurie Borg, exec. prod. by Philip Pullman, Jane Tranter, Tom Emmerich, et al. for Bad Wolf, New Line Productions, and Scholastics; aired on BBC One and HBO between November 3, 2019, and December 5, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasy, coming of age, parallel worlds; 3 seasons, 23 episodes, 60 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Parallel worlds, witches, daemons – external souls in the form of an animal. The underworld is reached by crossing a river on a ferry, a strong similarity to Charon, who ferries the dead across the River Styx. Nameless harpies torment the dead, but Lyra makes a pact with them to guide the dead out of the Underworld in exchange for the true stories they would tell the harpies. She also names one of the harpies Gracious Wings. Based on P. Pullman's 1995–2000 trilogy under the same title.

References. Potter, 2022, 217–232; Olechowska, forthcoming b.

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377. **“Patty.”** S04E12. *The Good Place* (US). Directed and prod. by Megan Amram, written by Morgan Sackett for Fremulon, 3 Arts Entmt, and Universal Television; aired on NBC on January 23, 2020.

Genre & length. 51st episode of a television series, fantasy, comedy; 4 seasons, 53 episodes, 22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Hypatia (ca. 360–415 CE), an Alexandrian astronomer, philosopher, and mathematician, here called Patty, resides in Heaven – the Good Place – one of the reasons is her stand against slavery. In the Good Place, there is only happiness, no conflict, and the absence of problems and complications, which leads to ennui. A door is opened through which people can leave and end their existence. The ennui dissipates as a feeling of appreciation for continuing existence returns. According to the 10th-c. CE *Suda*, Hypatia has always fascinated writers and artists. See the 2009 *Agora*.

378. **“The Gamblers.”** S15E11. *Supernatural* (US). Directed by Charles Beeson, written by Davy Perez and Meredith Glynn, exec. prod. by Andrew Dabb and Robert Singer for Wonderland Sound & Vision and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on January 30, 2020.

Genre & length. 318th episode of a television series, fantasy, horror, mystery; 15 seasons, 327 episodes, 38–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The Roman goddess Fortuna was allegedly created like other pagan deities by the first God because he wanted to have someone for humans to blame if things did not go the way they prayed for. She holds a grudge against him and runs a magic casino in Alaska with her demigod son called Pax. In the pool hall, she removes luck from people who play there. She used to admire and support true heroes like Hercules or Gilgamesh. She realizes



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that the 2 main characters of the series are true heroes and lets the people whose luck she stole go. There are many supernatural beings in the 15 seasons of the series, but Fortuna and Mercury (2010, “Hammer of the Gods,” S05E19) are the only Roman gods.

References. Rea, 2023, 39–48.

- 379. “Freaks and Geeks.”** S05E11. *DC’s Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Directed by Nico Sachse, written by Matthew Maala and Ubah Mohamed, prod. by Greg Berlanti, Phil Klemmer, Marc Guggenheim, et al. for Berlanti Productions, DC Entertainment, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on May 12, 2020.

Genre & length. 79th episode of a television series, SF, time travel, fantasy; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. The Legends go to Nate’s Alma Mater to get the Chalice of Dionysus because whoever drinks from it becomes a god for a day. The leader of the Sigmas is Dionysus, called Dion. He has not changed since Nate studied there. Students worship him without knowing he is a god; this worship gives him his divine status. He guesses that the Legends want the cup to immortalize one of them for a day and operate the Loom of Fate. Sara challenges Dion to a beer-pong game to win the cup. When Dion loses, his followers leave him. The title alludes to “Freaks & Geeks,” a 2009 episode of the *Fairly OddParents* (S07E04b) animated series where Olympic gods are shown as bored, partying characters, irresponsible and indifferent to others. Like in the animated series, Sara calls a “toga party” Greek (“Listen Legends, better get your togas dry-cleaned because we are going Greek”).

- 380. *The Old Guard*** (US). Directed by Gina Maria Prince-Bythewood, written by Greg Rucka, prod. by David Ellison, Marc Evans, Charlize Theron, et al. for Skydance Media, Denver and Delilah Productions, and Marc Evans Productions; released on July 10, 2020.

Genre & length. Feature film, superhero action, adventure, fantasy, a free adaptation of a comic book; 125 min.

Classical content & comments. A group of immortals is led by Andromache, “the Scythian”; her Trojan origin and marriage to Hector are hinted at. “Andy” is an invincible warrior dedicated to fighting evil men and protecting the innocent (her name means: ‘Battling with Men’). Based on a 2017 comic book, *The Old Guard*, by G. Rucka and Leandro Fernández. 2021 Hugo Award winner for Best Dramatic Presentation, NAACP Award for Outstanding Directing in a Motion Picture, and Critics’ Choice Super Awards for Best Superhero Movie. *The Old Guard 2* was scheduled to be released in 2024, but has been delayed.

- 381. 2020–2021, *Cleopatra in Space*** (US.) Prod. by Doug Langdale, Scott Kreamer, and Julia “Fitzzy” Fitzmaurice for DreamWorks Animations; aired on Peacock streaming service from July 15, 2020, to January 14, 2021.

Genre & length. Animated television series, SF, space adventure; 3 seasons, 26 episodes, 22 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A historical figure in a SF fantasy setting for teenage viewers. Based on Mike Maihack’s cycle of graphic novels *Cleopatra in Space* featuring a teenage Cleopatra.

- 382. *Brutus vs César*** (FR, BE). Directed and written by Kheiron (Nouchi), prod. by Simon Istolainen et al. for Paiva Films, Centaure, Umedia, etc., in association with Amazon Prime Video; released on Amazon Prime on September 18, 2020.

Genre & length. Feature film, comedy, fictionalized Roman history, action; 87 min.

Classical content & comments. Senators Rufus and Cassius plot to assassinate Caesar, the dictator, and invite his son to join them.



