

GREEK ELEMENTS IN THE SINBAD MOVIES OF RAY HARRYHAUSEN: A LESSON IN CLASSICAL RECEPTION¹

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Over the three decades of his working life, Ray Harryhausen was involved in a great number of different genres, such as the 'straight' monster movie (for example, *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, 1953), the prehistoric adventure (*One Million Years B.C.*, 1966), or the science fiction movie (*First Men in the Moon*, 1964), to name but three.² The genre that I wish to address here is the mythological adventure movie. Harryhausen made five contributions to this genre (though clearly wished to make more – a number of the projects that he could not get funding for fall into this genre,³ and at least one of the ones he did make, *Jason and the Argonauts*, appears to have been constructed to leave space for a sequel that never was).⁴ Those five are *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958), *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1974), *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977) and *Clash of the Titans* (1981).

The titles alone would suggest that these movies can be further subdivided into two groups, one containing the three Sinbad movies, and the other comprising the remaining two, which are based upon Greek mythology. It is then easy for us as Classical Reception scholars to concentrate on *Jason* and *Clash*, and forget about the Sinbad movies.⁵ And it is not just Classical Reception people that do this – film scholar Jeffrey Richards overlooks the Sinbad movies when discussing Harryhausen in *Hollywood's Ancient Worlds*.⁶ Martin Winkler in *Cinema and Classical Texts* does mention the 1970s Sinbad movies, but in an entirely separate context to his discussion of *Jason* and *Clash*.⁷ Jon Solomon does take all the films as a group (Solomon 2001: 18, 112-17), but also rather gives the impression that he thinks that the 1970s Sinbad movies were Harryhausen slumming it while conditions were not right for a 'proper' Greek mythological work.

I want to argue in this article that, whilst there clearly is a division present, it is perhaps not as important to everyone as we as Classical Reception scholars sometimes might imagine. There are clear links across all these mythological adventures from movie to movie, and we need to be aware of these. Treating *Jason* and *Clash* in isolation leads to a distorted view of the two movies. Taking a less narrow focus has wider implications for the study of Classical movies as a whole, as the genre recognised by scholars is not necessarily recognised in the same form by producers or audiences.

There clearly is a great deal of Classical Reception in Harryhausen's various Sinbad movies.⁸ This is arguably inherent in the source material. Though the Sinbad story derives from mediaeval Arabic literature, it had almost certainly been influenced by exposure to texts such as the *Odyssey* long before Harryhausen began work on his movies. Sir Richard Burton observed that the monster Sinbad encounters in his *Third Voyage* has distinct echoes of Homer's Polyphemus. It seems very likely that the original composers of the Sinbad stories had access to the *Odyssey*, at least in Arabic translations, and to other sources of Greek myth.⁹

Harryhausen's first *Sinbad* movie was *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*. Sinbad (Kerwin Matthews) and his crew land on the island of Colossa. There they find the magician Sokurah being pursued by a Cyclops, and rescue him. In the rescue, however, Sokurah drops his magic lamp. Sinbad sails back to Baghdad, where he is to marry Princess Parisa (Kathryn Grant). In Baghdad, Sokurah attempts to persuade the Caliph (Alec Mango) to give him a ship to return to Colossa, but the Caliph refuses. Sokurah then (unbeknownst to others) shrinks the Princess, and then tells the Caliph that she can be restored from a potion made from the eggshells of a two-headed roc, a bird that conveniently lives on Colossa. Sinbad takes a ship, but is forced to recruit criminals for his crew. These mutiny, but an encounter with the Sirens drives them mad, and they have to release Sinbad. Once on Colossa, Sinbad's men split into several groups. One, including Sinbad, finds the Cyclops' treasure, but the men are captured. Sokurah retrieves his lamp and leaves Sinbad and his men to die. With Parisa's help, Sinbad's men escape, and kill the Cyclops. Sinbad captures Sokurah, and takes the lamp off him. Parisa enters the lamp, where she find the genie Barani (Richard Eyer). Sokurah escapes, taking Parisa, whilst Sinbad is attacked by an adult Roc. Sinbad makes his way to Sokurah's castle, making

his way past the dragon that guards the entrance. Sokurah restores Parisa, but then sets a skeleton on Sinbad, which Sinbad defeats. Parisa throws the lamp into a river of lava, which destroys it and releases Barani. Sinbad releases the dragon to distract another Cyclops and allow their escape. The dragon kills the Cyclops, but then is killed in turn by Sinbad's crew with a giant crossbow. Sokurah is crushed underneath the dragon. As Sinbad sails away, Barani appears on the ship, and reveals the treasure of the Cyclops in Sinbad's cabin.

