

## Clips, Cartoons, and Texts: Pop-Culture Meets the Ancient World

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Visual culture manifested in cartoons and video clips has had an explosive growth among the college-age youth. Asian animation clubs have become a standard fixture of campuses across the country, and many students are now creating, distributing and viewing digital movie clips through such channels as [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). In the beginning to intermediate classical language courses at Western Washington University we have taken notice of these cultural trends. Not only have we used the Latin cartoons produced by Graf Von Rothenburg, but we have also had students create cartoons and movie clips on their own. In my presentation, I will be speaking about my experience in setting guidelines for such creative projects and will be demonstrating some of the students' works using a computer projector.

Pictorial and dramatic accompaniments of classical narratives have a long history stretching back into antiquity. Some manuscripts both ancient and medieval feature cartoon-like illustrations, while a few classical authors mention performances of skits with literary and mythological themes (e.g. X.*Smp*.IX.3-7, Ach.Tat.III.20.3-7, PETR.59, APUL.*Met*.X.29-34). Some students of classics may understandably be reluctant to plunge too deeply into contemporary pop culture, in which case they may be encouraged to do research and presentation on such historical precedents.

Whichever direction the students' inclination takes them, their projects centered on the theme of visual representation help connect (or contrast) their contemporary cultural experience with the ancient texts, languages and culture they are studying. In addition, with the help of modern technology, such projects can be easily stored and disseminated through the internet to aid comprehension and inspire similar projects elsewhere.

### SELECTED TEXTS

#### Latin Cartoons of the Classics

Graf Von Rothenburg, K.H. and M. Frei. *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphoses*. Stuttgart: Klett, 1997.  
Oberst, H. *Terenz, Die Brüder*. Munich: Heimeran, 1975.

#### Ancient Book Illustration and Other Visual Aids

Keuls, E. "Rhetoric and Visual Aids in Greece and Rome," in Havelock, E. and J.P. Hershbell eds.  
*Communication Arts in the Ancient World*. New York: Hastings House, 1978.  
Small, J.P. *The Parallel Worlds of Classical Art and Text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.  
Weitzman, K. *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration*.  
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

### SAMPLE STUDENT PRESENTATIONS:

<http://myweb.facstaff.wwu.edu/~Watanaa2/Sample%20Course%20Materials/LAT%20350/PyramusetThisbe.mov>  
<http://myweb.facstaff.wwu.edu/~Watanaa2/Sample%20Course%20Materials/LAT%20350/Fabula%20de%20Pyramo%20et%20Thisbe.pdf>  
<http://myweb.facstaff.wwu.edu/~Watanaa2/Sample%20Course%20Materials/LAT%20350/DeucalionetPyrrha.ppt>