- 383. 2020–2022, *Barbaren*** (DE). Written by Jan Martin Scharf, Arne Nolting, Andreas Heckmann, directed by Barbara Eder and Stephen St. Leger; prod. by and released on Netflix; season 1 on October 2, 2020, and season 2 on October 21, 2022.
Genre & length. Television series, war drama, fictionalized Roman history; 2 seasons, 18 episodes, 41–51 min. each.
Classical content & comments. The infamous Roman defeat in the Teutoburg Forest in 9 CE resulted in the loss of 3 entire legions vanquished by Germanic tribes; it ended Roman expansion beyond the Rhine. Various inaccuracies and a tendency to stress the moral superiority and humanity of the Germanic tribes oppressed by taxes and tributes over the merciless brutality of Rome. The title *Barbaren* seems to refer to Romans rather than the Germanic freedom fighters. Romans speak Italianized Latin, and the tribes modern German. Ancient sources: Strabo (63 BCE–23 CE), Tacitus' (56–120 CE) *Annales* and *Geographica*, Cassius Dio's (155–235 CE) *Historia Romana*. A German quasi-historical action-drama series with lots of violence, brutality, and gore.
References. Waddell, 2020, 151–161.
- 384. 2020–, *Blood of Zeus*** (US). Created and written by Charley and Vlas Parlapanides, directed by Shaunt Nigoghossian, prod. for Netflix by Powerhouse Animation studio, animation by Mua Film and Hanho Heung-Up; 1st season released on October 27, 2020, 2nd on May 9–10, 2024.
Genre & length. Television series, adult animation; 2 seasons of 8 episodes each, 26–37 min. each.
Classical content & comments. Greek mythology outside the canon – new characters and stories. Heron, son of Zeus and Electra, the Queen of Corinth, is hidden by his father from Hera's revenge. He tries to save the world from demons (the Giants' souls were preserved in a cauldron made by Hephaestus and guarded by an automaton, Talos; their bodies were thrown into the ocean; people who found a Giant's corpse became demons after consuming some of the flesh) led by Seraphim, Heron's half-brother presumed murdered by his uncle Acrisius, who usurped the throne of Corinth. The conflict involves the gods and the demons and becomes very convoluted. Finally, the Giants are brought back to life; in a new version of deicide, Zeus is killed but then revived by Poseidon and, later in the conflict, killed again when trying to protect Hera. Seraphim is killed by Heron, who returns to Olympus to unite with his half-brothers. In the Underworld, Seraphim swears to serve Hades, who frees him from eternal punishment. 1st season: RottenTomatoes Critics Consensus: "*Blood of Zeus* reforges Greek mythology into an epic battle royal with slick animation and sterling voice acting, earning it a spot on the Mount Olympus of action animation" (RottenTomatoes, n.d. a). Tentatively planned for 5 seasons.
- 385. 2020–2022, *Romulus*** (IT). Created and directed by Matteo Rovere, co-directed by Michele Alhaique and Enrico Maria Artale, prod. by M. Rovere, Paolo Lucarini, et al. for Sky Italia, Groenlandia, and Cattleya, in collab. with ITV Studios; released on Sky Atlantic on November 6, 2020.
Genre & length. Television series, a retelling of a foundational Roman myth; 1 season of 10 episodes, 60 min. each. A 2nd season of 8 episodes was aired from October 21 to November 11, 2022.
Classical content & comments. The language used is reconstructed archaic Latin, but on Sky Atlantic, the 1st season was dubbed in Italian with the possibility to watch in the original Latin. The action begins earlier than M. Rovere's 2019 movie *Il primo re* and presents the imagined antecedents of Rome's foundational myth. Great care has been taken to reconstruct the 8th-c. BCE reality, with the assistance of eminent archaeologists, such as Andrea Carandini (*Roma. Il primo giorno*, 2007), Paolo Carafa (specialist in Ancient Roman topography), and Valentino Nizzo (Director of the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia). Winner of the 2021 Nastro d'Argento for Best Italian TV Series.
- 386. *Wonder Woman 1984*** (US). Directed, co-written, and co-prod. by Patty Jenkins for Warner Bros. Pictures, DC Films, Atlas Entmt, and The Stone Quarry; released on December 16, 2020.



Genre & length. Feature superhero film, action, fantasy, mythological figures; 151 min.

Classical content & comments. A sequel to the 2017 movie *Wonder Woman*. An Amazon superheroine in 1984 US (Smithsonian Inst.); a “dreamstone” granting wishes: a monkey’s paw expects a steep payment for whatever it gives. Based on characters from DC Comics.

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387. *L’Odyssée*. S03E01–10. *Les grands mythes* (FR). Created and written by Francois Busnel, co-written by Gilbert Sinoué, Jean Charles Paugam, prod. by Nathalie Amsellem, Sylvain Bergère, et al. for Arte France and Rosebud Productions; aired on Arte from February 7 to March 7, 2021.

Genre & length. Documentary television series, retelling of myths; season 3 of 10 episodes, 26 min. each.

Classical content & comments. 1. “À la recherche d’Ulysse.” 2. “L’homme qui défait les dieux.” 3. “La malédiction du Cyclope.” 4. “Circé, la magicienne.” 5. “Le voyage aux enfers.” 6. “Le chant des sirènes.” 7. “Le châtement de Zeus.” 8. “Cap sur Ithaque.” 9. “La cicatrice du roi.” 10. “Le crépuscule des dieux.”

388. *시지프스: the myth / Sisyphus: The Myth* (SK). Directed by Jin Hyuk, written by Lee Je-in and Jeon Chan-ho, prod. by Park Joon-seo and Park Sang-eok for Drama House and JTBC Studios. Aired on JTBC from February 17 to April 8, 2021.

Genre & length. A time-travel SF fantasy television series; 1 season of 16 episodes, 70 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. In episode 8, a painting of Sisyphus created by the villain of the series is discovered, and the hero explains the hopeless and never-ending punishment of Sisyphus from Greek mythology, who repeatedly tries to roll a rock up a mountain; each attempt ends in failure, and Sisyphus must try again. After a nuclear disaster, the survivors time-travel to the past in order to prevent the catastrophe and change the future but their attempts have little chance of success. Elements of a vaguely suggested time-loop phenomenon recall the 2017 SF film *Before I Fall* paraphrasing the myth of Sisyphus. In a bizarre twist, the nuclear disaster is limited to the Korean Peninsula; it may reflect the fear of a nuclear conflict between North and South Korea.

389. *This Little Love of Mine* (AU). Directed by Christine Luby, written by Georgia Harrison, prod. by Lionel Hicks and Phil Hunt for The Steve Jaggi Company and McLaren House; released on April 6, 2021.

Genre & length. Feature film, romantic comedy; 91 min.

Classical content & comments. A hostess in a tropical resort shows the night sky to dinner guests at the hotel’s restaurant. She explains: “Over to the east, we have the constellation of the beautiful maiden Andromeda. Legend has it she was rescued from a sea monster by the brave warrior Perseus, son of Zeus. After turning the monster to stone, they rode away on his white-winged horse, Pegasus, and lived happily ever after. And the gods placed them in the night sky as a reminder to all of us to follow our hearts.” A later exchange between the romantically involved couple: “Andromeda, meet Pegasus! Are you Perseus, Zeus’ son?”

390. “Ground Control to Sara Lance.” S06E01. *DC’s Legends of Tomorrow* (US). Developed by Greg Berlanti, Marc Guggenheim, Andrew Kreisberg, and Phil Klemmer, written by James Eagan and Mark Bruner, directed by Kevin Mock, prod. by Berlanti Productions, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; aired on The CW on May 2, 2021.

Genre & length. 83rd episode of a television series, SF fantasy; 7 seasons, 110 episodes, 42–45 min. This episode runs for 42 min.



Classical content & comments. Time-travelling aliens abducted Sara Lance, the captain of the *Waverider*, as the “quintessential human.” They also abducted other humans and stored them in cryo chambers on their ship. Among them was Spartacus, who thought he was the “quintessential human,” but the aliens took him only as their food reserve. When Sara escaped from her chamber, she liberated Spartacus. He let out a monster from another pod, but while claiming to be undefeatable, he did not help Sara vanquish it. He told her that he did not want to tire himself because if she were killed, he would have to revenge her. He ignored Sara’s warnings and was caught and devoured by the aliens. This highly unfavourable image of Spartacus may be a reaction, typical for the series, to the idealized stereotype of the tragic hero well-established in audiovisual culture.