The Odyssean influence is very clear in *7th Voyage*.¹⁰ Eleanor O'Kell's paper in this volume discusses the Cyclopes who appear in that movie, with their combination of the mythological figure found in Homer and the satyr, which supplies the lower body of Harryhausen's Cyclops. Harryhausen acknowledges that the Cyclops comes from Homer (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 99). They capture Sinbad's sailors with a view to cooking and eating them, in the same way as Polyphemus does (except that the Greek Cyclops prefers his meat raw).¹¹ Sinbad has Odysseus' curiosity, which leads him into danger (like Odysseus with the Cyclops) when he should leave well alone. Like Odysseus' sailors, Sinbad's get themselves into trouble through failing to obey their captain's orders, and getting greedy. The Cyclops is blinded, as Homer's Polyphemus is.¹² And there is in *7th Voyage* an encounter with what are clearly Sirens, whose song can only be avoided through stopping one's ears up with wax – though they are sadly unseen (and not actually very well heard).¹³ In the original outline for the movie, Sinbad's entire crew were killed (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 104), which might also be an echo of the *Odyssey*, where the same happens to Odysseus' crew.

Other, less important, Classical elements are to be found.¹⁴ The island of the Cyclopes is called Colossa. This is a name with Greco-Roman origins, and reminds the classicist of the Colossus of Rhodes and the Colosseum at Rome. The word 'colossal' is, and was then, in fairly common usage (e.g. in the contemporary movie title *The Amazing Colossal Man*, 1957), and Colossa may not have been deliberately chosen for its Classical resonances.¹⁵ Moreover, on this island is found a river of wine that reminded me at least of the one to be found in Lucian's *True Histories* 1.7. I suspect, however, this is a more common trope, not just found in Lucian, and I do not know whether Harryhausen or anyone else involved in the movie was familiar with the *True Histories*, and how they might have accessed it.¹⁶

In *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, Sinbad (John Philip Law) finds an amulet dropped on his ship. After dreams, and a storm, he comes to Maribia. There the magician Koura (Tom Baker) demands the return of the amulet. Sinbad is rescued by the city guard, and introduced to the grand Vizier (Douglas Wilmer), who permanently wears a golden mask, hiding a scarred and disfigured face. The amulet is part of a puzzle that will lead to the Fountain of Destiny in Lemuria, which Koura also seeks. Sinbad agrees to help find the Fountain. After an encounter with a statue of the Indian goddess Kali, animated by Koura, the two groups reach the Fountain. They witness a fight between the Fountain's guardian of evil, a centaur, and its guardian of good, a gryphon, in which the centaur kills the gryphon. Sinbad kills the centaur, but Koura is restored by the Fountain. However, Sinbad kills him, and the Vizier is healed. Sinbad departs with Margiana, a former slave-girl found and freed in the adventure.

Golden Voyage tones down the Classical elements somewhat, in order to make way for a strong iconographic thread drawn from Indian mythology. Nevertheless, Classical elements are there. The Grand Vizier hides his burned face behind a mask that looks rather like the Mask of Agamemnon, or at least an art deco version of it; the oracle that Sinbad and the Grand Vizier consult resembles Classical descriptions of Baal-Ammon; and the two main monsters, who fight at the end, are a (one-eyed) centaur¹⁷ and a gryphon.¹⁸ (The latter could possibly be thought to be more eastern and/or mediaeval; Harryhausen's view is in fact that it came from 'northern' mythology).¹⁹

In *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger*, Sinbad (Patrick Wayne) seeks permission from Prince Kassim (Damien Thomas) to marry his sister Farah (Jane Seymour).²⁰ However, Queen Zenobia (Margaret Whiting) wishes her son Rafi (Kurt Christian) to succeed to the caliphate, and transforms Kassim into a baboon. In search of a cure, Sinbad and Farah take Kassim to the Greek alchemist Melanthius (Patrick Troughton). With Melanthius and his daughter Dione (Taryn Power), Sinbad sets off for the arctic land of Hyperborea, pursued by Zenobia, Rafi and a robotic Minotaur. Zenobia transforms into a

