

Classical References in the Work of Witi Ihimaera: An Annotated Commentary¹

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Given that classical references are especially meaningful in colonial and/or postcolonial contexts, an investigation of such references in New Zealand literature is a pressing desideratum. Accordingly, in this article, I collate and annotate classical references from the published fiction of Witi Ihimaera, the foremost Māori writer in Aotearoa New Zealand. I demonstrate by example that classical references can and do make a significant contribution to the warp and weft of Māori fiction.

Were one packing an intertextual toolkit for Māori fiction, one might well be tempted to leave out classical allusions entirely.² On the other hand, as scholars of classical reception rightly assert, all things classical are fraught, at least potentially, with a plenitude of meaning(s) in a colonial and/or postcolonial milieu.³ That being so, any Māori literature which engages in classical reception affords an opportunity not to be missed, as much for New Zealand literary studies as for classical reception studies. Indeed, interactions between antiquity, *Rezeptionsästhetik*, and indigenous fiction are intrinsically problematic and worthy of attention – in New Zealand literature as well as, say, Caribbean or African literature. That is to say, classical references in Māori literature offer an ideal interdisciplinary testing ground in which to observe Māori, Pākehā, and European culture interacting in mono- bi-, and multicultural contexts. To borrow from Jauss, classical reception could be a provocation towards rethinking literary history, and vice versa.⁴ Therefore, I propose to investigate classical reception in the novels and short stories of New Zealand's foremost Māori writer, Witi Ihimaera.⁵

Ihimaera is New Zealand's post-colonial writer *par excellence*, and his dominant *modus scribendi* is intertextual mythopoesis. Ranging across Māori oral literature, historiography, opera, theatre, and much else besides; and taking in register changes, genre shifts, and narrative techniques outside Eurocentric literary norms; his mercurial, chameleonic voice readily inhabits the two 'worlds' of tikanga Māori and tikanga Pākehā.⁶ Tellingly, Ihimaera's oeuvre, most (or all) of which engages on some level in writing back against empire, abstracts Pākehā literary culture as a unity of anglophone sources: 'I can ransack wherever it's [i.e. the English language] been, Greek culture, Roman mythology, American literature, I can do all of that.'⁷ That is, instead of marking classical antiquity for either distinction or opprobrium as many writers do (indeed, classical reception studies in a sense assumes a privileged status for classical intertexts), Ihimaera claims to treat antiquity as (merely) another textual resource. Accordingly, my reading of Ihimaera's work reveals a consistent engagement with classical material alongside other prominent strands of intertextuality.

With this in mind, my purposes in this article are description, suggestion, and (Jaussian) provocation: I hereby collate, and annotate, classical references – references to phenomena from the Greco-Roman world – in Ihimaera's fiction.⁸ For the time being, I aim to demonstrate (1) that classical material forms a significant, though rarely

dominant, strand in Ihimaera's work, and (2) that this material deserves, and repays, closer examination.

To conclude these prolegomena, I observe a few general phenomena which future research might examine more closely. First: the magpie's approach to allusion and intertextuality, whereby (as quoted above) Ihimaera 'ransacks' world literature in English for whatever comes to hand. Second: the view of classics and a classical education. Broadly speaking, Ihimaera treats classical material as a privileged, essentially unproblematic exemplar of the European cultural legacy. Ihimaera's fiction suggests, and at times explicitly insists, that 'the Classics' is a praiseworthy element in primary or higher education. Third: allusive technique(s), from similes to authorial digressions. Even ostensibly simplistic similes and metaphors ('He was the Maori X', 'Y was like Z'), which imply a positivistic intertextual engagement with the classical tradition, obscure a whole raft of questions about reception, tradition, influence, and so on. Fourth: the generally uncritical, and prominent, use of classical phenomena as comparanda for Māori phenomena. For example, Ihimaera's *The Matriarch* and *The Dream Swimmer* (on which see my forthcoming chapter), critique the over-idealised pastoral vision of Ihimaera's early works. These novels do so with radical politics, but also, tellingly, with *classical* mythology. Compare, say, Glenn Colquhoun's *North South* (2009), which uses *Celtic* mythology to develop, and problematise, the portrait of biculturalism which Colquhoun had earlier laid out in *The Art of Walking Upright* (1999). Fifth: prominent examples, if not themes, emerging from Ihimaera's use of classical mythology, such as Olympus and the Olympian gods, Helen and Troy, Medusa, and Orpheus. Ihimaera's treatment of these and other figures reveals, *inter alia*, an emphatic concern with male subjectivity, liminal female figures, and tikanga Māori. Ihimaera is both our most postcolonial writer, so to speak, and our most intertextual: a writer of fiction which is resolutely provincial yet which also aspires to be universal. Classical references are a significant, yet largely unexamined, element of this fiction.

Finally, I note that Ihimaera's classical references began in earnest *after* his self-imposed, ten-year writing hiatus. That is, his early engagement with classical intertexts for the most part coincided with the radical, programmatic statement that is *The Matriarch*.⁹ This coincidence suggests a possible historical connection between Ihimaera's radicalism and his use of classical material. In turn, the strong and lasting association between colonialism and a classical education in the British Empire gives rise to a paradox: can such classical allusions really 'write back' after all?¹⁰

***Pounamu Pounamu* (1972, revised 2003)**

BACCHANAL; ROMAN EPIC ('One Summer Morning'; *Pounamu*, 81 = rev. ed., 110)
Hema Tipene's attainment of manhood takes the form of a nocturnal emission accompanied by an erotic dream with a classical flavour:

Then the dream fell around him: a Bacchanalian delight obviously derived from a Roman epic movie he'd seen the weekend before. He, of course, was the dissolute emperor, munching on a bunch of grapes, his other six hands each around nubile slavewomen.

The object of Hema's affection is named Claudia.

***The Matriarch* (1986, revised 2009)¹¹**

ARTEMIS, CIRCE, and DIANA

The eponymous matriarch of Ihimaera's *magnum opus* and grandmother of the narrator-protagonist (Tama) is named Riripeti 'Artemis' Mahana. Tama also has an aunt named Circe.¹² Like her Homeric namesake, Ihimaera's Circe is a vaguely threatening figure; she opposes her mother 'Artemis'. In *The Dream Swimmer*, Circe is one of those who dispossess Tama of his birthright, and also the mother of Tepora, the cousin with whom Tama fathers a (dead) child. Tama's mother is named Tiana, a Māori transliteration of the Latin Diana (Artemis). The 2009 edition introduces a passage in which Tama first learns that Riripeti's European name was Artemis (*Matriarch*², 31).

OLYMPUS

(*Matriarch*, 2 = *Matriarch*², 9)

our own Maori home of the gods, the legendary Hawaiki, our Maori Olympus

As both physical mountain and celestial home for the gods, Olympus provides a close analogy for Hawaiki.¹³ Whereas the epithet 'legendary' stresses equivalence, 'Māori Olympus' implies a Eurocentrist position whereby Olympus is the primary norm and Hawaiki the secondary approximation. Compare, likewise, 'Maori Poseidon', 'Maori House of Atreus', and 'Maori Ulysses' (see below).

OEDIPUS

(*Matriarch*, 12 = *Matriarch*², 18)

[Alexis] 'Someone's put a hoodoo on me, Tama. They stuck pins in my eyes.'

See Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1266–79; *The Dream Swimmer* includes a very similar passage (on which see below).

SPHINX

(*Matriarch*, 21 = *Matriarch*², 29)

She [Tiana] stood there, unblinking, her face like a sphinx and without expression.

Tiana is twice compared to a sphinx in *The Matriarch*. Though her expression is the primary referent, this instance of the allusion suggests predatory qualities also.

MEDUSA

(*Matriarch*, 44)

In my dreams, the Medusa has that look [of Tiana]. It is neither ugly nor beautiful. It is a stillness, an immobility beyond rage or anger [...] The voice when it comes hisses like the snakes in the hair of the Medusa.

The 'stillness' and 'immobility' of the dream figure evokes the Medusa's power to petrify, not unlike the qualities of the Sphinx. Ultimately, however, Tama treats the Medusa as a perfect illustration of some ineffable quality: 'neither ugly nor beautiful', 'beyond rage or anger'. Tama makes a subtle point here, undermined somewhat by the redundant gloss about the snakes 'in the hair of the Medusa'. Later, Tama labours this

very point: ‘Backlit in the bed, her hair swirled about her [Tiana] like writhing snakes’ (390).

TROY

(*Matriarch*, 48 ≈ *Matriarch*², 70)

As with the siege of Troy, the invaders occupied the Te Araroa Flats for some time, living on the plantations and the contents of the storehouses, then packed up and seemed to sail away. But instead, they hid behind Matakaoa Point. (Pomare had said darkly in retreat, ‘Enjoy your wife tonight for tomorrow she will be mine’). Stealthily they returned and fell upon the unsuspecting residents who had descended rejoicing to their homes.