391. *Jupiter’s Legacy* (US). Developed by Steven DeKnight and Sang Kyu Kim, prod. for Millarwood, Di Bonaventura Pictures, and DeKnight Productions; released on Netflix on May 7, 2021.

Genre & length. Superhero television series based on a comic book; 1 season of 8 episodes, 35–56 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on Mark Millar and Frank Quitely’s 2013 comic book series *Jupiter’s Legacy*. A superhero team known as the Union of Justice, composed of people gifted with superpowers, is led by the Utopian and functions according to the Utopian principles: do not kill, do not interfere in political matters. The next generation struggles with practising the Utopian’s ideals. Mythological inspirations: the title reflects the superpower of the Utopian – he controls lightning and thunder.

392. 2021–2023, *Domina* (IT, UK). Created, written, and exec. prod. by Simon Burke, directed by Claire McCarthy, David Evans, and Debs Paterson, prod. by John Phillips and Carmen Maloney for Fifty Fathoms, Tiger Aspect, Cattleya, Sky Italia, and Sky Studios; aired from May 14, 2021, to August 13, 2023, on Sky Atlantic (Italy and UK).

Genre & length. Television series, fictionalized Roman history, a biopic; 2 seasons of 8 episodes each, 48–55 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. Octavian’s road to power and his 51-year-long marriage to Livia Drusilla, the most powerful woman in Roman history, can be seen from her perspective.

References. Holland, 2021.

393. *Idéfix et les Irréductibles / Dogmatix and the Indomitables* (FR). Directed by Charles Vaucelle, written by Olivier Serrano, Hervé Benedetti, Philippe Clerc, et al., prod. by Dionen Clauteaux and Céleste Surugue for GMT Productions, Les Editions Albert René, M6, etc.; aired on Okoo (France Televisions) from July 2, 2021, on France 4 from August 28, 2021, on Télé-Québec from January 23, 2022.

Genre & length. Animated television series, humorous fantasy, fictional Roman history; 1 season of 52 episodes, 11 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Based on Albert Uderzo and René Goscinny’s series of comic books. Pseudo-historical fantasy, a prequel to the comic-book series *Asterix*. Gaul in 52 BCE. Defending Lutetia against the Romans, Dogmatix leads a resistance group, the Indomitables, composed of his animal friends. The first ever animated *Asterix* series centred on Dogmatix.

394. *Medusa* (BR). Directed and written by Anita Rocha da Silveira, prod. by Mayra Auad, Vânia Catani, and Fernanda Thuran for Bananeira Filmes and MyMama Entmt; released on July 12, 2021.

Genre & length. Feature film, urban horror, feminist; 129 min.

Classical content & comments. “Michele, Mariana, Melissa... I once read that girls’ names that start with the letter ‘M’ are names of malicious women... Mary Magdalene... Messalina... Monsters.” The director was inspired by the similarity to the myth of Medusa of several recent cases in Brazil of “Christian” girl gangs attacking at night girls deemed promiscuous – “she was punished because of her loss of purity. In one version I read, she was raped, and in another, she just had sex.



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That got me thinking: How does a myth that has existed for thousands of years resonate with today's society? I decided to write this film to explore that" (A. Rocha da Silveira in Martin, 2022).

- 395. *Centaurworld*** (US). Created, co-directed, and co-written by Megan Nicole Dong, co-written by Jen Bardekoff, Dominic Bisignano, et al., prod. by Megan Nicole Dong and Louis J. Cuck for Netflix Animation and Sketchshark Productions; released on Netflix from July 30 to December 7, 2021.

Genre & length. Animated television series, musical comedy; 2 seasons, 18 episodes, 25–73 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Someone riding a horse brings a magical object to the war zone but lands in Centaurworld, situated in a magical Centaur Valley; the horse gets separated from the rider and acquires the ability to speak. The horse asks the locals (singing Centaurs of many varieties) to help him find the rider, which leads to a series of fascinating adventures.

- 396. "No Direction Home."** S05E12. *Billions* (US). Created and prod. by Brian Koppelman, David Levien, Andrew Ross Sorkin, et al., directed by Dan Attias, written by B. Koppelman and D. Levien, prod. for Best Available! and TBTF Production Inc.; aired on October 3, 2021.

Genre & length. 60th episode of a television series; 7 seasons, 84 episodes, 54–60 min. each. This episode: 58 min.

Classical content & comments. A mythological analogy to the high-stake business world. Chuck Rhoades says to Bobby Axelrod: "A Titan steals fire and gets his liver eaten every day for punishment. Another one picks the wrong side and has to hold the world on his shoulders for all time. A king tells a secret and has to push a rock up a hill for his trouble. Believe it if you will, or look for the metaphor in it; one thing's for sure. We don't know how to be happy." Michael Prince to Axelrod: "Roman soldiers on the campaign carried three days of rations and foraged. Going to ground with under a billion liquid is your equivalent of that."

- 397. "The Siren."** S03E07. *What We Do in the Shadows* (US). Created by Jemaine Clement, directed by Yana Gorskaya, written by Shana Gohd, prod. by J. Clement et al. for FXP; aired on FX on October 7, 2021.

Genre & length. 27th episode in a docudrama television series, fantasy, supernatural; 25 min.

Classical content & comments. 4 vampires live together on Staten Island, NY. 2 vampires are lured by the voice of a siren called Sheila, who intends to eat them. One escapes, and the other falls in love with Sheila but is rescued by his friends anyway. The series runs on FX since March 27, 2019.

- 398. *Eternals*** (US). Directed by Chloé Zhao, written by C. Zhao, Patrick Burleigh, Ryan and Kaz Firpo, prod. by Kevin Feige and Nate Moore for Marvel Studios; released on October 18, 2021.

Genre & length. Feature film, superheroes/ancient aliens, fantasy, action, adaptation of a comic book; 156 min.

Classical content & comments. An explanation of how Greek mythology came to be: ancient aliens (Eternals, who are AI: Ajak, Druig, Gilgamesh, Ikaris, Kingo, Makkari, Phastos, Sersi, Sprite, and Thena) are sent from space by a superior being to facilitate the birth of other such beings whose mission is to create and recreate solar systems and make the cosmos function properly. Sumer, Babylon, Greece: the Eternals defend humans against the Deviants (AI predators) and assist in human progress. All human mythologies originate from the presence of the Eternals on the planet. In the pre-credits, Stonehenge is shown, suggesting its connection to the Eternals. In post-credits, Sersi's human boyfriend is opening a wooden casket with an inscription: *Mors mihi lucrum*, holding a magic sword. Based on Jack Kirby's 1976 Marvel comic series under the same title.