gull in order to spy on Sinbad, but is unable to completely transform herself back, and ends up with a gull's foot. In Hyperborea the Minotaur is destroyed. In a final battle Zenobia possesses a sabretoothed tiger, and kills a troglodyte that had befriended Sinbad's party. The tiger is killed by Sinbad. Sinbad, Farah, Melanthius, the restored Kassim and others flee the collapsing Hyperborean temple. Kassim is crowned caliph, but in a final post-credit scene, it is implied that Zenobia has survived.²¹ In contrast to *Golden Voyage*, *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* seriously pursues the Classical *mis-en-scène*, such that Solomon (2001: 18) even describes it as a movie set in the ancient world. Zenobia employs a monstrous automation Minotaur, the Minotaur (illustrated at Solomon 2001: 117, illustration 74). Apart from this, the creatures do not draw heavily upon Classical mythology.²² However, other elements are ancient. The philosopher Melanthius is one of the key 'plot coupons'²³ that Sinbad needs to collect. He is Greek, with a Greek name. He uses telepathy, which is given in the movie a pseudo-Greek name, *telepathia* (the elements of the word are, of course, Greek, but they were not put together in the ancient language). He claims to have known Archimedes. He lives on an island with Greek-looking buildings. These were filmed in fact in Petra, though it is quite obvious none of the main cast went to the city (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 241).²⁴ The main antagonist is called Zenobia, a name with both Classical and Eastern connotations.²⁵ The climax comes in Hyperborea, the land of the Arimaspaes (names both ultimately drawn from Herodotus).²⁶ I even wonder (though without any extratextual evidence) whether the transformations of the witch Zenobia are influenced by those of the witch Pamphile in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, who also transformed herself into a bird though the aid of a magic potion.

There is also a complex network of connections between the Sinbad movies and the two movies based directly on Greek myth.²⁷ In its very earliest conception, c. 1959, *Jason* was intended as a Sinbad movie, entitled *Sinbad in the Age of the Muses*, which would have featured Jason only as a supporting character, though Harryhausen soon discarded Sinbad (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 151). The animated skeleton from *7th Voyage* reappears in *Jason*,²⁸ except that this time there are seven of them – and they are destroyed by falling off a cliff, in a similar way to the first Cyclops in *7th Voyage*. The shot of the miniaturised Princess Parisa being loomed over by Sinbad is repeated when Jason is facing the god of Olympus. The head of the Hydra in *Jason* is, to my eyes at least, very like the head of the dragon in *7th Voyage*.²⁹ The set-piece of the heroes being threatened by a monster as they try to escape into their boats, seen twice in *7th Voyage*, with the Cyclops and then the dragon, is repeated in the Talos sequence in *Jason*. That Talos set-piece is put in motion by Hercules and Hylas breaking into a treasure store and stealing from it; similarly, Sinbad's sailors get in trouble because they linger in the Cyclops' treasure room. And the death of the magician Sokurah, crushed under the dying dragon, is echoed by that of Hylas, crushed under the falling Talos.

Going forward from *Jason* to *Golden Voyage*, the harpies (themselves derived from the titular creatures of the unmade 1952 movie *Elementals*)³⁰ are reworked as the homunculus of Prince Koura. The partially animate figurehead of the *Argo*, possessed by Hera (and not rendered in *Jason* as a stop-motion effect), recurs in rather more dangerous form, as a tool animated by Prince Koura's magic (and called in Harryhausen's original documentation 'the Siren'). The animated bronze statue Talos is re-envisioned as the bronze statue of Kali, complete with the same sound effect. There is even shared casting – Douglas Wilmer, the evil King Pelias in *Jason*, returns as the good Grand Vizier.

Casting marks the main link between *Jason* and *Eye of the Tiger*. Patrick Troughton partially reprises in *Eye of the Tiger* his role from *Jason* as the elderly Greek who holds, at least in part, the key to the fulfilment of the quest (though Melanthius is softened in comparison to Phineas, probably under the influence of Troughton's intervening period as *Doctor Who*).³¹ It is also worth noting that Zenobia calls upon Hecate – Medea was, of course, a priestess of Hecate in *Jason*. And the strange creatures that Zenobia summons to attack Sinbad at the beginning (variously described as zomboids or ghouls) owe something to the skeletons of *7th Voyage* and *Jason*,³² though also are indebted to the Selenites of *First Men in the Moon*.