The Te Araroa battle recapitulates the Trojan War. Pomare and his ‘invaders’ occupy the Te Araroa Flats just as in the *Iliad* battle centres, at first, on the plain before Troy. Pomare’s rejoinder about raping his enemies’ wives calls to mind Helen, quintessential stolen wife, passing from one husband to another in sequence (Menelaus, Paris, Deiphobus, Menelaus). Like the Trojans, the residents of Te Araroa Flats celebrate the supposed departure of the enemy and suffer the sack of the village in return.

ACHILLES

(*Matriarch*, 52)

I put my hands firmly on her [Tiana’s] toes. She truggled a bit as she always did. But my mother has an Achilles toe rather than an Achilles heel and in the end, she ceased struggling. ‘Oh, *you*,’ she said.

Tama revivifies the dead metaphor (‘Achilles heel’) into a punch-line by introducing the facetious notion of an ‘Achilles toe’. By extension, the comparison suggests an all-encompassing rage on Tiana’s part, like the wrath (*mēnis*) of Achilles in the *Iliad*.

ORPHEUS and EURYDICE

(*Matriarch*, 233 ≈ *Matriarch*², 268)

Unlike Eurydice, in the Greek myth, she [the underworld goddess Hine Nui Te Po] did not attempt to return with Tane [...] She entered Rarohenga and became the great goddess. Her mouth is that of a barracouta. Her eyes are flecked with greenstone. Her hair is sea-kelp, still moist from the sea. It is she who awaits the neverending march of mortals to her domain.

Eurydice is the ideal to which the speaker compares the Māori example, Hinenuitepō.¹⁴ Ihimaera thus reproduces patriarchal norms implicit in the respective mythological traditions, leaving only two options for female subjectivity: monster or wife. In Ihimaera’s early works, Hinenuitepō is a stereotypical, threatening, chthonic female (e.g., *Matriarch*, 23). Eurydice, by contrast, is reduced to a prototypical wife who dutifully follows her man back to(wards) the world of the living. The reductive image of Hinenuitepō thus also reduces Eurydice, its inverse, to an idealised, voiceless, subservient wife. Tellingly, Ihimaera retracted this stance on Hinenuitepō in *The Rope of Man* and ‘ask the posts of this house’ (see below), not to mention the revision of *The Matriarch* itself (*Matriarch*², 267–8). With that in mind, consider Ross Calman’s timely warning not to over-emphasise Hinenuitepō’s chthonic aspect:

Her place in Māori thought should be considered carefully. She is dreaded as the goddess of death, but must also be remembered as a young woman fleeing from her shame, yet imbued with love for her innocent offspring and their descendants. In the later legend of Māui and his attempted conquest of death, a picture is conjured up of the dread figure of night swallowing up humankind, but in the legend of creation she is a beneficent being devoted to the welfare of her children.¹⁵

Accordingly, the 2009 revision replaces the ‘dread goddess’ with the Great Mother.

ARTEMIS (Matriarch, 250 ≈ Matriarch², 287)
‘Artemis?’ The Prime Minister said. ‘An unusual name.’
‘For a Maori?’ The matriarch mocked. ‘It is the name of a Greek goddess. Diana to the Romans. The Huntress.’

Artemis assumes that Greco-Roman phenomena are appropriate parallels for Māori phenomena; she also reasserts her own aggressive female agency. The 2009 text revisits Artemis in light of the Ephesian Artemis of *The Dream Swimmer* (on which see below): ‘It is the name of a Greek goddess who, in earlier times, was regarded as the Great Mother. That was before the world turned to patriarchy.’ This version downplays Riripeti’s aggression and foregrounds structural oppression.

HESIOD, EMPEDOCLES, ANAXIMANDER
URANUS, GAEA, CRONUS (Matriarch, 252 ≈ Matriarch², 290–1)
It was the late Te Kani Te Ua who said that while the Maori people might be called a barbaric and savage race his knowledge and conception of the spirit world show a high plane of thought similar to the philosophical speculations of the earliest Greek philosophers — Empedocles, Anaximander and others. For instance, the myth of the separation of Rangi and Papa by their offspring reminds us of the Greek myth of Uranus and Gaea. The god Tutakangaahau cut the sinews which united Papa and Rangi and Tanemahuta wrenched them apart and kept them eternally separated. In the Hesiodic fable, Cronus separated the heavenly pair by mutilating his oppressive father Uranus. Remember this context as I tell you about *Takitimu*.

Reference to hexameter poetry (Hesiod, Empedocles) sets up the following *Takitimu* narrative as a mini-epic (*epyllion*).¹⁶ Specifically, the myth of the separation of earth and sky, narrated in Hesiod’s *Theogony*, recurs in Māori cosmogony in the form of Rangi and Papatūānuku, violently separated by their son Tāne.¹⁷ In an important passage in *The Uncle’s Story* (343), Ihimaera uses this myth to bring together his two constituencies, gay and indigenous. While addressing a First Peoples’ gathering in Canada, Michael Mahana illustrates the global coming-out of GLBT indigenous people: ‘I am a gay man. Of all the children of the gods, my kind – gay, lesbian, transvestite and transsexual – inhabited the lowest and darkest cracks between the Primal Parents. We, now, also wish to walk upright upon this bright strand.’

In certain respects, the reference to Empedocles is pregnant with semiotic potential.¹⁸ While Strife (*eris*) is prominent in Hesiod (literally in *Works and Days*, structurally in *Theogony*), Empedocles introduced Love and Strife as cosmic forces; in *The Matriarch*, we see each in equal measure. Likewise, Love and Strife offer a hermeneutic for reading Uranus/Gaea and Rangi/Papa: excessive Love causes cosmic stasis; necessary Strife breaks that stasis; then follows another phase.¹⁹ Anaximander, on the other hand, is of less pointed relevance as (merely) an early Greek thinker who wrote a philosophical treatise and made the first map of the world. To a degree, then, this passage from *The Matriarch* reads like a muddled compendium of material gleaned in a hurry from basic handbooks. As usual, however, Ihimaera's narrator makes a clear, forceful claim: Māori cosmogonic and theogonic concepts resemble ancient Greek philosophy.

In fact, A.W. Reed had already made this very point in his 1963 *Treasury of Maori Folklore*.²⁰ Reed disclaims any attempt to prove Māori superiority, and indeed the reverse is true of Reed's chauvinistic observations. Māori 'of old' supposedly lived a life 'far removed' from that of the 'cultured Greeks'. These noble savages avoided 'philosophical speculation' and 'cynicism and indifference' only by preserving their ancestors' 'barbarous concepts'. Māori theogonic narratives, *qua* 'parallel stories', complement Hesiod's *Theogony*. Nevertheless, one cannot hold such narratives to Hesiodic standards: they are 'closer to nature' (therefore less sophisticated), 'more bloodthirsty' (therefore less cultured), and 'more poetical' (therefore less philosophical). The best that can be said about 'the Maori imagination' is that it did not outgrow its natural talent for personification: 'We are not attempting to prove the superiority of the Maori imagination, but rather to show that a people who lived close to nature were able to evolve a form of belief that expressed itself in a genius for personification.' This is faint praise indeed. Compare Ihimaera's narrator: 'while the Maori people might be called a barbaric and savage race his knowledge and conception of the spirit world show a high plane of thought similar to the philosophical speculations of the earliest Greek philosophers'. The 'barbaric and savage' Māori just manage to scale the heights of Greek thought, not via philosophy *per se* but via 'the spirit world'.

JULIUS CAESAR

LATIN

(*Matriarch*, 301 = *Matriarch*², 333)

She [Riripeti] raised her arms in supplication to he [Wi Pere Halbert] who had once been her Caesar [...] Ave, ave Caesar.

The 2009 revision of *The Matriarch* clarifies and emphasises this analogy between Wi Pere and Caesar (see below). In particular, Act Four is subtitled 'Ave, ave, Wi Pere' instead of 'The Statesman'.

JULIUS CAESAR

ROMAN SENATORS

(*Matriarch*, 330 ≈ *Matriarch*², 367–8)

In the darkness of Rongopai the matriarch was teaching the child, whispering in his ear in that place of memories. [*Matriarch*²: 'before the panel of the man who had been the tribe's caesar', *viz.*, Wi Pere Halbert] [...]

