Classical Mythology and Nineteenth-Century English Literature

The five papers that comprise this issue of *IJCT* were first delivered at the Bristol Myth Colloquium, held at the University of Bristol, 14–16 July 1998. One of the themes of the colloquium was "Classical Mythology and Nineteenth-Century English Literature." Four of the papers—those of Drs. Bonaparte, Schultze, Travis, and Vandiver—were circulated in advance and formed the subject of a lively panel discussion. As readers will discover, these essays on both canonical and little-known authors contain a substantial number of recurring themes and concerns in their exploration of the survival and transformation of mythology. Readers will also, we trust, forgive the extension of the nineteenth century to include World War One, since that cataclysmic event drew the veil forever over the more optimistic and innocent age that preceded it, and its literature looks back with anguish and regret as much as it looks forward fearfully to the new world. The fifth paper, by Dr. Hall, opened the conference (as it opens this issue of *IJCT*), and seemed to make a perfect partner with the four papers of the panel, reminding us that literature is a capacious category and mythology an endlessly adaptable organism. All five papers, after initially having been submitted in the Fall of 1998, were thoroughly revised by the authors in response to comments made by external reviewers for *IJCT* and by Wolfgang Haase in his capacity as editor of this journal.

The heritage of antiquity—the Classical Tradition—is made up of many things, but the adaptation of classical myths must be one of the commonest forms of its manifestation. The Department of Classics and Ancient History at Bristol has long made the Classical Tradition one of its interests; in the "News of the Field" section of *IJCT* 4.4 (Spring 1998; pp. 648–650) we have outlined plans for the establishment of the Bristol Institute of Hellenic and Roman Studies, which will promote, through visiting fellowships, conferences, and other activities, research into Classics and the Classical Tradition. Myth studies find a natural home in this environment, and the Myth Colloquium will continue to explore this rich vein of the Classical Tradition. The next installment will be held in the summer of 2001 on the theme of "Classical Mythology and Feminist Criticism."

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