In *Clash of the Titans* the main obvious link with the Sinbad movies is the presence in both of snake women. The cobra-woman of *7th Voyage* (who strongly resembles John Keats' version of the Lamia,

in his 1819 poem of the same name) is paralleled by one of Harryhausen's most successful characters, Medusa.³³ But more links may be suggested. The Dioskilos, the two-headed dog of *Clash*, suggests primarily the three-headed Cerberus of Greek myth, and indeed is a reworking of a two-headed Cerberus planned for *Jason* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 105, 109, 114; 2009: 151). But it also recalls, at least for this viewer, the two-headed roc of *7th Voyage* (as far as I know the two heads of that bird are an innovation of Harryhausen). And the adult roc has clear similarities to the giant vulture of *Clash* (even if the latter only has one head), whilst the cage in which the vulture carries the spirit of Andromeda is a reuse of a motif seen in the various cages in which Prince Kassim in *Golden Voyage* is carried when changed into a Baboon, for his transformation and his restoration, and the box in which the miniaturised Princess Parisa is carried in *7th Voyage*. Indeed, the whole enchanted princess/prince theme that is to be found in *7th Voyage* and *Golden Voyage* recurs in *Clash*, in the enchantment of Andromeda, something that has little connection with the original Classical myth. (And Liz Gloyn has reminded me that the Troglodyte in *Eye of the Tiger* is very similar to *Clash*'s Calibos.)³⁴

Of course, these connections are part of a wider network of links throughout Harryhausen's movies³⁵ – for instance, in *Jason and the Argonauts*, the emblems on the skeleton's shields include an octopus and what some have interpreted as the Ymir, the monsters of, respectively, *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955) and *20 Million Miles to Earth* (1957).³⁶ And, of course, a climactic fight between two creatures, such as is to be found in all three Sinbad movies, is often found in Harryhausen's work, such as *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *One Million Years B.C.*, and *The Valley of Gwangi* (1969).³⁷ But the connections within these five movies seem to me to be closer than those between them and the rest of the works, and the gap between the Greek movies and the Sinbad movies is less than that between these movies and, say, the black-and-white monster movies.

I certainly accept that Harryhausen views the two Greek films as different in some qualities from the Sinbad movies. This can be deduced from some of the comments he has made in documentaries,³⁸ where he seems to view the Greek myth in *Jason* as something of a step up from the Sinbad movies. It is significant that in *The Art of Ray Harryhausen*, he treats the Greek and the Sinbad movies in separate chapters.³⁹

Harryhausen's Greek movies have a more prominent role for the gods – there is a lot of sorcery in the Sinbad movies, but no gods directly onscreen. It is also the case that the Greek films display far less of the enthusiastic eclecticism of the Sinbad movies. The Sinbad movies merrily, and clearly deliberately, mix mythologies from Arabia, Greece, India, etc., something which Harryhausen has said was an attractive idea to him.⁴⁰ This is especially the case for *Jason*, where there are few major elements that do not in some way derive from the Greek legend, even if the manner in which they are depicted sometimes derives from a non-Greek source. *Clash* is a bit more eclectic – the sea-monster of the original Greek legend takes the Norse/German name of Kraken,⁴¹ and in facial appearance it is a reworking of the Ymir from *20 Million Miles to Earth* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 116-18; 2009: 91). Screenwriter Beverley Cross drew the name of Calibos from Shakespeare's *Tempest* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 118; 2009: 269). And there is Bubo, the owl, which, whilst again having Classical precedents, seems to also be drawing on R2-D2 from *Star Wars* (1977), with Harry Hamlin's Perseus as his C-3PO.⁴²

But I would like to suggest that a strong difference between the Sinbad and the Greek movies would be less perceived by the audience and by Hollywood executives at the time. I think they would tend to see all the movies as generic mythological adventure movies, and not worry too much about the differences in source material.

Liz Gloyn has discussed some of these issues with me, and suggested that the Greek movies have had more enduring appeal. There may be some truth to this, in that people engage with the Greek myth, as part of western heritage, more than they do with Arabic stories (especially after 2001 and the growth of Islamophobia). I would, however, argue that this may partly be a perception that we pick up on as Classical Studies scholars.

Also, the enduring appeal of *Jason* has a lot to do with it being the best of the five. Liz Gloyn did ask me the question, why a *Clash* remake and not a Sinbad remake? Well, I would counter that with why a *Clash* remake and not a *Jason* remake? One reason I think is clearly that if one is going to remake a Ray Harryhausen mythological movie, then one is least likely to be lambasted for desecrating a much-loved classic if one chooses *Clash*. Whilst *Clash* did well at the box-office, contains Harryhausen's most technically sophisticated sequence in the Medusa scene, and is loved a lot by some, many critics consider it the weakest.⁴³

Moreover, there *are* Sinbad movies, if not ones using Harryhausen's titles. In part, these movies are operating within a wider *Arabian Nights* tradition, one which originates with Richard Burton's translation, and manifests itself in such movies as the Douglas Fairbanks-starring *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), and *Sinbad the Sailor* (1947), starring Fairbanks' son. This is a tradition, of course, in which the Harryhausen movies are themselves operating.⁴⁴ Perhaps the best-known recent example is *Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas* from 2003 (which features Sinbad vs. Eris, and stars the voice of Brad Pitt), and it is true that there is a degree to which Arabian adventures have moved into animation (e.g. Disney's *Aladdin*). But there are also live-action movies, such as *The 7 Adventures of Sinbad* (2010), a TV movie with a modern-day setting (!), in which the lead character is 'Adrian Sinbad'. This movie appears to be trying to cash in on the success earlier the same year of *Prince of Persia*. May 2011 saw a new TV movie, *Sinbad and the Minotaur*. Sky Atlantic in the UK broadcast a new *Sinbad* television series in 2012.