The establishment of the [New Zealand Native Land] Company was a bold move, e mokopuna. For what your ancestor attempted to do was to take it upon himself to act on behalf of the people [*Matriarch*²: ‘to take upon himself the title of an emperor’] and to stop the Pakeha from taking more of the land. He set up an estate in the Roman mould. He took the triumphal wreath upon himself and said, ‘I am your Senator [*Matriarch*²: ‘Caesar’], your destiny, and you are in my hands.

JULIUS CAESAR

ROMAN SENATORS

(*Matriarch*, 426 ≈ *Matriarch*², 406)

On her lighted side was the senator [*Matriarch*²: ‘Caesar’], Wi Pere Halbert.

ATHENA

(*Matriarch*, 308 = *Matriarch*², 343)

[...] what appeared to be a bird, perched like the owl of Pallas Athene, on Wi Pere’s shoulders.

Ihimaera recycles this image in *The Dream Swimmer* (127).

CLEOPATRA

(*Matriarch*², 344)

The revised edition compares Riria, ancestor of Riripeti, to Cleopatra (despite also comparing Wi Pere, Riria’s son, to Caesar): Riria places Wi Pere on life’s chessboard ‘Like the fabled Egyptian queen who attempted to put her son on the throne of Rome as well as Alexandria’.

TRAGEDY (GREEK)

(*Matriarch*, 377 = *Matriarch*², 418)

Tiana and my sisters, Teria, Erina, Vanessa and Meri, were waiting like a Greek chorus, silent and eternal.

This unadorned simile (‘like a Greek chorus’) adds a momentary classical resonance, albeit one which misrepresents its vehicle: the choruses of Greek drama were anything but silent and far from eternal. One thinks also of the common misconception that Greek tragedy is a static performance medium, inhabited by a motionless chorus, in which all the action takes place offstage.

SPHINX

(*Matriarch*, 403 = *Matriarch*², 433)

Her [Tiana’s] face was sphinx-like, showing no emotion, but when she tilted her face to the light there were signs of tenderness.

This softening of Tiana’s predatory nature prefigures the nuanced character portrait on display in *The Dream Swimmer*.

ORESTEIA

(*Matriarch*², 441)

The revised edition interpolates a shortened version of a conversation from *The Dream Swimmer* (92–5) in which Regan explains to Tama why his family history resembles that of Orestes. This version of the conversation takes place in a different time and space from that in *The Dream Swimmer*. Most importantly, *The Matriarch* now

prefigures, loud and clear, Ihimaera's wholesale adaptation of the *Oresteia* in *The Dream Swimmer*: the intertextual makeup of the sequel has intruded on the rewritten original.²¹

OLYMPUS (Matriarch², 450 ≈ *Dream Swimmer*, 315)
See below on *The Dream Swimmer* for the original version of this interpolation.

Dear Miss Mansfield (1989)

NEPTUNE ('Maata'; *Mansfield*, 28)
'I don't teach until the afternoon. The little dears go to swimming in the morning, praise Neptune.'

Here, as elsewhere, a classical allusion takes precedence over convincing dialogue, leaving us with the oddly mannered aside 'praise Neptune'.

MEDEA ('Maata'; *Mansfield*, 29)
The protagonist, Mahaki, kills a litter of diseased kittens:
[H]e saw Gertrude [the cat], a feline Medea, looking down at him.

DELPHIC ORACLE ('Maata'; *Mansfield*, 37)
Just after the garden party, Mahaki and Susan flew on vacation to Greece. The interlude was idyllic, the white marble shining against the deep blue of sea and sky. They stayed in Athens for two weeks, dreaming their way through the ancient landscape and dancing every evening in the Plaka [...] Just prior to returning to London, Susan wanted them to consult the oracle at Delphi. They went by bus – a three-hour journey – and felt that they were travelling into the past. When they arrived at Delphi the mood was mystical – and when Mahaki asked for a sign of his future there was a rain of red blossoms. 'And you?' Mahaki asked Susan. 'Well, I saw the number twelve,' she said. 'Oh my God,' Mahaki responded, 'we'd better get started quick.' He knew that Susan was referring to children.

Like other New Zealand writers, Ihimaera reflexively depicts travel, especially the 'O.E.', as a journey into the past. (Compare, for example, Patricia Grace's *Tu* and *Ned and Katina*). This overseas location is also a dreamscape: Mahaki and Susan are 'travelling into the past' and 'dreaming their way through the ancient landscape'. (Compare Venice, a differently inflected dreamscape in *The Matriarch* and *The Dream Swimmer*). The classical past is idealised but also set apart, leaving New Zealand as the *modern* setting for domestic bliss. Ihimaera's flippant treatment of the Delphic Oracle contrasts greatly with the only other such mention (see below: *Dream Swimmer*, 22).

LATIN ('Maata'; *Mansfield*, 38)
For tutor both girls [Katherine Mansfield and Maata] had read Marie Bashkirtseff, dead of consumption at 24, *vide* KM.

The Latinate instruction ‘*vide KM*’ (that is, ‘see Katherine Mansfield’) suits the offhand, familiar, yet learned style of Melvin’s letter to Mahaki.

SPHINX (‘Maata’; *Mansfield*, 44)
‘Maata was the only one who could have told me,’ he said. ‘But she died in 1952. Perhaps her secret is better kept by her.’ His aunt laid her hands in her lap. She was like the sphinx. She nodded in agreement.

On the one hand, this simile recalls artistic representations of sphinxes – Greek and Egyptian – as winged leonine hybrids with front paws visible on the ground. On the other, however, the Greek Sphinx’s riddling nature colours the aunt as a figure of secrecy and mystery. Regardless of function, the form of the unadorned simile (‘like’; finite verb *to be*) is characteristic of Ihimaera’s technique elsewhere.

LATIN, CLASSICAL EDUCATION (‘Country Life’; *Mansfield*, 93)
Not that Mama minded shepherds’ children or the dark-skinned Maoris who predominated at the valley school, but what did they know of Latin, French, the Classics, MUSIC; ah, there was the rub.

This passage presents in miniature a notion which recurs in ‘The Thrill of Falling’ and *The Trowenna Sea* (see below): the classics as one positive exemplar, among many, of a proper education. Ihimaera refuses ‘white flight’ as an explanation for informal racial segregation in schools.

PHOENIX; PEGASUS (‘Country Life’; *Mansfield*, 102)
The corners of the living-room where lamplight simply *touched* were bejewelled and glowing spaces – like remote and fantastic worlds filled with unicorn, dodo, phoenix, Pegasus and other fabulous creatures.

In the context of the story (especially the mother who loves ‘the Classics’), this reference to fabulous creatures frames the girl’s reaction to the novelty of electric light in terms of her own privileged education, and her own literary experience, primarily of Greco-Roman mythology.

LATIN
TROY (‘Royal Hunt before the Storm’; *Mansfield*, 153)
Men only subvert our overtures. They think them either as signs that we want to dominate them [...] or as signs of feminine weakness. Either way they smell blood, as if we are some kind of prize in, yes, a – a royal hunt, or a Trojan war.

Ihimaera here plays with etymology. ‘Subvert’: Middle English < Middle French *subvertir*, Latin *subvertere*, to ‘overture’. ‘Overtures’: Middle English < Middle French *ouverture*, possibly < Latin *apertura*, ‘opening’, ‘orifice’; ‘approach’, ‘beginning’. That is, men overturn (subvert) the openings (overtures) which indicate feminine weakness, a weakness also suggested by the (menstrual?) blood, thereby casting all women as

images of Helen of Troy. Finally, an attentive reader might associate the story's title ('Royal Hunt before the Storm') with Aeneas and Dido in Book Four of Vergil's *Aeneid*.

***Bulibasha* (1994)**

MYTHOLOGY

EPIC

(*Bulibasha*, 11)

With every sculpting movement of bulldozer and grader, they stripped the [Waipaoa] river of its mythology [...] The epic dimension that existed when you travelled at thirty miles an hour maximum on a twisting, turning road has gone.

This conflation of mythology and epic casts *Bulibasha*, more naturally categorised as a comic or picaresque novel, as a mythological epic.

HELEN OF TROY

(*Bulibasha*, 39)

There are some souls, like Grandfather Tamihana, whom God signs contracts with before they are born. You can tell who they are when something shows up in the manner of their birth or in their accomplishments as young men or women [...] God also marks such souls with a special blessing. In some cases it is astounding beauty, like Helen of Troy or red-headed Rhonda Fleming.

Helen of Troy is assumed to be well-known, providing merely a canonical example of 'astounding beauty'. Note the collocation of classical mythology and Hollywood.

POSEIDON

(*Bulibasha*, 111)

He was a Maori Poseidon, water streaming from his deltoids and running down his chest.

Ihimaera's protagonist-narrator, Simeon, uses the Greek god of the sea as a straightforward vehicle for illustrating the image of a young man swimming. As with the 'Maori Olympus' in *The Matriarch*, this 'Maori Poseidon' asserts Māori ownership of, but also dependence on, the classical pantheon.