399. **Love Hard** (US). Directed by Hernán Jiménez, written by Danny Mackey, and Rebecca Ewing, prod. by Joseph McGinty Nichol and Mary Viola for Wonderland Sound & Vision; released on Netflix on November 5, 2021.

Genre & length. Feature film, romantic comedy; 105 min.

Classical content & comments. To explain the romantic notion of soulmate and true love, the following story is told: “It’s been said that according to Greek mythology, humans were originally created with four arms and four legs and a head with two faces. But fearing their power, Zeus split them into two separate parts, condemning humans to spend the rest of their lives searching for their other half. And if that’s the truth, then Zeus is an ass...” This story involving not only Zeus but also Apollo and Hephaestus is based on Aristophanes’ speech on the nature of love in Plato’s *Symposium*, 189d–193d.

400. “**All the Bells Say.**” S03E09. **Succession** (US). Directed by Mark Mylod, written and created by Jesse Armstrong and Jamie Carragher, prod. by J. Armstrong, Scott Ferguson, Will Ferrell, et al. for HBO; aired on December 12, 2021.

Genre & length. 29th episode of a television series, satirical comedy-drama; 4 seasons, 39 episodes. This episode runs for 66 min.

Classical content & comments. One of the characters claims that in Ancient Rome, they wanted to make the slaves wear the same clothes so they could identify them. They decided not to because they realized that if all the slaves dressed the same, they would see how many of them there were, and they would rise up and kill their masters. J. Armstrong won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series. Season 4 was released on HBO Max on March 27, 2023, and ran until May 28, 2023.

401. **The Matrix Resurrections** (US). Directed, written, and prod. by Lana Wachowski, co-written by David Mitchell and Aleksandar Hemon, co-prod. by James McTeigue and Grant Hill for Warner Bros. Pictures, Village Roadshow Pictures, and Venus Castina Productions; released on December 22, 2021.

Genre & length. 4th feature film in a cycle, SF action; 148 min.

Classical content & comments. A sequel to the 2003 *The Matrix Revolutions*. Niobe, Morpheus, Persephone, the Oracle. For more details, see the 2003 *The Matrix Reloaded*.

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402. “**Cannonade.**” S06E01. **Billions** (US). Created and prod. by Brian Koppelman, David Levien, Andrew Ross Sorkin, et al., directed by Joshua Marston, written by B. Koppelman, D. Levien, and A. Ross Sorkin, prod. for Best Available! and TBTF Production Inc.; aired on January 23, 2022.

Genre & length. 61st episode of a television series; 7 seasons, 84 episodes, 54–60 min. each. This one runs for 52 min.

Classical content & comments. Prince says about Chuck Rhoades: like Cincinnatus, leaving matters of state for the plough. Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus (ca. 519–ca. 431 BCE), dictator in 458 and 439 BCE (Liv., *Hist.* 3.26.6–3.30). Rather like Manius Curius Dentatus (d. 270 BCE): “I see no glory in having money myself, but in commanding those that do.” Rhoades answers him: “I’m less interested in speaking Latin than in speaking the truth.” Cf. “It seemed to him that a better thing than having gold was ruling those who did” (Cic., *De sen.* 56: “non enim aurum habere praeclarum sibi videri dixit, sed eis qui haberent aurum imperare”; “Indeed he said that it seemed to him an excellent thing not to have gold, but to rule over those who have gold” – Cicero, 1923, trans. W.A. Falconer). Valerius Maximus (4.3.5a) rephrases the thought: “narrate Samnitibus M’. Curium malle locupletibus imperare quam ipsum fieri locupletem” (“tell the Samnites that M’.



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Curius prefers to command the rich rather than to become rich himself” – Valerius Maximus, 2000, trans. D.R. Shackleton Bailey).

403. **“Rubicon.”** S04E09. *Star Trek: Discovery* (US). Directed by Andi Armaghanian, written by Alan McElroy et al., prod. by Michelle Paradise et al. for Secret Hideout, Roddenberry Entertainment, Living Dead Guy Productions, and CBS Studios; aired on Paramount+ on February 17, 2022.

Genre & length. 51st episode of a television series, military SF; 5 seasons, 65 episodes, 45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. As the title suggests, the episode deals with a point of no return: the destruction of the Dark Matter Anomaly. Based on *Star Trek*, created by Gene Roddenberry.

404. **“Hostis humani generis.”** S06E06. *Billions* (US). Created and prod. by Brian Koppelman, David Levien, Andrew Ross Sorkin, et al., directed by Tara Nicole Weyr, written by Beth Schacter, prod. for Best Available! and TBTF Production Inc.; aired on February 27, 2022.

Genre & length. 66th episode of a television series; 7 seasons, 84 episodes, 50–60 min. each. This one runs for 50 min. Available on HBO Max.

Classical content & comments. “The original term for a pirate, ‘Hostis humani generis.’ ‘Enemy of all mankind.’ That’s right. Beyond any legal protection and prosecutable by any and all.” See Cic., *Off.* 3.29.107, *Verr.* 2.5.76.

405. **“Don’t Get Attached.”** S04E05. *Killing Eve* (UK). Directed by Emily Atef, written by Laura Neal and Georgia Lester, exec. prod. by Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Lee Morris, Sandra Oh, et al. for Sid Gentle Films, Endeavor Content, and BBC America; aired on March 27, 2022.

Genre & length. 29th episode of a television series, spy thriller, black comedy, an adaptation of a novel; 4 seasons, 32 episodes, 40–43 min. each. This one runs for 42 min.

Classical content & comments. One of the former members of a group active since the Cold War investigated by Eve, Oliver Schubert, lectures about the myth of Cupid and Psyche and says that in popular culture it is associated with sweet romance and customs like Valentine’s Day. In contrast, in the myth, Psyche did not necessarily remain gentle and good. Prof. Schubert asks what Psyche would be ready to do, having already endured incredible hardships, including a journey to the Underworld. The story resonates with Eve as it mirrors her relationship with the professional killer Villanelle. Based on Luke Jennings’s 3 novellas from 2014–2016, put together in 2017 as *Codename Villanelle*.

406. *Thermae Romae novae* (JP, US). Directed by Tetsuya Tatamitan, written by Yūichirō Momose, prod. for Kabushiki-gaisha Nazu, licensed by Netflix; released on March 28, 2022.

Genre & length. An original net animation (ONA) series – called in Japan *web animation*, historical SF manga; 11 episodes, 27 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Ancient Rome, 128 BCE. Lucius Modestus, a Roman bathhouse architect, lacks inspiration. He time-travels to a modern Japanese bathhouse and tries to copy Japanese inventions at home. A long opening sequence with Georges Bizet’s *Carmen*. 1. All baths lead to Rome (“Omnes thermae Romam dugunt” [*sic!*]). At the end of each episode, there is a segment about hot-spring baths in Japan presented by the manga author Mari Yamazaki. 2. Lucius rarely speaks in Japan, but if he does, it is always in Latin. A gently didactic show presenting similarities between Japanese and Ancient Roman culture, showcasing hot-spring baths in Japan. An adaptation of the 2012 TV anime series *Thermae Romae*, based on Yamazaki’s manga.