A number of the live-action movies at least are nodding towards Harryhausen. *7 Adventures* includes CGI monsters that look rather Harryhausen-inspired (including a Cyclops!). The television *Sinbad* used a Harryhausen-like giant bird in the second episode, and the main adversary, the witch Taryn, is obviously inspired by Harryhausen's Zenobia.

Finally there is *Sinbad: The Fifth Voyage*. This movie has not yet been released – indeed, it has been put back on several occasions. When I first learnt of it, the release was scheduled for May 2011; at the time of writing it is scheduled for May 2013, but I would not be surprised if it was put back again. What has been seen in pre-publicity shows that it comes complete with a living statue and Cyclops,⁴⁵ and originally claimed to be made in Dynamation, which in this case seems to mean CGI-augmented stop motion.⁴⁶ So, whilst none of the specific movies have been remade, Harryhausen's Sinbad is by no means forgotten. Indeed, what we see currently are versions of Harryhausen's Sinbad that do not quite qualify as remakes, and therefore carry no requirement to pay the rights holders of the Harryhausen movies.⁴⁷

However, it is true that these movies do not get the publicity that is granted to the new *Clash*, or wannabe *Clash* movies like *Immortals* (2011). I think here contemporary politics do play a role. Where earlier Sinbad movies were part of an acceptable tradition in entertainment, current Islamophobia makes modern Hollywood producers reluctant to get behind a hero who, in Harryhausen's movies, regularly prayed to Allah. (It is notable that the religious aspect is played down in the 2012 television series.)

In any case, I do think that if one sits down and watches the Sinbad movies, one will see more similarities to *Jason* and *Clash* than differences. And this leads me into my final, and wider, point. We must, as Classical Reception scholars, not allow ourselves to be blinkered to movies of generic similarity to the ones in which we are interested, simply because of geographic and temporal boundaries. A 2011 documentary in the BBC's *Timeshift* series, 'Epic: A Cast of Thousands!',⁴⁸ discussed the 1950s and 1960s epics set in the ancient world. Yet it was clear from the selection of examples that, for the people producing these epics, 'the ancient world' included the eleventh-century Spain of *El Cid* (1961). Today, I suspect many Hollywood producers will see little difference between an ancient epic like the new *Clash of the Titans* and a mediaeval one like *Prince of Persia* – both are set in the past, after all, and both will be expected to appeal to similar audiences. And I would argue that this has been the case through much of the history of cinema. Gideon Nisbet has argued that movies set in the Greek world find it hard to make themselves distinct from Roman movies, and that

they often end up as faux-Roman.⁴⁹ This is probably a minor symptom of a wider tendency to blur the distinctions between most forms of the ancient and mediaeval past.

A look at the eclecticism of other movies and television series underlines this. *She* (1965) chooses from Greece, Rome and the Middle East for its aesthetic. Sam Raimi and Robert Tappert's television series *Hercules* (1995-1999) and *Xena* (1995-2001) used not just Greek mythology, but the Bible, Roman history, and Chinese legends; famously, the producers considered anything B.C. to be fair game. The careers of actors and directors underline that the divisions of Classical Reception scholars are somewhat artificial. Muscleman Steve Reeves went from *Hercules* (1958) and *Hercules Unchained* (1959) to Karim in *The Thief of Bagdad* (1961) and then *Sandokan the Great* (1963; set in nineteenth century Malaya), without his audience feeling that he was appearing in significantly different genres of movies. Anthony Mann worked uncredited on *Quo Vadis* (1951) and *Spartacus* (1960), and then on *El Cid*, before returning to Rome with *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1964); and he was most famous before *El Cid* for a string of westerns. Ridley Scott followed up *Gladiator* (2000) with two other epics set in the mediaeval past, *Kingdom of Heaven* (2005) and *Robin Hood* (2010), which are rarely considered alongside *Gladiator*. Other directors had long and successful careers in which they only once made a movie that could be considered any sort of ancient or mediaeval epic – examples include Robert Wise (*Helen of Troy*, 1956), William Wyler (*Ben-Hur*, 1959),⁵⁰ Stanley Kubrick (*Spartacus*) and, more recently, Wolfgang Petersen (*Troy*, 2004). Whether or not one takes an auteurist approach, these directors' contributions to the epic genre cannot be extracted entirely from the rest of their careers.⁵¹