OLYMPUS

(*Bulibasha*, 128)

The gloves were off, and not only between the Mahanas and the Poatas. If I had to, I would bring down Olympus.

Simeon decides to fight to the end with his grandfather, the patriarch Tamihana Mahana. This reference to Olympus alludes to the war(s) of succession in heaven, as in Hesiod's *Theogony*. Tamihana is Cronus, refusing to allow his children to flourish; Simeon adopts the role of Zeus, challenging Tamihana and trying to 'bring down Olympus'.

OLYMPUS

(*Bulibasha*, 228)

I had indeed brought down Olympus.

Simeon's assertion of victory comes after Uncle Hone defies Tamihana. Note the continuing theme of intergenerational conflict and the kingship of heaven.

JASON

(*Bulibasha*, 202–3)

NEW GOLDEN FLEECE AWARD

The New Zealand Wool Board today announced the holding of a national competition to select the best shearing gang in the Dominion. A substantial cash prize of £5000 and the Golden Fleece Shield will be awarded to the winning gang. A gold statuette, christened 'Jason', will be given to the best shearer of the year, not necessarily from the winning gang.

JASON

THESEUS

(*Bulibasha*, 226)

The whole town [Gisborne] was caught up in the excitement, no doubt assisted by the local newspaper editor who likened our journey to that taken by the Greek hero Jason and his valiant argonauts, who sought and finally won the golden fleece. Even the mayor could not resist the opportunity for some classical allusion of his own. 'The hopes of the district go with you. On your return, we will look for a white sail of victory rather than the black sail of disappointment.'

Here we find two instances of classical reception performed by a character for an internal audience. First, the journalists themselves compare the Mahana family to Jason and the Argonauts; second, the mayor makes his allusion to Theseus. For once, Ihimaera engages in allusion without naming the referent (Theseus), yet note the quasi-footnote ('classical allusion') reminding the reader that this is, indeed, a classical reference. In the person of the mayor one can also glimpse the shadow of the author, unable to resist another—less apposite—classical allusion yet unwilling to leave the task of recognition entirely to the reader.

HADES

(*Bulibasha*, 237)

He didn't think we had a hope in Hades.

Thus Tamihana dismisses the chances of one of his own family's shearing gangs (Mahana Four) in the competition. The narrator likewise rejects the regular collocation 'hope in Hell' for the classicising variant 'hope in Hades'.

ZEUS

(*Bulibasha*, 237)

I swear that Grandfather never moved a muscle and yet he seemed to be sending down thunderbolts of psychic energy designed to cripple their shearers or set fire to their wool.

Compare the earlier references to ‘bringing down Olympus’: Ihimaera effectively conflates Cronus and his son Zeus in the person of Tamihana. Throughout the novel, classical allusions develop a theme of cosmic crisis and intergenerational conflict shared with Greco-Roman literature. In that respect, the hero Simeon is himself both a Zeus-figure and a Prometheus-figure: a trickster-helper who defeats the supreme patriarch with deceit.

Nights in the Gardens of Spain (1995)

ORPHEUS and the MAENADS

(*Nights*, 115)

The night is a river and I am driven to wander its banks. In spite of Annabelle and Chris I am like Orpheus, compulsive in my search for peace from the shades that haunt me. Within the whispering forest the maenads are gathering to rip my heart out and tear me limb from limb.

Here we see the Orpheus myth put to a very different purpose from that to which it was put illustrating the figure of Hinenuitepō in *The Matriarch*. In *Nights*, unlike *The Matriarch*, the narrator is concerned with the death not of Eurydice but of Orpheus. There is no mention of Eurydice, and an apparent disclaimer in the sense that Annabelle, the narrator’s wife, and Chris, his (male) lover, are mentioned together, and that the narrator is like Orpheus ‘in spite of’ them. Nevertheless, Orpheus is the archetypal husband who tried, and failed, to win back his wife. In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (10.83–5), Orpheus also invents pederasty, restricting himself to male lovers after losing Eurydice.²² This is, *mutatis mutandis*, what happens in *Nights*: after coming out to Annabelle, the narrator tries to stay but ultimately leaves to start a relationship with a man. It goes without saying that Ihimaera elides Ovid’s heteronormative happy ending (*Met.* 10.61–6) in which Orpheus, now dead, is reunited with Eurydice in the underworld (on which see below, *The Trowenna Sea*).

ORPHEUS

(*Nights*, 221)

I hated him [Charles, a lover who had left the narrator] for a time and cried like Orpheus. I found solace in marriage to Annabelle and in fatherhood. But I have always been searching the underworld for another soul of his magnitude.

Another unadorned simile comparing the narrator to Orpheus returns us to Eurydice, but without any gendering of Orpheus’s desire or Eurydice’s desirability. The focus is rather on the pathos of the doomed lover. Charles is Eurydice, with Annabelle a mere substitute. By extension, Chris is a more successful replacement; Annabelle, the woman, is no longer a second Eurydice. Ultimately, the perfect marriage of two (male) souls here requires a classical, heterosexual parallel: ‘I have always been searching the underworld for another soul of his magnitude’. Repeated reference to Orpheus, archetypal mythological poet, suggests a reflexive, metafictional image of the novelist as suffering soul looking for (doomed) love.

EIDOLON

(*Nights*, 141)

And too much of me, my gay eidolon, was trying to get out from behind the façade we had erected.

An eidolon (Greek *eidôlon*) is an image, figure, or spectre, possessing verisimilitude but not substance; contrast Greek *psykhê*, ‘soul’. The narrator ascribes the failure of his reunion with Annabelle to repression of this ‘gay eidolon’, his true, inner, gay self. Ihimaera described *Nights* as ‘keeping faith with his gay audience’ much as he had been keeping faith with his Maori audience.²³ Redefining the *eidôlon* as an inner soul with independent volition provides him with a classical equivalent for the image of a repressed, gay, self trying to escape a straight-acting façade.²⁴ Ihimaera has himself used the image of the eidolon to describe himself and his writing, and it has been proposed as a fundamental symbol of his authorial subjectivity.²⁵

EIDOLON

TITANS

(*Nights*, 235)

Our [divorce] lawyers are eidolons of ourselves, sent out to do battle, clashing like titans.

Here the ‘eidolons’ (Greek plural *eidôla*) retain more of their classical form as spectres rather than independent souls. On the one hand, this passage offers a gentle dig at divorce lawyers for being less than whole human beings. On the other hand, the emotional consequences of coming out and of divorce once more prompt a classical analogy. The division of a household and its property attendant on divorce requires not only the hiring of lawyers, but also the division or compartmentalisation of the self.

The lawyers are *clashing* like titans. That is, they are like the stop-motion figures in Ray Harryhausen’s 1981 film *Clash of the Titans*. Otherwise, ‘clashing like titans’ would be an entirely empty cliché: Hesiod (*Theogony* 617–733) is not forthcoming about how exactly titans clash. Ihimaera’s bathetic image of clay figurines thus offers another dig at divorce lawyers, ‘sent out to do battle’, performing choreographed fight sequences. Divorce proceedings can be violent, grave, and yet also petty.

DIANA

(*Nights*, 257)

She [Annabelle, running on the beach] is like Diana, the Roman Goddess of the Hunt.

Yet another unadorned simile here uses Diana for a straightforward comparison, unlike the treatment of Artemis in *The Matriarch* and *The Dream Swimmer* (see below). Diana’s chaste, aloof nature, and preference for hunting, illustrates the necessary separation that the two protagonists must undergo. The exegetical footnote (‘the Roman Goddess of the Hunt’) was presumably deemed necessary given the prominence of Diana, Princess of Wales, at the time *Nights* was published.

The Dream Swimmer (1997)²⁶

ARTEMIS, TIANA, and CIRCE

(*Dream Swimmer*)

See above, on *The Matriarch*.

ELECTRA

(*Dream Swimmer*)

Tama's niece, born in *The Dream Swimmer*, is named Eretra, a Māori transliteration of Electra.

DELPHIC ORACLE

(*Dream Swimmer*, 22)

Back in Athens, I decided to go up to Delphi to consult the oracle of Apollo. There are some places in the world where the boundaries between the past and future, living and dead, are so fine that you can read the patterns of destiny. Waituhi is one such place; Venice is another; and so is Delphi. Why else would it be so associated with divinations?

DELPHIC ORACLE; ORESTES; MYCENAE

TIRESIAS

SPHINX

(*Dream Swimmer*, 24)

Alas, Uncle Alexis.