References. Kovacs and Marshall, 2016, xxvi–xxviii. See the 2012 live-action movie adaptation and Cyrino, 2022b, 82–97.

407. **“Two of One.”** S02E06. *Star Trek: Picard* (US). Directed by Jonathan Frakes, created by Akiva Goldsman, Michael Chabon, Alex Kurtzman, et al., written by Cindy Appel and Jane Maggs, prod.



by A. Goldsman, Terry Matalas, Douglas Aarniokoski, et al. for Roddenberry Entmt; released on Paramount+ on April 7, 2022.

Genre & length. 16th episode of a television series, military SF, fantasy, time travel; 3 seasons, 30 episodes, 41 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A mad scientist, Dr. Soong, produces a series of clones and gives them names from Greek mythology: Persephone, Despoina, Persephassa, Artemis, Thallia, Proserpina (pronounced Prosperina), and Kore.

408. *My Love Affair with Marriage* (LV, US, LU). Directed, written, animated, and prod. by Signe Baumane, co-prod. by Roberts Vinovskis, Sturgis Warner, and Raoul Nadalet for Studio Locomotive, The Marriage Project, and Antevita Films; released on June 11, 2022.

Genre & length. Adult animation film, musical comedy-drama; 108 min.

Classical content & comments. A semi-autobiographical quest for love by a young girl conditioned by societal values and aspirations. Mythical Sirens guide her in her choices and explain expectations. The urge to find her fated partner is explained in a simplified version of Aristophanes' story on the origin of love in Plato's *Symposium*. No attribution to Plato or Greek mythology, only a reference to non-specified "gods." Nominated for 28 awards, won 18.

409. "First Kiss." S01E01. *First Kill* (US). Created, co-written, and co-prod. by Victoria Schwab, directed by Amanda Tapping, Eriq La Salle, Jet Wilkinson, et al., prod. by Felicia D. Henderson, Matthew Matraski, Emma Roberts, et al. for WaterWalk Entmt and Belletrist Productions; released on Netflix on June 22, 2022.

Genre & length. 1st episode of a television series, fantasy, horror, coming of age, hidden world; 1 season, 8 episodes, 42–59 min. each.

Classical content & comments. A budding teen romance between a Legacy vampire (ancient lineage) girl called Juliette and Calliope, a girl from an ancient family of monster slayers. Allusions to *Romeo and Juliet*. For centuries, the slayers were named after classical gods and heroes; Calliope's brothers are Apollo and Theseus. Their mother's name is Thalia. There is no classical inspiration apart from the names. Two rather grammatically unconvincing Latin incantations: *Intra lux tenebras relego* and *Puriati studentibus* (?). Based on an eponymous short story by V. Schwab. Netflix cancelled the series after the 1st season because of low ratings.

410. *Thor: Love and Thunder* (US). Directed and written by Taika Waititi, co-written by Jennifer Kaitin Robinson, prod. by Kein Feige and Brad Winderbaum for Marvel Studios; theatrical release on June 23, 2022, released on Disney+ on September 8, 2022.

Genre & length. Feature film, superhero comedy, based on Marvel comics; 119 min.

Classical content & comments. Powerful gods from different mythologies (Gods of the Universe) live in Omnipotence City. The most powerful is Zeus, who fears the Necrosword wielded by Gorr the Butcher God. Zeus does not want to help Thor vanquish Gorr; he refuses to lend Thor his thunderbolt. Thor, with his friends, wounds Zeus and takes away the thunderbolt. There are 2 post-credits sequences; in the first, Zeus, with his son Hercules, plans revenge on Thor: "When did we become a joke? No, no more. They will fear us again when Thor Odinson falls from the sky. Do you understand me, Hercules? Do you understand me, my son? Yes, Father." The second sequence shows Valhalla, the Viking heaven. 4th film in the Marvel *Thor* cycle, a sequel to the 2017 *Thor: Ragnarok*.

411. *Lost Treasures of Rome* (US). Directed by Fabio Cerveira and Bianca Zamfira, prod. by Laura Oak, John Fothergill, Helen Hawken, Carlo Massarella, et al. for Argonon Group and Windfall Films; released on Disney+ and National Geographic Channel on June 24, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, documentary; 1 season, 6 episodes, 45 min. each.

Classical content & comments. An international team of archaeologists discusses the latest finds at various excavation sites. 1. “Hidden Secrets of Pompeii.” 2. “Rome’s Sunken Secrets.” 3. “Secrets of the Colosseum.” 4. “Nero’s Lost Palace.” 5. “Secrets of Rome’s Great Wall.” 6. “Pompeii’s Lost Twin: Herculaneum.”

412. **The Gray Man** (US). Directed by Anthony and Joe Russo, written by J. Russo, Christopher Markus, and Stephen McFeeley, prod. by A. and J. Russo, Mike Larocca, et al. for AGBO and Roth/Kirschenbaum Films; released on Netflix on July 22, 2022.

Genre & length. Feature film, action thriller, adaptation of a novel; 129 min.

Classical content & comments. The main character has “Sisyphos” tattooed on his arm in the Greek alphabet. “It’s a guy’s name in Greek. What guy? Just a guy. You know, trying to get a rock up a hill. Why? They made him. Who made him? The gods. Did they need a rock? They were just trying to punish him, I think. Did he deserve it? Probably. Did he like it? Probably not. So why’d he do it? You ask a lot of questions. [...] Does he ever get to the top of the hill? I’ll let you know.” Based on Mark Greaney’s 2009 novel *The Gray Man*, the 1st in a series now counting 10 more books, with an 11th (*Burner*) published in 2023.

413. **The Sandman** (US). Developed and exec. prod. by Neil Gaiman, David S. Goyer, and Allan Heinberg, directed by Mike Barker, Jamie Childs, et al., co-prod. by M. Barker for PurePop Inc., The Blank Corp., Phantom Four, DC Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; released on Netflix on August 5–20, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, dark fantasy, based on a graphic novel; 1 season, 10 episodes + a double bonus episode (see the entry below), 37–64 min. per episode. Season 2 announced.

Classical content & comments. A poignant, poetic adaptation of N. Gaiman’s 1989–1996 graphic novel *The Sandman*. A dark fantasy bordering on horror. Morpheus, king of dreams, gets imprisoned for a century by a sorcerer. When he escapes, his kingdom is in ruins, and his powerful magic attributes (a bag of sand, a helmet, and a ruby) are gone. His subjects – dreams and nightmares – scattered in the world threaten to blur the difference between being awake and asleep. In his quest to rebuild his kingdom, Morpheus meets his dangerous siblings, Death and Desire.

References. Besson, 2014, 497–508; Pszczolińska, 2023.

414. “A Dream of a Thousand Cats” and “Calliope.” S01E11. **The Sandman** (US). Developed and exec. prod. by Neil Gaiman, David S. Goyer and Allan Heinberg, directed by Hisko Hulsing (Part 1) and Louise Hooper (Part 2); released on Netflix on August 20, 2022.