As Reception scholars, we need to recognise this, and pay greater attention to the wider context of movies, otherwise our understanding of the movies we study will be flawed. By treating all five of these mythological movies made by Harryhausen as a set, I hope to remind scholars that we also need, for instance, more papers that treat *Gladiator* along with Ridley Scott's other ventures into the genre, *Kingdom of Heaven* and *Robin Hood*. Only then can we truly understand Classical Reception in the movies.

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- She* (UK, dir. Robert Day, wri. David T. Chantler, 1965)
- Sinbad* (UK, television series, 2012)
- Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (UK, dir. Sam Wanamaker, wri. Beverley Cross, from a story by Beverley Cross and Ray Harryhausen, 1977)
- Sinbad and the Minotaur* (Australia, dir. Karl Zwicky, wri. Jim Noble, 2011)
- Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas* (USA, dir. Patrick Gilmore and Tim Johnson, wri. John Logan, 2003)
- Sinbad the Sailor* (USA, dir. Richard Wallace, wri. John Twist, from a story by John Twist and George Worthing Yates, 1947)
- Spartacus* (USA, dir. Stanley Kubrick, wri. Dalton Trumbo, 1960)
- Star Wars* (USA, dir. George Lucas, wri. George Lucas, 1977)
- The Story of King Midas* (USA, dir. Ray Harryhausen, wri. Charlotte Knight, 1953)
- The Story of 'The Tortoise and the Hare'* (USA, dir. Ray Harryhausen, 2002)
- The Thief of Bagdad* (USA, dir. Raoul Walsh, wri. Lotta Woods, from a story by Elton Thomas, 1924)
- The Thief of Bagdad* (Italy, dir. Arthur Lubin and Bruno Vailatili, wri. Augusto Frassinetti & Filippo Sanjust & Bruno Vailatili, 1961)
- The 3 Worlds of Gulliver* (USA, dir. Jack Sher, wri. Arthur A. Ross and Jack Sher, 1960)

Troy (USA, dir. Wolfgang Petersen, wri. David Benioff, 2004)

20 Million Miles To Earth (USA, dir. Nathan H. Juran, wri. Robert Creighton Williams & Christopher Knopf from a story by Charlotte Knight, 1957)

The Valley of Gwangi (USA, dir. Jim O'Connolly, wri. William Bast and Julian More, 1969)

Xena: Warrior Princess (USA, TV series, 1995-2001)

¹ As with the other papers in this volume, this was first presented at the *Animating Antiquity* conference in November 2011 at the National Media Museum, Bradford. My thanks to the organizers, Steven Green and Penelope Goodman, for the opportunity to present these ideas, to audience at the time, and to Liz Gloyn and Trevor Fear for their comments, and to the audience at the first presentation of this paper.

² I recognise a body of work that may be termed 'Ray Harryhausen' movies, i.e. movies on which he worked as visual effects supervisor and later producer, and where the basic concepts were often his, and will discuss these movies as showing Harryhausen's vision. However, I do not subscribe to the *auteur* theory of movie criticism, and so do not recognise Harryhausen as sole 'author' of these movies (*pace* Wells 2002: 90). Fortunately, neither does Harryhausen (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 265). In particular, further attention deserves to be focussed on the contribution of Beverley Cross, screenwriter on *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977) and *Clash of the Titans* (1981), to the shaping of these mythological movies. Sadly there is not space for that here (the issue is addressed briefly in Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones' and Stephen Trzaskoma's contributions to this volume).

³ These included *Sinbad Goes to Mars* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 292-3), *Force of the Trojans* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 287-8), and *Sinbad and the Seven Wonders of the World* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 292)

⁴ The movie leaves out Jason's return to Iolchos and the resolution of his conflict with King Pelias. Harryhausen cannot quite recall if a sequel to *Jason* was intended, but concedes that the movie is constructed to suggest one (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 174).

⁵ For a demonstration of this, one need only look at the abstracts for the *Animating Antiquity* conference (<http://enduringcreatures.blogspot.com/p/abstracts.html>, accessed 19 October 2012), where only three, mine, and those of Eleanor OKell and Brock DeShane, mention any movies other than *Jason* and *Clash*.