He was Tiresias, the Blind Man in Greek mythology, the one who waits at the crossroads near the feet of the sphinx in the hot noon sun. He was the oracle of Apollo, waiting for Orestes to come, to direct him to his destiny at Mycenae. He was the seer, the divinator, the matakite.

OEDIPUS

(*Dream Swimmer*, 23 ≈ *Matriarch*, 12; *Matriarch*², 18)

See above on *The Matriarch*.

PANDORA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 27)

Te Ariki is sixty this year. All the ills and spites of the world have climbed out of Pandora's box.

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 92–5)

In an extended, didactic passage, Regan summarises (her version of) the *Oresteia* in detail. Ihimaera recycled and shortened this passage for the 2009 revision of *The Matriarch* (see above: *Matriarch*², 441).

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 150)

Sylvia, a French classicist, gives a nuanced account of the *Oresteia*. Tama concludes that a son's loyalty should be with his father.

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 201)

In a famous passage from the *Oresteia* (*Eumenides* 657–66), Athena downplays the mother's role in procreation, asserting that the real parent is 'the one who mounts' (660), that is the father. Here Tama's sister reverses the terms of the equation:

[A]lthough she often refers to Te Ariki as ‘your father’, excluding herself from his male parentage, she always talks about ‘our mother’ when referring to Tiana.

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 276)

‘E mokopuna, my grandson, you must be careful as you walk in the world. Beware, particularly, of the way of the Pakeha for it will be like unto a red carpet so comforting to your feet [...] And the carpet will take you to the Paremata [Parliament] of the Pakeha, my dearest grandson, but it is a carpet of blood which your ancestors have trod before you into the House of the European [...] O mokopuna, when you walk the red carpet be on your guard for you walk a sea of blood. And should you enter there, take great care lest the butcher plunge his knife into your heart –’

Compare the famous ‘carpet scene’ from *Agamemnon* (lines 855–974).²⁷ Riripeti Mahana emphasises her allusion with repetition and with the phrase ‘sea of blood’. Agamemnon walks a carpet dyed with red dye (literally, ‘ooze’) from the sea; Tama is warned off walking on a carpet (‘red carpet’, ‘carpet’, ‘carpet of blood’, ‘red carpet’) which is also a sea of blood.

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 378)

‘Oh, Tamatea,’ Aunt Hiraina wept. ‘Will our fight never end?’

Compare the final words of Aeschylus’ *Libation Bearers* (1075–6): ‘What will it do now? Where will the force of destruction lie down and rest?’

ORESTEIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 409–10)

Tama remembers Sylvia’s earlier account of the *Oresteia* (150) and again answers a question about family loyalty:

‘My friend,’ Sylvia had said gently when we were wandering in Paris, ‘your question is simple but the answer is not simple. Which has the greater argument for rightness? Does a son owe more devotion to his father or mother? Where do you think a son’s devotion lies?’

I had answered wrongly and had been punished.

I now know that the answer should have been:

‘With my mother, Tiana.’

ATHENA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 127 ≈ *Matriarch*, 308, *Matriarch*², 343)

See above on *The Matriarch*.

CYRUS OF PERSIA

(*Dream Swimmer*, 153)

Ihimaera proffers Mujahideen freedom fighters as a parallel for Māori fighting for their land; the Mujahideen themselves insist on a classical analogy, quoting Herodotus’ *Histories* (1.206.1). Thus history repeats: first Persia, now the U.S.S.R.

As far back as 559 BC, the Persian King Cyrus tried to conquer us [the Afghani people]. It was our Queen Tomyris who, just before Cyrus was

defeated at the battle with the Massagatae [*sic*] said, ‘Rule your own people and try to bear the sight of me ruling mine.’ The Soviets are no different.

HOUSE OF ATREUS (*Dream Swimmer*, 174)

One section of Act III of *The Dream Swimmer*, encompassing chapters 19–21, is titled ‘House of Atreus’. These chapters concern Tama returning to Gisborne, deciding to undertake a second delegation to Wellington about his tribe’s land, and rescuing his niece Eretra. That is, these chapters contain one of Ihimaera’s versions of the Orestes story.

HOUSE OF ATREUS; CLYTEMNESTRA (*Dream Swimmer*, 273)

The spirit of Clytemnestra had invaded the soul of Riripeti. The House of Atreus was in its decline and fall.

Whereas elsewhere in *The Dream Swimmer* Clytemnestra is associated with Tiana, here it is the Matriarch, Riripeti, who receives the comparison. The ‘decline and fall’ of the whānau immediately suggests an ancient historical, indeed historiographical, context by way of Edward Gibbon’s *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

HOUSE OF ATREUS (*Dream Swimmer*, 360)

The Mahana clan was a royal house, like the House of Atreus. It possessed a power, one regulated by spells and portents and by gods who still played games, dispensing favours and malefactions to favourites or those who had fallen from favour. No matter which way the history of the world went, the destiny of the clan had been chartered by other stars and other divinities. It would always be a house unto itself.

Nor had the Gods finished with us.

HOUSE OF ATREUS (*Dream Swimmer*, 406)

He, too [Te Ariki], has contributed to the cruel fate inflicted upon our Maori house of Atreus.

See above on ‘Maori Olympus’ (*Matriarch*, 2; *Matriarch*², 9) and ‘Maori Poseidon’ (*Bulibasha*, 111).

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 196)

Then I thought of Tiana. Her memory conjured up the sounds of the rustling pursuit of the Eryinnes [*sic*]. I looked out the window of the plane. Somehow I felt the Furies were not far behind me.

You’ve always had the power to take it off, Son.

What I did not know was that the Furies weren’t behind me at all. They were ahead, waiting with their net of memories, to trap me in Wellington.

The Furies (Latin *Furiae*, Greek *Erinues*) are avenging female spirits who punish evildoers, particularly murderers or those who harm family members. In *Eumenides*, the

final play of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, the Erinues are transformed into the Eumenides, the 'Kindly Ones'.

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 284)

The waves stormed across the concrete wall. As they flung their spray toward the moon I saw three dark shapes advancing and knew—
The Furies were coming.

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 285)

One section of Act IV, encompassing chapters 33–35, is titled 'The Furies'. This section narrates Tama's violent confrontation with Tiana in which he almost kills her, and represents the other major extended allusion to the Orestes myth.

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 296)

Now let the occult arts rip apart the air and allow the entrance of the Furiae. Daughters of Kronos and Eurynome, come forth through Past's doorway. Wing down, Tisiphone, avenger of murder. Hover, Alekto, unwearied persecutor. Join then, Megaera, grim justice. Come, black-gowned ones, with your odious aspect, your coronets of vipers. Hold in your hands serpent, knife or firebrand.

You, implacable triad, look down this night and sit in justice upon her, Tiana, the mother who murders her children, and he, Tamatea, with murder in his heart for his mother.

In the *Oresteia*, the Erinues support Clytemnestra. Here Tama calls the Erinues not only upon himself, the Orestes-figure, but also upon Tiana, the Clytemnestra-figure. As elsewhere, Murray's *Who's Who in Mythology* provides the detail and much of the phraseology: 'Tisiphone (the avenger of murder)'; 'Alekto (the unwearied persecutor)'; 'Megaera (the grim)'; 'odious aspect'; 'carrying a serpent, a knife, or a torch'. Murray and Ihimaera use the names for the Erinues which Vergil canonised in the *Aeneid*, but Hellenise Vergil's Latin *Allecto* as *Alekto*.²⁸

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 297)

Lightning slashed the sky. The three Furies were suddenly alight in the garish glare.

FURIES/ERINUES (*Dream Swimmer*, 302)

Of course I should have known that the Furies would take judgement against me. I had forgotten that matricide, the murder of a mother, was the highest of all homicides.

One of the roles of the Erinues is to persecute kin-murderers, and this is precisely what they do in the *Oresteia*.

FURIES/ERINUES

(*Dream Swimmer*, 367)

If you can't be mine, you can be nobody else's, Tiana said. *If I let you go, you will only try to kill me. If you do that the Furies will damn you for ever, my son.*

ORESTES and the *ORESTEA*; ATHENA; FURIES/ERINUES

(*Dream Swimmer*, 420)

Here Tama looks forward to an end to his own story to match the end of the *Oresteia*, where Athena settles the case against Orestes and incorporates the Erinues into Athens as the Eumenides ('Kindly Ones'):

Although I have forgiven my clan, I have yet to find forgiveness for myself. I have been like Orestes. I have deservedly been pursued by the Furies, permitting no peace to my throbbing heart. But as Orestes did, so have I tried to make restitution to Artemis. Although the Furies continue to persecute me, I shall proceed to Athens and there call for a trial in the Areopagus.

With their help, I pray Apollo and the great goddess Athene will secure my acquittal. May the Furies end their persecution.