Genre & length. A bonus double episode added to season 1 of a television series, fantasy, superhero; 1st part animation, 2nd live-action; runs for 64 min.

Classical content & comments. The world of cats. Calliope, the Muse, is imprisoned by a mediocre writer and brutally forced to inspire him.

References. Besson, 2014, 497–508; Pszczolińska, 2023; Olechowska and Pszczolińska, 2023, 137–144.

415. 2022–, **Erynie / Erinies** (PL). Directed and written by Borys Lankosz, co-written by Igor Brejdygant and Magdalena Lankosz, prod. by Krystyna Świeca, Paweł Rzewuski, Marcin Kurek, et al. for Mediabrigade and Telewizja Polska; released on TVP VOD on October 25, 2022, and on Netflix on November 29, 2023.

Genre & length. Television series, an adaptation of a series of dark detective novels; 1 season of 12 episodes, 45 min. each. There will possibly be a 2nd season, but no date is available.

Classical content & comments. Based on a cycle of detective novels by Marek Krajewski (b. 1966), a classicist previously at the University of Wrocław, now a full-time writer (*Głowa Minotaura* [The Minotaur’s Head; 2009], *Erynie* [Erinyes; 2010], *Liczby Charona* [Charon’s Numbers; 2011], *Rzeki Hadesu* [Rivers of the Underworld; 2012]). Titles of the series and most of the episodes

allude to Greek mythology or are in Latin: 4. “Kokytyos” [Cocytus]; 5. “Lete” [Lethe]; 6. “Alektō” [Alecto]; 7. “Megajra” [Megaera]; 8. “Tyzyfona” [Tisiphone]; 9. “Flegeton” [Phlegethon]; 10. “Subterra”; 11. “Patodycea” [Pathodicy]; 12. “Experimentum crucis.” A police detective in Lviv in 1938 is fired, and to make some money until the police hire him again, he works as a Latin tutor. In episode 9, the action moves to Wrocław right after WW2.

References. Zieliński, 2016, 51–64.

416. **Wednesday** (US). Created, written, and co-exec. prod. by Alfred Gough and Miles Millar, co-written by April Blair, Ayla Alpert, and Matt Lambert, directed by Tim Burton, Gandja Monteiro, and James Marshall, prod. by Carmen Pelelea for MGM Television, Tim Burton Productions, and Toluca Pictures; released on Netflix on November 23, 2022.

Genre & length. Television series, supernatural horror comedy, coming of age; 1 season of 8 episodes, 46–57 min. each. Filming of season 2 began in May 2024.

Classical content & comments. 2 secondary characters, students at the Nevermore Academy attended by Wednesday Addams, display mythological powers: Ajax is a Gorgon able to petrify people temporarily, including himself. Bianca and her friends are Sirens with strangely luminous eyes and a compelling power of suggestion; underwater, they change into mermaids but do not sing. Latin incantations in the last episode revive a dead wizard. A sequel to 1991 *The Addams Family* and 1993 *The Addams Family Values*, movies based on macabre cartoon characters created by Charles S. Addams (1912–1988).

2023

417. **Physical: 1000** (KR). Directed by Jang Ho-gi and Lee Jong-il, created by J. Ho-gi, written by Kang Sook-kyung and Jo Geun-ae, prod. by Kim Hyun-gi, Yoon Kwon-soo, and Han Yul for MBC and Luvworks Media; released on Netflix from January 24 to February 21, 2023.

Genre & length. A survival reality show; 1 season of 9 episodes, 51–88 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. Inspired by the ancient Olympic Games, promoting the cult of a healthy and strong body. In Quest 4, five games are based on Greek mythology: 1. The Punishment of Atlas (holding up a 50 kg rock); 2. The Fire of Prometheus (an obstacle course to a flaming torch); 3. The Wings of Icarus (climbing a lowering rope); 4. The Tail of Ouroboros (chasing each other around an arena trying to tag the person running in front); 5. The Punishment of Sisyphus (pushing up a hill a 100 kg boulder). Praised for the participation of women contestants but criticized for occasional lack of transparency and favouritism, as well as for gender-related issues, alleged use of steroids, and negative character traits of some participants. High viewership figures for a non-English reality show. My thanks to Henry Stead for bringing this series to my attention.

418. **Exceptional Beings** (US). Directed by Njehed Anthony and Christian Kazadi, written and prod. by N. Anthony, co-prod. by Justin Morgan for Gestalt Effect and FJ Morgan; released on January 31, 2023.

Genre & length. Feature film, SF fantasy action; 97 min.

Classical content & comments. A partial Greek Pantheon: Athena, Hermes, Apollo, and Poseidon. The action is set in the present; the gods meet a mortal woman who can see them, which should not be possible. They begin to question their divinity.

419. **Astérix et Obélix. L'Empire du Milieu / Asterix and Obelix: The Middle Kingdom** (FR). Directed by Guillaume Canet, written by Philippe Mechelen and Julien Hervé, prod. by Alain Attal and Yohan Baiada for Les Editions Albert René, Les Enfants Terribles, Pathé Films, and Les Productions des Trésor; released on February 1, 2023.

Genre & length. Feature film, live action, neo-peplum comedy, Roman Gaul; 111 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on Albert Uderzo and René Goscinny's characters and story but not on any specific album. 1st c. BCE: the daughter of a Chinese Emperor, Han Xuandi, fleeing a villainous prince, escapes to Gaul, hoping for assistance from Asterix and Obelix. Asterix and Obelix depart for China, as do Caesar and his army. The movie mainly received unfavourable reviews (dubbed *pathétix* by the RTBF Hugues Dayez, 2023).

420. ***Shazam! Fury of the Gods*** (US). Directed by David F. Sandberg, written by Henry Gayden and Chris Morgan, prod. by Peter Safran for New Line Cinema, DC Studios, The Safran Co.; released on March 17, 2023. Available on HBO Max from May 23, 2023.

Genre & length. Feature film, superhero fantasy, based on DC characters; 130 min.