⁶ Richards (2008); *Jason* is discussed at 138-9, and *Clash* at 138-41. None of the Sinbad movies merit an index entry.

⁷ *Golden Voyage* and *Eye of the Tiger* (*7th Voyage* is not discussed): Winkler (2009: 83); *Jason* and *Clash*: Winkler (2009: 218).

⁸ *7th Voyage* was, of course, not Harryhausen's first venture into Classical Reception. One of his earliest shorts was called *The Satyr* (1946), and he had treated the legends of Midas (derived from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.85-193) in another of his earlier shorts, *The Story of King Midas* (1953); the Tortoise and the Hare (derived from Aesop, *Fables* 226 Perry) featured in a short begun in 1952, but not finished until 2002. The climax of *20 Million Miles to Earth* (1957) took place amongst the ruins of the Roman Forum and the Colosseum.

⁹ Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones tells me that Arabic literature is full of material originally derived from Greek myth.

¹⁰ Interestingly, though probably irrelevantly, Torin Thatcher, who played the villainous Sokurah in *7th Voyage*, had played Ulysses (Odysseus) in the 1956 *Helen of Troy*.

¹¹ *Pace* OKell in this volume, the implication of the relevant scene in *7th Voyage* seems to me to be that the Cyclopes eat human flesh when they can get it.

- ¹² As Eleanor OKell notes elsewhere in this volume, the blinding may also go back to the giant Sinbad blinds in the *Arabian Nights* story *The Third Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor*, in which Burton saw the influence of Homer's Polyphemus.
- ¹³ A scene showing the Sirens was planned, but cut due to time: Harryhausen and Dalton (2009: 107).
- ¹⁴ One might speculate that Parisa, the name of the princess in *7th Voyage*, is intended as a name with Classical resonances, but there is nothing to confirm this one way or the other.
- ¹⁵ However, as noted, Harryhausen's previous movie, *20 Million Miles to Earth*, had its climax in Rome's Colosseum.
- ¹⁶ Harryhausen's friend, the science fiction writer Ray Bradbury, may well have been familiar with Lucian.
- ¹⁷ The centaur was originally intended to be a Cyclops, but changed to avoid being too like *7th Voyage*; see Harryhausen and Dalton (2006: 174-6).
- ¹⁸ Harryhausen's eventual preferred spelling (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 180), though in production he vacillated between this and 'griffin' (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 219).
- ¹⁹ Expressed by Harryhausen in Schickel (1997), included on the DVD of *7th Voyage*.
- ²⁰ There is no continuity between any of Harryhausen's Sinbad movies. In particular, the love interest of each movie is always forgotten, as if they never existed, by the time the next movie begins.
- ²¹ This is hinted at even more strongly in the novelization (Hall 1977).
- ²² According to one account (Webber 2004: 193), there was a deliberate plan to move away from mythological creatures to prehistoric ones in this movie, though this is not stated in Harryhausen (1989), Harryhausen and Dalton (2006) or Harryhausen and Dalton (2009).
- ²³ 'Plot coupons' (a term coined by Nick Lowe) describes an approach similar to that where people gather coupons clipped from magazines or cereal packets, and when they have enough, send off to the publisher or manufacturer for a free gift or reduced price object. Similarly, 'plot coupon' stories involve characters gathering a number of magic items or important pieces of information; when they have enough they can write off to the author for the ending. See Langford (1999).
- ²⁴ Harryhausen has been fascinated with Petra since his youth (1989: unnumbered page), and it was in the concept of what became *Eye of the Tiger* from a very early stage (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 182-3).
- ²⁵ The most famous Zenobia was Queen of Palmyra and enemy of Rome in the third century CE.
- ²⁶ See Herodotus, *Histories* 4.32-6 for Hyperborea, and 3.116 for the Arimaspoi. Harryhausen himself (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 237) cites Virgil, *Georgics* 3.195-6 for Hyperborea.
- ²⁷ For summaries of *Jason and the Argonauts* and *Clash of the Titans*, see the article in this volume by Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones.
- ²⁸ Literally, as Harryhausen reused the model created for *7th Voyage* for one of them, though he can no longer recall which. This information is derived from a label at the exhibition *Ray Harryhausen: Myths and Legends*, which ran at the London Film Museum from June 2010 to October 2012.
- ²⁹ Though Harryhausen himself cites his beloved dinosaurs as an influence (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 164).
- ³⁰ Harryhausen had wanted to do bat-winged characters before *Elementals* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 160), and had planned to include bat-devils in *7th Voyage* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 105). The idea of the homunculus was first proposed for *The 3 Worlds of Gulliver* (1960; Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 200). Harryhausen also gave bat wings to the pterodactyls in *One Million Years B.C.* and *The Valley of Gwangi* (1969; Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 75).