FURIES/ERINUES

(*Dream Swimmer*, 421–2)

In my darkest moments I have even called upon the Furies to put me out of my misery. Come daughters of Kronos and Eurynome. Come, Tisiphone, Alekto, Megaera; take me now, avengers of a son who murdered his mother. The Furies are merciless. They know only too well that to live with the memory of my guilt is the worst punishment of all.

IN MEDIAS RES

(*Dream Swimmer*, 214)

'Events don't just stop and start,' Sylvia had said in Paris. 'Sometimes we come into a story in the middle without knowing its beginning or its real ending.'

Compare Horace, *The Art of Poetry* 148–9: the good composer of epic 'always hurries on to the main event and throws his audience into the middle of things as though they are well known'. Sylvia subverts Horace's famous dictum and rejects the idea of linear narrative, privileging ignorance rather than prior knowledge.

ARTEMIS OF EPHEBUS

(*Dream Swimmer*, 237–8)

Tama repeats an account given by one Signor Nucci of Venice, describing the 'Ephesian Artemis', the Eastern divinity made famous by St. Paul (Acts 19:23–49). In particular, Signor Nucci conflates Artemis, Isis, the Moon, and Cybele the Great Mother, emphasising the Asiatic qualities of this goddess as opposed to the classical Artemis/Diana: 'This image tells us that in this house was practised the religion of the original Artemis of Ephesus, not the Artemis of the Greeks or Romans. This sect has been here hundreds of years.'

Artemis of Ephesus is not well understood. Much of what is claimed here about the deity, beyond being a fertility goddess and city goddess in Asia Minor and the Near

East, is antiquarian fiction.²⁹ Likewise, Ihimaera generalises much about the classical Artemis/Diana.

ARTEMIS OF EPHEBUS

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

SEVEN WONDERS

(*Dream Swimmer*, 385)

Tama visits the site of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, noting that ‘On the night Alexander the Great was born, it was set on fire and almost completely destroyed. Alexander rebuilt it more magnificent than before.’

ARTEMIS OF EPHEBUS

(*Dream Swimmer*, 415)

Tama visits Venice to find the temple of Artemis which Riripeti had herself visited. There, he rehearses some of Signor Nucci’s ideas about ‘Ephesian Artemis’ (see above).

MEDEA AND JASON

GREEK TRAGEDY

(*Dream Swimmer*, 294)

Tama explicitly compares Tiana’s vengeance on him (by proxy in the form of his sisters) with that of Medea on Jason (by proxy in the form of their children) as portrayed in Euripides’ *Medea*. He introduces the comparison by noting, ‘There is a moment in the great Greek drama, *Medea*, which is similar to this.’ Tama’s extended account of Medea’s theatrical epiphany, however, follows Cherubini’s *Médée*.³⁰

OLYMPUS

(*Dream Swimmer*, 315)

At the time [*viz.*, of the narrator’s law studies], the Magna Carta and King Edward seemed as remote as Olympus to a young man from a place called Waituhi; I was finding it difficult and boring and, worse, irrelevant to Maori.

Yet again, classical antiquity stands for higher learning. Here, though, in a radical context, the narrator’s simile casts such higher learning (by association with those legal studies with which it is compared) as ‘remote’, ‘difficult and boring [...] irrelevant to Maori.’ Nevertheless, it only ‘seemed’ remote ‘at the time’: the narrator eventually completes his legal studies. ‘Only with this understanding would I know how the law could be manipulated.’

ORPHEUS

HADES

(*Dream Swimmer*, 371)

Had my mother not called me, I would have kept on walking up into the light. I was Orpheus ascending, and I knew if I looked back I would destroy my mother for ever [...] I turned, and at that moment banished her to Hades for ever.

At this moment of final separation from his mother Tiana, Tama identifies himself with Orpheus at the moment of final separation from Eurydice. Orpheus thus exemplifies a particular kind of (Freudian?) subjectivity: a male subjectivity facing emotional stress caused by the loss of a nurturing, feminine aspect, but also a male subjectivity which

constitutes the self by destroying the feminine other. By extension, Eurydice, the archetype for lost lovers, is recast into an archetype for lost (or banished) *mothers*.

ORPHEUS (*Dream Swimmer*, 405)
‘When you leave,’ I said, ‘don’t look back. Don’t look back. *Ever*.’

The earlier reference to Orpheus encourages reading this moment, when Tama and his lover Tepora part, as a recapitulation of Orpheus and Eurydice.

EREBUS (*Dream Swimmer*, 403)
‘His eyes [*viz.*, Tamati Kota’s] were like the black pits of Erebus.’

In Hesiod’s *Theogony* (123–5), Erebus is primordial darkness.

Whanau II (2004)

GLADIATORS (*Whanau II*, 30)
The whole of Gisborne had been there last night to celebrate his wedding, even the mayor, as if George [a rugby league star] was a modern-day gladiator being crowned with the laurel leaves of victory.

Roman gladiators typically did not receive a laurel wreath; victorious charioteers did.

The Rope of Man (2005)

MEDUSA (*Rope*, 87)
Some people consider that when she [Hinenuitepō] transformed from Hinetitama, child of the dawn, she became a monstrous inversion of herself. Her eyes were said to be flecked with greenstone. Her hair was sea-kelp still moist from the sea. She was a fearsome apparition with a mouth like a barracouta. I like to think of her differently. Not as some Maori Medusa but, rather, as the Great Mother [...]

Tama rejects Ihimaera’s earlier treatment of Hinenuitepō in *The Matriarch* (see above) and describes her as a benevolent deity not at all like Medusa. By removing an extended description of Hinenuitepō’s chthonic aspect from the first version of *Tangi* (compare *Rope*, 70–1) and adding this explicit rebuttal, Ihimaera radically rewrites a description of female mythological figures in his earliest novel. Ihimaera later adapted this rebuttal in ‘ask the posts of the house’ (see below). Note that in each earlier instance, Hinenuitepō is contrasted with a *Greek* mythological female figure (*Matriarch*: Eurydice; *Rope*: Medusa).

Ask the Posts of the House (2007)

THE MUSE (‘i’ve been thinking about you, sister’; *Posts*, 15)
In a charged autobiographical interlude, Ihimaera writes *in propria persona* of the start of his writing career, and of the optimistic, lyrical voice which garnered him so much criticism:

Instead, they got me. That other writer must have got delayed when old lady Muse swung by in her Peugeot and mistakenly picked me up instead.

CLEOPATRA

HIPPOCRATIC OATH (‘ask the posts of the house’; *Posts*, 60)
Calorifically challenged, the women all appear to have taken some hippopotamic oath; and my most recent date has been with the reigning Cleofatra of the Aisle, Miss Fatuisi Falofasofa.

This passage best displays Ihimaera’s off-hand, at times whimsical, approach to classical allusions: Cleopatra becomes a Pacific ‘Cleofatra’, and the Hippocratic Oath a facetious ‘hippopotamic oath’, neither of which needs to be read as more – or less – than a clever pun like ‘Aisle’ or ‘Falofasofa’.

MEDUSA

(‘ask the posts of the house’; *Posts*, 74)
Ihimaera, again *in propria persona*, borrows from Tama in *The Rope of Man* (see above) to rehabilitate Hinenuitepō:

Malevolent Kali-like Goddess of Death? With eyes of paua, locks of hair – medusae of barracuda – and vaginal dentata? No. She is Great Mother of the Underworld. Hers is the redemptive role and it is through her that we achieve forgiveness.

BOUDICEA

(‘in the year of prince harry’; *Posts*, 89, 136)
‘Seeing as you lot like to trace your whakapapa,’ I began, ‘let me give you mine [...] Roman invaders occupied Colchester in 43 AD and it was my ancestor Boudicea who led a revolt against their rule.’

Later, when the English narrator learns that he is to have a granddaughter, he muses, ‘Okay, Oliver, you can do this. A baby girl, oh my, a *girl*. Wasn’t Boudicea a girl? And girls can learn war cries too, right?’ (136).

VENUS

(‘in the year of prince harry’; *Posts*, 91)
Yes, I met sweet, uncomplicated Fleur. A pocket Venus, dark skin, gorgeous hair, well stacked with a nicely balanced bottom, working in a law office in Porirua.

FURIES

(‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 149, 163)
One section of this novella is entitled ‘the attack of the furies’; another, ‘in the lair of the furies’.³¹ The ‘furies’ of the title are not supernatural beings but three doomed princesses, now old women. Kin-murder, something of great interest to the Erinues, does feature prominently.

MEDUSA

(‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 152)
The young prince asks the old man to take off his mask; the old man refuses, saying, ‘If I did that, you would be turned to stone.’