Classical content & comments. A sequel to D.F. Sandberg's 2019 movie *Shazam!* and the 12th part of the DC Extended Universe. Hespera and Kalypso, daughters of the Titan Atlas, break into the museum on the Athenian Acropolis and steal Shazam, the wizard's staff, broken in half by Billy Batson in the 1st movie. Billy, in his superhero form, is "as wise as Solomon, as strong as Hercules, as resilient as Atlas, as powerful as Zeus, as brave as Achilles, and as fast as Mercury." The wizard Shazam, imprisoned in the Gods' Realm for killing Atlas and other gods, is forced to fix the staff; it becomes a weapon for Hespera and Kalypso, who want to heal their world by seeding the Golden Apple, saved from ruin. The wizard warns Billy about the sisters in a dream, and the Shazamily (composed of 6 foster siblings who transform into adult superheroes) gets ready. A 3rd daughter of Atlas, Anthea, befriends Freddy, one of the heroes, but the other 2 sisters interfere, take away Freddy's powers and imprison him in the same cell as the Wizard. While Hespera and Anthea do not want to harm humans, Kalypso is bloodthirsty and revengeful. She wounds Hespera and takes away Anthea's powers. After calling to her aid the dragon Ladon, the guardian of the Golden Apples, she plants the Apple in the grass of a baseball stadium, and a monstrous Tree of Life begins to grow. It begins the destruction of the Earth and brings in monsters, such as Chimeras, harpies, Minotaurs, and a one-horned Cyclops. Billy, the only hero left with powers, with the help of a wounded Hespera and a herd of wild unicorns tamed with rainbow-coloured Skittles, manages to destroy the Tree, Kalypso, Ladon and all the monsters, but at the cost of his life. Wonder Woman, the only divine power left alive, shows up at his funeral and resurrects him. The Shazamily is safe, reunited, and stronger because their parents now know about their super-powers. Only loosely inspired by mythology: the mythological Anthea is not Atlas' daughter; her name is the Roman version of Antheia; also, the name Mercury is used instead of Hermes; the non-mythological wild unicorns are feared by all mythological monsters who are unredeemable villains.

421. **"Vox."** S03E09. ***Star Trek: Picard*** (US). Directed by Terry Matalas, written by Sean Tretta and Kiley Rossetter, prod. by Akiva Goldsman, Alex Kurtzman, and Patrick Stewart for CBS Television Studios, Roddenberry Entmt, and Secret Hideout; released on CBS All Access, Amazon Prime Video, etc., on April 13, 2023.

Genre & length. 29th episode of a television series, military SF; 3 seasons, 30 episodes, 48 min.

Classical content & comments. The Borgh Queen greets Jack, Picard's son, who has inherited Borgh organic technology from his father, saying that she considered for him the name Regenerati (*sic!*) or Puer Dei, but decided on Vox. Picard was Locutus, the one who speaks, and Jack is the voice itself. Jack comments on the Queen's "fondness for Latin."

422. ***Knights of the Zodiac*** (US, JP). Directed by Tomek Bagiński, written by Josh Campbell, Matt Stuecken, and Kiel Murray, prod. by Yoshi Ikezawa, Joseph Chou, and Tim Kwok for Stage 6 Films and Toei Company; released on April 28, 2023.

Genre & length. Fantasy action film; duration 112 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on the manga *Saint Seiya* by Masami Kurumada. The adopted daughter of Seiya, the main character, is called Sienna. She seems to develop strange powers. It is revealed that she is a reincarnation of the goddess Athena, who progressively transforms into an unconscious power that may eventually destroy the world. Apart from names of figures such as Athena, whose defenders are called Knights of Pegasus, there is no visible connection to antiquity. The convoluted plot is difficult to follow. A box-office disaster.

423. **Queen Cleopatra.** S02. *African Queens* (UK). Directed by Tina Gharavi and Victoria Adeola Thomas, written by NneNne Iwuji (episodes 3 and 4) and prod. by Jada Pinkett Smith, Ben Goold, et al. for Nutopia and Westbrook Studios; released on Netflix on May 10, 2023.

Genre & length. A 2-season docudrama audiovisual miniseries, a *vie romancée* biopic; 4 episodes per season, 45 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. Season 1: *Njinga* (1583–1663; Queen of Ndongo and Matamba). Re-enactments and statements by class B experts, one of whom claims Octavian (Augustus and Princeps Senatus) was proclaimed emperor by the Roman Senate. The simplistic recreation of dialogues and lack of scholarly rigour produce the impression of a show for high-school viewers. The Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt strongly protested against casting a Black actress in the role of Cleopatra and called it an Afrocentric falsification of their national history. They considered blocking the Netflix release in Egypt and announced the production of an authentic series on the Queen. The accusations of forced Afrocentrism and historical incompetence multiplied on social media, especially from Greek and Egyptian Internet users, even before the release of the series. The controversial casting and the resulting heated debate ensured free global publicity for the series – whether positive or critical. In 2010, the Council also protested against a falsified representation of Cleopatra in the Ramadan 30-episode Egyptian-Syrian series *Klioubatra*.

424. **Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny** (US). Directed and co-written by James Mangold, written by Jez Butterworth, John-Henry Butterworth, and David Koepp, prod. by Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, and Simon Emanuel for Walt Disney Pictures and Lucasfilm Ltd.; released on May 18, 2023.

Genre & length. Action fantasy movie which completes a 5-part cycle; time travel to ancient Syracuse; 154 min.

Classical content & comments. Based on characters by George Lucas and Philip Kaufman, it is the 5th and final installment in the *Indiana Jones* film series and a sequel to *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008). Indiana Jones time-travels to 212 BCE Syracuse (when the city was at war with the Roman Republic) using Archimedes' Dial of Destiny, an imagined version of Antikythera designed to locate fissures in the fabric of time. The original mechanism was discovered by sponge divers in 1900, off the isolated island of Antikythera, located in the Aegean Sea, between Crete and the Peloponnesian Peninsula. It was used to predict the movements of the Sun, Moon, and planets, as well as dates of future Olympics.

References. Solly, 2023.

425. **Clone High** (US). S02–S03. Created, written, and prod. by Bill Lawrence, Phil Lord, Christopher Miller, et al. for 20th Television, Lord Miller, Atomic Cartoons, etc.; season 2 aired on HBO Max from May 23 to June 22, 2023; the entire season 3 released on February 1, 2024.

Genre & length. An adult animated television series revived after a 2-decade break: season 1 aired in 2002; see the listing in the Survey. Seasons 2 and 3 ran for 10 episodes each, 25–27 min. per episode.

Classical content & comments. Among the students attending Clone High are the clones of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra.



426. **2023–, *Krapopolis*** (US). Created and exec. prod. by Dan Harmon, co-exec. prod. by Jordan Young (the showrunner for the 1st season) and Steve Levy for Harmonious Claptrap, Fox Entmt Studios, and Bentobox Entmt, aired on Fox from September 24, 2023.

Genre & length. An adult animated mythological heroic sitcom, fantasy, comedy; 1 season of 23 episodes, 33 min. each; renewed for seasons 2–3 with Alex Rubens as showrunner.

Classical content & comments. A wide selection of Olympic gods, Titans, mythological heroes, and monsters, including new hybrids, as well as Atlanteans and humans. My thanks to Jakub Ozimek, the Commissioning Editor, for bringing the series to my attention. I'm only signalling it here, as I was unable to watch and analyse it.

427. ***Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom*** (US). Directed by James Wan, written by David Leslie Johnson-McGoldrick, prod. by Zack and Deborah Snyder, Peter Safran, et al. for Warner Bros. Pictures; released on December 20, 2023.

Genre & length. Feature film, superhero action, fantasy, SF; 124 min.