³¹ It should be noted, however, that the original plan was to cast Laurence Naismith, who had appeared in *Jason* as the shipwright Argus (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 239). A similar role is filled by Burgess Meredith as Ammon in *Clash*.

³² Indeed, one of them reused the legs from one of the *Jason* skeletons.

³³ Harryhausen had considered using Medusa in *Jason* (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 151).

³⁴ The giant scorpions on the other hand, whilst owing something to Classical myth, probably also owe a lot to the giant bees and crabs of *Mysterious Island* (1961), as does the giant wasp in *Eye of the Tiger*. Harryhausen had always wanted to do a scene with giant scorpions, and certainly based the scorpions' movement on crabs (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 275).

³⁵ I should make clear that I intend no criticism of Harryhausen for reworking ideas from one movie in another.

³⁶ This observation is not original to me, but unfortunately the only source I can find at present is the Wikipedia article on *Jason and the Argonauts*. The 'Ymir' could in fact be a stylized lion.

³⁷ This feature, of course, ultimately goes back to the formative influence on the young Harryhausen, *King Kong* (1933). For the influence of *King Kong* on Harryhausen, see Harryhausen and Dalton (2009: 10, 17-18). According to Tony Dalton, in a lecture delivered at the Canterbury Anifest, 5 October 2012, 'Ray Harryhausen: The Godfather', another influence on this motif was Harryhausen's being taken to boxing matches by his mentor (and special effects supervisor on *King Kong*) Willis O'Brien.

³⁸ E.g. in Schickel (1997).

³⁹ 'Zeus complex' (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 96-127); 'Legends' (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 156-89). In the lecture noted above, Dalton, presumably following Harryhausen's thinking, distinguished between 'Legends' (the Sinbad movies) and 'mythology' (*Jason*).

⁴⁰ In Schickel (1997).

⁴¹ The name was the idea of screenwriter Beverley Cross (Harryhausen and Dalton 2006: 116). On the Kraken, see also Steven Green's paper in this volume.

⁴² Harryhausen (Harryhausen and Dalton 2009: 270) is adamant that Bubo was conceived before *Star Wars* was released. Nevertheless, there are notable similarities, especially in the electronic noises that both R2-D2 and Bubo use, and it may be that, whilst Bubo was conceived before the production crew were aware of R2-D2, that the character's subsequent development was influenced by the *Star Wars* droid.

⁴³ For an example, see Grant 1999. Regarding *Jason* remakes, there is also a supposed project *Jason and the Argonauts: The Kingdom of Hades*, in development since at least 2008 (<http://www.movieinsider.com/m5041/jason-and-the-argonauts-the-kingdom-of-hades/>, accessed 26 February 2013), but little appears to be happening with this. The possibility of a *Jason* remake was also probably affected by the 2000 TV mini-series, which Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones in this volume argues is an homage to the Harryhausen movie.

⁴⁴ For Harryhausen's attitude to that tradition, see the quotation from him in Wells (2002: 97), in Eleanor O'Kell's paper in this volume.

⁴⁵ Note how the monsters fought in all of these Sinbad movies often remain Classical.

⁴⁶ The publicity now uses the term 'SuperAnimation'. According to Tony Dalton, Harryhausen made the producers take any reference to him off the movie; I am grateful to Tony Dalton for this comment.

⁴⁷ Of course, this could have been done with *Clash of the Titans*, since the Perseus myth is not in copyright. Here, presumably, the market draw of the title was considered to be worth the investment, whereas for the Sinbad movies the draw is the public domain name 'Sinbad', and paying for the rights

to a remake gains nothing over making a Sinbad production that is clearly influenced by the Harryhausen movies but is not a direct remake.

⁴⁸ Broadcast 24 December 2011. Clips are available on the BBC's website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b018jp1v> (Accessed 26 February 2013).

⁴⁹ See Nisbet 2008, in particular 8 on the difficulty in making Greece distinct, and 79-82 on *Troy* (2004) as a Greek movie made faux-Roman, but the argument is sustained throughout the book.

⁵⁰ Wyler had been a second unit director on the 1925 *Ben-Hur*, and had directed *Roman Holiday* (1953), a movie very aware of the Roman past around the modern world.

⁵¹ Nor is it necessarily helpful to seek for ancient themes in their earlier work, or teleologically assume that their careers were leading up to their ancient movie, as Winkler 2007: 4-7, seems to for Petersen.