HARPIES (‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 164)
Again, Ihimaera has recourse to the copious supply of dangerous female monsters in Greco-Roman myth: the three aged princesses attack the prince ‘like harpies’.

EIDOLON (‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 174)
Meantime, I had instructed that effigies be made of us all — eidolons of Ohiri, myself and my daughters — and displayed on the walls of the city.

In this passage, Ihimaera egregiously prefers ‘eidolon’ to, say ‘images’, ‘statues’, or even ‘simulacra’. As elsewhere, he picks and chooses Latinate *or* Hellenic vocabulary unsystematically, magpie fashion. (On the Greek concept of the *eidolon*, see above: *Nights*, 141, 235.)

CHARIOT OF THE SUN (‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 177)
And the people say that the great Queen Ihi embarked on a second, epic journey [...] Legend tells us that Ra, the Sun God, came to her aid; admiring her fearless spirit he rewarded her by sending a chariot made of fire.

In the mythico-historical setting of the story, Māori have no horses and thus no chariots. This passage suggests Medea using the chariot of her grandfather Helios (the Sun) to escape from Corinth, as at the end of Euripides’ *Medea*. On the other hand, Queen Ihi’s is an ‘epic’ journey; compare Medea’s travels in Book Seven of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

CHILD SACRIFICE (‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 180)
The ghost of Queen Ihi, who sacrificed her daughter Ata to save her own husband, defends herself:

‘I offer no excuse,’ she called, defiant. ‘I am not the first nor am I the last in the ancient world to sacrifice a child.’

Authorial focalisation again insists on ‘the ancient world’ as the ideal comparandum, but by way of anachronism: how does Queen Ihi even know that she inhabits said ancient world?

OEDIPUS (‘ihipi’; *Posts*, 182)
The old king Ohiri recalls killing Queen Ihi to avenge their daughter Ata, then blinding himself:

Where the eyes had once been were two dark sockets.

‘I killed Ihi,’ Ohiri went on [...] I could not bear the horror of it. I took a blade of obsidian and hacked out both my eyes. I wanted to make sure that there would be no further accidental reflection of myself in the water, or in any shining pounamu or obsidian surface.

Compare, for example, Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1334–5.³²

GREEK SCIENCE ('dead of night'; *Posts*, 195)
Dr. Foley explains what he considers the first major proposition of cosmology: the geocentric cosmos of Thales of Miletus (sixth century B.C.), further developed by Aristotle (fourth century B.C.) and Claudius Ptolemy (second century A.D.).

GREEK SCIENCE ('dead of night'; *Posts*, 223–4)
'Oh yes, Professor,' Mrs Cortland answers. 'One of the first-known woman mathematicians and astronomers was Hypatia, circa AD 375 to 415. Her father, Theon, was the last head of the museum at Alexandria, and Hypatia herself became one of the last guardians of the old Ptolemaic knowledge. She wrote a commentary on Ptolemy's work and invented astronomical navigation devices. Who knows what else she might have accomplished had she not been murdered by Christian monks during Alexandria's waning years?'³³

LATIN ('dead of night'; *Posts*, 210)
Professor Van Straaten complains about the church's treatment of Galileo:
'His *Dialogue on the Two Chief Systems of the World*, of 1632, was placed on the Index Librorum Prohibitorum and stayed there for 200 years.'

Tellingly, Ihimaera translates the *Italian* title of Galileo's treatise, but not the *Latin* title for the Church's 'Index of Forbidden Books'. Knowledge of Latin is assumed where knowledge of Italian is not, with the result that the 'living' vernacular comes alive for the monoglot reader; the 'dead' ecclesiastical language retains a mysterious, numinous quality.

LATIN ('dead of night'; *Posts*, 211)
Monsignor Frère refers to creation as the 'primordial fiat lux', using the Vulgate Latin phrase *fiat lux*, 'let there be light', from Genesis 1:3.

LATIN ('dead of night'; *Posts*, 218)
The space-ship's AI attendants ('aunties') eschew traditional names for stars, opting instead for descriptive Latin names:
They preferred more exotic nomenclature like Hikurangi Gloriosa or Marama Sublima or Ariki Imperatrix; and on one occasion Aunti-3 suggested calling a particular chain of galaxies Vagina Splendida.³⁴

CLASSICAL LITERATURE ('meeting elizabeth costello'; *Posts*, 290)
In a lecture on the postcolonial novel, a Māori novelist criticises Eurocentric canons:
'The idea of a canon for literature appeared in the fourth century AD when a list of texts, primarily books of the Bible, were deemed worthier of preservation than others [...]'

This conflates biblical canon formation with literary canon formation. While the western church established its scriptural canon in the late fourth century A.D., the classical canon developed much earlier. The speaker later reiterates his odium for

canons without specifying Greco-Roman antiquity: ‘When will we give primacy to our own indigenous Shakespeares, Goethes and Prousts? When will European countries stop exporting to the colonies all those books called classics by dead white guys?’ (293).

CLASSICAL EDUCATION

(*Posts*, 298)

In the notes to ‘in the year of prince harry’ (298), Ihimaera refers to ‘a stunning lecture given by Anthony Burgess’ in which Burgess claimed that ‘the condition of literature was most akin to music involving poetry, aesthetics, rhetoric, philosophy, and what the Romans call *politior humanitas*.’ The phrase *politior humanitas*, referring to liberal education (literally ‘more polished civilisation’) appears in Cicero, *Orator* 2.72.4.

***The Trowenna Sea* (2009)**

CLASSICAL EDUCATION

(*Trowenna*, 20)

Throughout the first section (‘Ismay’s Story’), the narrator, Ismay, treats the classics as the pre-eminent marker of a proper education. Crucially, the classics are associated with practical subjects rather than fiction and poetry.

I found greater fascination in the classical, philosophical, geographical and historical tomes of Uncle Rollo’s capacious library [than in Jane Austen or Elizabeth Barrett Browning].

CLASSICAL EDUCATION

(*Trowenna*, 35)

It was well known that she [Ismay’s cousin, Sybil] had set her cap at a more suitable candidate, Marcus Wrenn, son of a Wolverhampton marquis, who was currently reading classics at Balliol.

CLASSICAL EDUCATION

(*Trowenna*, 56)

‘My cousins prefer the romantic novels but I would rather open Macaulay’s history of the Roman Empire or medical books dealing with the physique and determination of illnesses by diagnosis. Science, mathematics, political economy, Greek and Latin — these are my collateral interests.’

ORPHEUS and EURYDICE

(*Trowenna* 62–3, 64–5, 231)

The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is a leitmotiv in *The Trowenna Sea*. In this episode, a newly (and not blissfully) wedded Ismay cries at a performance of Gluck’s *Orpheus and Eurydice*.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

(*Trowenna*, 396)

Hohepa tells Gower McKissock the story of Mataora travelling to Rarohenga to bring back his wife. Mr McKissock, whose fraught, initially loveless marriage spans the novel, reciprocates with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, concluding:

Although the gods have warned him not to look at Eurydice until they get to the surface, her entreaties of ‘Do you love me?’ make him gaze upon her and he gives the answer, yes. But he loses her forever.

As in *The Dream Swimmer*, Ihimaera has a character explain a myth to an internal addressee for the reader's benefit, prior to endowing that myth with programmatic significance later in the work: intimacy with classical myth is not assumed.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE (Trowenna, 487–8)

A much older Mr and Mrs McKissock attend another performance of *Orpheus and Eurydice* which again moves both of them: Mrs McKissock remembers her dead soul-mate, Hohepa, while Mr McKissock remembers and regrets his treatment of Mrs McKissock.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE (Trowenna, 489)

And, like Orpheus, I could no longer wait to look at you, no longer stop from telling you what you had always wanted to hear [...] 'I love you, Mrs McKissock,' I said.

Here, Ihimaera allows the Ovidian happy reunion denied to the husband and wife in *Nights in the Garden of Spain* (see above): Gower McKissock realises, and professes, his love for his wife. The McKissocks thus (re)discover reciprocal, marital, heterosexual affection precisely at the moment when death parts them. Orpheus remains Ihimaera's archetypal unhappy or unlucky husband, but here, of course, the outcome is different. All in all, Orpheus constitutes a fascinating, yet problematic, figure in terms of male subjectivity and desire, hetero- and homo-erotic.

NEPTUNE³⁵ (Trowenna, 67)

Then the *Esmond Hurst* crossed the equator. The men had such fun acting out a masquerade concerning Neptune [...]

ULYSSES (Trowenna, 114)

'Hohepa's Story' (79–182) parallels Greek and Māori heroes:

Te Rauparaha, whom the Pakeha called the Maori Ulysses [...]

See above on 'Maori Olympus' (*The Matriarch*), 'Maori Poseidon' (*Bulibasha*), and 'Maori house of Atreus' (*The Dream Swimmer*).

