

Episode Sixty-Five - Introducing A New Panelist (Don) and Recapping the Opening of Book Five

Post by "Don" of April 10, 2021 at 7:36 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

So Michele modern Italian poetry is now like English in being based to some extent on rhyme rather than so much on "meter"? Probably my question is naive but I don't perceive the structure of the Latin verse to be at all similar to modern poetry - at least English.

Greek and Latin poetry was ALL about the meter/rhythm: da da DUM da da DUM da da DUM. That's one of the reasons you get phrases like "the wine dark sea" and "divine Achilles" and "the sons of Atreus" (all in Greek, of course!) It gave the poet or rhapsode a huge stock of standard phrases he could plug into his lines when he needed a specific meter maintained. If you needed five feet when Achilles came up and not three (A-chil-les)* you stuck in divine. Same with Odysseus, he could be crafty, devious, many-faceted, depending on the meter you needed.

Rhyme didn't play a roll. In Anglo-Saxon poetry we get great alliteration plus meter but I don't think the Greeks or Romans used alliteration but I could be mistaken in that.

*Just to be clear, I realize we're talking Αχιλλεύς/Αχιλλος here. I was going the easy route and just using his English name 😊