Classical content & comments. A sequel to J. Wan's 2018 *Aquaman*; see the listing under the year of release. According to the *Aquaman* plot, Atlantis was a federation of 6 kingdoms, but apparently a 7th, called Necrus, had been sealed deep in the ocean floor in Antarctica and erased from memory and all records. Its captive king, Kordax, who transformed himself and his subjects into monsters trying to take the Atlantean throne from his brother, Atlan, is attempting to break free by manipulating David Kane (Black Manta) through the cursed black trident. Kane wants revenge for the death of his father killed by Aquaman, the King of Atlantis. He is wrecking the Earth's climate by burning the reserves of orichalcum, a metal that the Atlanteans had stopped using and stored centuries earlier when they realized it was polluting the planet with greenhouse gases. Working together with his half-brother, Orm, and later with the help of joint Atlantean armies, King Aquaman manages to vanquish Manta, liberate Kordax, and stop the ecological disaster. He reveals the existence of Atlantis to the human world and asks the United Nations to accept Atlantis as a new member so that they can repair and stabilize the endangered environment together.

428. ***Percy Jackson and the Olympians*** (US). Directed by James Bobin (pilot), Anders Engström (episodes 3 and 4), Jet Wilkinson (5 and 6), written by Rick Riordan, Jonathan E. Steinberg, Monica Owusu-Green, et al., prod. by J.E. Steinberg, R. Riordan, Dan Shotz, et al. for Disney Branded Television, 20th Television, and the Gotham Group; season 1 released on Disney+ from December 20, 2023, to January 30, 2024.

Genre & length. Television series, mythological fantasy, adaptation of R. Riordan's cycle of novels; 1st season of 8 episodes (33–44 min.) adapts *The Lightning Thief*; the following seasons are planned 1 per novel.

Classical content & comments. In the 2 previous movie adaptations (2010 *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* and 2013 *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters*) Riordan had no influence on the production. The series is being produced with the writer's active participation. Contrary to the 2 film adaptations, in the series, the main characters are much younger, the same age as in the novels.

Productions Released or to Be Released in 2024

429. ***Kaos*** (UK). Created and written by Charlie Covell, directed by Georgi Banks-Davies and Runyararo Mapfumo (2nd block), prod. by C. Covell, Chris Fry, G. Banks-Davies, et al. for Sister, All3Media, and Brightstar; released on Netflix on August 29, 2024.

Genre & length. Television series, dark comedy, mythological fantasy; 1 season of 8 episodes, 60 min. each.



Classical content & comments. Prometheus, still hanging from a boulder and having his liver devoured by an eagle, cheers on contemporary humans, with names and roles of mythological heroes, as they fulfil an ancient prophecy announcing the end of the psychopathic King and Queen of Olympus' rule. Zeus fears the loss of his power and becomes paranoid. Hera, Poseidon, Hades and Persephone, and Dionysus are also featured in the story, as well as humans – the president of Crete, Minos, Poseidon's puppet, Minos' daughter Ariadne (Ari), the Minotaur, who is, in fact, Ari's brother Glaucus kept in the Labyrinth built by Minos' prisoner Daedalus. There are even some Trojans (including Cassandra) treated as second-class citizens on Crete. Eurydice (Riddy), the wife of Orpheus, a rock star, wants to leave him but dies in an accident. Orpheus goes to the Underworld to retrieve her with the help of Dionysus and later of Medusa and Persephone, who are against exploiting dead humans by the gods. Zeus tries to kill the 3 Fates but cannot change the prophecy. This dark comedy has good actors and production values, even though it occasionally serves excessive vulgarity, gore, and horror.

430. *Circe* (US). Written by Madeline Miller, Rick Jaffa, and Amanda Silver, prod. by R. Jaffa, A. Silver, and John Cameron for Chernin Entmt and Endeavor Content; to be released on HBO Max in 2024, which is unlikely, as of October 22, 2024, there was still no news even on casting.

Genre & length. Television miniseries, adaptation of a novel, mythological fantasy; 8 episodes.

Comment. Based on the celebrated 2018 novel *Circe* by M. Miller.

431. *Gladiator II* (US). Directed by Ridley Scott, written by David Scarpa, prod. by R. Scott, David Franzoni, Douglas Wick, et al. for Parkes/MacDonald Image Nation, Red Wagon Films, and Scott Free Enterprises; released in the US on November 22, 2024.

Genre & length. Feature film, fantasized Roman history.

Classical content & comments. A continuation of *Gladiator*, ca. 30 years after the death of Maximus. The main character is Lucius, Commodus' nephew and son of his sister, Lucilla. Maximus saved Lucius' life. However, we know from ancient sources that Lucilla's son died in childhood.

References. Kidd, 2024.

432. *Those About to Die* (US, CN). Directed by Roland Emmerich and Marco J. Kreuzpaintner, written by Robert Rodat, prod. by Harald Kloser, R. Emmerich, R. Rodat, et al. for Centropolis Entmt, Er Dong Pictures, High End Productions, etc.; to be released on Peacock in the US and on Prime Video in Europe on July 19, 2024.

Genre & length. Television series, fantasized Roman history, a gladiatorial epic; season 1 of 10 episodes.

Comment. Inspired by Daniel P. Mannix's 1958 non-fiction book under the same title. Gladiators under Vespasian.

References. Kidd, 2024.

433. *The Return* (IT, UK). Directed, co-written, and co-prod. by Uberto Pasolini, co-written by John Collee, and Edward Bond, co-prod. by Roberto Sesso, Giorgos Karnavas, et al. for Bleecker Street, Red Wave Films, HanWay Films, etc. Shown at Toronto International Film Festival on September 7, 2024; released in the US on December 6, 2024.

Genre & length. Feature film, a new take on the end of Homer's *Odyssey*; 116 min.

Classical content & comments. A grim, modern, anti-war stance. While based on Homer, there are no gods, no magic, no mythology – just a weary, aged soldier returning home from a decade-long war, followed by another decade of cursed wanderings in which all his companions perish. He has had his fill of violence and bloodshed, yet must resort to both once more in a desperate attempt to save his wife, his son, and his island.

Planned for 2025/2026

434. *Asterix and the Big Fight* (FR, US). Directed by Alain Chabat, prod. by Alain Goldman for Netflix and Hachette's Les Editions Albert René; the series will begin streaming in 2025.

Genre & length. 3D animated television series, a fantasized Roman Gaul; 5 episodes, 30 min. each.

Classical content & comments. Adapted from *Asterix and the Big Fight*, where the Romans, trying to get even with Asterix and his people, instigate a fight between several chiefs and manipulate the results by abducting a druid and stealing the famous magic potion.

435. *Harry Potter Series* (UK, US). Showrunner, writer, and exec. prod. Francesca Gardiner, exec. prod. J.K. Rowling. Based on J.K. Rowling's novels. Prod. for Warner Bros. Discovery, Warner Bros. Entmt, and Warner Bros. Television; launch of the series tentatively scheduled for 2026 on Max; no other names of the members of the production team or cast were known as of July 7, 2024.

Genre & length. Television series, adaptation of a cycle of 7 novels, fantasy with mythological elements. It is planned to be broadcast over a period of 10 years.

Comment. See entries on the film cycle with consecutive productions released in 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011.

References. Armstrong, 2024.



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