ULYSSES (Trowenna, 150)

[H]e [Te Rauparaha] was jeered with expressions of contempt: 'You may be Ulysses, but we are Ngati Rangatahi and Ngati Tama. Get off our land.' It was a shocking blow to his mana [authority, pride].

All told, references to Ulysses and Ajax (see below) evoke the Embassy to Achilles from *Iliad* 9 – starring both Ulysses (Odysseus) and Ajax (Aias) – as a model for interactions between iwi.

AJAX (Trowenna, 114)

Tall and untamed, he [Te Rangihaeata, nephew of Te Rauparaha] was Te Rauparaha's Ajax.

‘BY JOVE’ (Trowenna, 258)

ATLAS (Trowenna, 272)
Hohepa Te Umuroa, transported to Tasmania for rebelling against the New Zealand authorities, is described as ‘Atlas in chains.’

LATIN (Trowenna, 383)
Inside was a most beautiful stained-glass window [...] Over the head of the Christ was the inscription *I.N.R.I. Jesus Nazaremus Rex Judaeorum* [‘Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews’]

Again, Ihimaera leaves Latin untranslated, paradoxically implying both mystery and linguistic knowledge. The biblical source of the inscription is apposite, inasmuch as it involves translating a Latin phrase to make it accessible: the evangelist records that the sign above Christ’s cross was read by many people and written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek (John 19:19–20).

***The Parihaka Woman* (2011)**

OLYMPUS (Parihaka, 42)
Some people say that he [Titokowaru] fell out of favour with whatever gods supported him; as easily offended as any of the Greek deities of Olympus, they lightly tapped his knees and his stride began to falter.

ROME (Parihaka, 67)
The narrator cites and quotes Christopher Woodward’s description of an 1873 engraving, *The New Zealander*:
The wizard-like figure [...] is a traveller from New Zealand, for to many Victorians this young colony seemed to represent the dominant civilisation of the future. He sits on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St Paul’s, exactly as Victorian Englishmen sketched those of ancient Rome.³⁶

The conceit of the engraving itself derives from a now infamous passage in an 1840 essay by Thomas Macauley. Macauley is concerned not with New Zealand’s illustrious future but with the dogged survival of the Roman Catholic Church, even in the face of British decline: ‘And she [the Roman Catholic Church] may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul’s.’³⁷ In the light of the engraving’s pessimistic vision of a ruined Rome, however, Ihimaera’s narrator envisages an ongoing *translatio imperii*. New Zealand is to overtake Britain as the British Empire once overtook the (ruined) Roman Empire: ‘I’ve often pondered [...] what, if anything, would have made New Zealand that dominant civilisation?’ (67–8). The impetus for the quotation is thus the narrator’s radical anger about how ‘those first Pakeha leaders of ours’ managed to ruin ‘what might have been’ (68). New Zealand, as a prelapsarian, pre-colonial paradise, is lost but for counterfactuals. Nevertheless, we

are still to imagine an agonistic, competitive context in which Aotearoa, ‘a greater Britannia or Albion’, will one day ‘challenge Europa’s supremacy’ as the worthy imperial successor to Rome and Britain.

TROY (*Parihaka*, 134)
‘To the victor the spoils,’ Erenora wrote, ‘is a story older than the fall of Troy.’

Again, an offhand comparison with Troy needs no gloss.

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD (*Parihaka*, 245–6)
Ihimaera’s narrator uses the ancient lighthouse at Alexandria to exemplify lighthouses as a symbol of and factor in Pākehā colonisation:

Among the drawings were those of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World. Can you name them? The Pyramid, the Sphinx, the Great Library at Alexandria, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, pae kare, I can’t remember the sixth one, but the seventh was my favourite: the Pharos [lighthouse] of Alexandria, built in 247 BC and 460 feet tall, according to my encyclopedia.³⁸

***The Thrill of Falling* (2012)**

DAEDALUS (‘Purity of Ice’; *Thrill*, 138–9)
‘Purity of Ice’ reworks *Moby Dick* into intertextual science-fiction. In a post-global-warming future, water hunters snare icebergs with helicopters; one such helicopter is called *Daedalus*. Making an inelegant landing, ‘*Daedalus* dropped like a stricken angel’ (139).

SIRENS (‘Purity of Ice’; *Thrill*, 162)
Within this realm lived the mighty kraken, the fabled giant squid, ready to pull the chopper down with its tentacles. Sirens sang men to their death.

LATIN (‘Orbis Terrarium’; *Thrill*, 181–205)
The title of this story makes a pun on the classical Latin phrase *orbis terrarum*, ‘the world’ (literally, ‘circle of lands’), misspelling the second word. A ‘terrarium’ is a habitat or enclosure for small land animals, especially reptiles; ‘Orbis Terrarium’ concerns the Galapagos tortoise. The ancient tortoise El Rey twice uses the titular phrase: ‘*We who live in Orbis Terrarium [...] the Inhabited World*’ (198); ‘*No inhabitant of Orbis Terrarium, no bird or animal or sea creature, would ever ask it*’ (200).

CLASSICAL EDUCATION (‘The Thrill of Falling’; *Thrill*, 250)
Ihimaera assimilates classical education into the realm of higher(-status) learning and upward social mobility:
‘Is there anything else we offer that you like the look of? Food technology maybe?’

‘Japanese and classical studies could be interesting,’ Mum answered. ‘He [the protagonist, Tupaea] might go to university after high school.’

Most importantly, Ihimaera avoids any criticism of classical subjects in New Zealand schools such as one might expect in a passage such as this. Contrast Patricia Grace’s ‘The Dream Sleepers’. In that story, primary-school pupils complain when their teacher insists that they copy down into their exercise books ‘all the things that have been handed down to us by the people of Ancient Greece’.³⁹ By contrast, Ihimaera suppresses the obvious disjunction between Japanese (modern, business-focused) and classical studies (ancient, resolutely non-vocational). An intelligent student destined for university might profitably study both.

OLYMPUS, CYCLOPS

(‘The Thrill of Falling’; *Thrill*, 292–3)

Then the [philosophy] lecturer said something interesting. ‘Of course, today, there are still many societies for whom the myths of Olympus or Valhalla, of gods, goddesses and one-eyed monsters, are still as real and as relevant as they were in ancient times.’

The lecture hall rippled with amusement. ‘What or how,’ the lecturer continued, would they feel if Cyclops, say, had survived the ages of man and lived in a cave on Mount Olympus [...] or even here, in New Zealand, near Invercargill! Our rational mind would refuse to admit that possibility, but what if?

As the laughter rose I thought to myself:

‘Mate, you don’t know the half of it. Maori still live with their own versions of Cyclops. Mine had his house in a cave at the back of Uawa where he slept in an ironwood cylinder and was kept warm by a royal loincloth of red feathers. Now he’s in a storage unit in Porirua.’

Polyphemus lives on an island – not Olympus – but that is not the point. The Cyclops exemplifies ancient myths at which rational moderns might laugh. As one of Ihimaera’s narrators puts it, ‘Our world was a continuum, in which all things possible and impossible could bind together’ (*Matriarch*², 222). Whether Greek, Viking, or Māori, it does not matter, for pre-rational or irrational fables can indeed come true in Ihimaera’s magical-realist cosmos. All told, then, ‘The Thrill of Falling’ presents a pointed, pertinent image situated, via Invercargill (like Denis Glover’s ‘Johnsonville or Geraldine’) in Porirua: the Cyclops, taken from a cave at the back of Uawa, now living alone in a storage unit, still wrapped in red feathers, still surprising ‘our rational mind’.

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² For classical reception in New Zealand literature, see A. Jackson, "Catullus in the Playground." In *Living Classics*, edited by S. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 82–96; S. Harrison, "Catullus in New Zealand: Baxter and Stead." In *Living Classics*, 295–323; G. Miles, J. Davidson and P. Millar, *The Snake-Haired Muse: James K. Baxter and Classical Myth* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2011). M. Kennedy's valuable recent book on literary tradition in Ihimaera's work devotes no space to classical material per se, mentioning Greek or Roman material only alongside other intertexts. See M. Kennedy, *Striding Both Worlds: Witi Ihimaera and New Zealand's Literary Traditions* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), 50, 58, 75; the index includes no classics-specific entries.

³ See *Classics and Colonialism*, edited by B. Goff (London: Duckworth, 2005).

⁴ H. R. Jauss, *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970); R. Hexter, "Literary History as a Provocation to Reception Studies." In *Classics and the Uses of Reception*, edited by C. Martindale and R. F. Thomas (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 23–31.

⁵ In "Greek Myth and Mythmaking in Witi Ihimaera's *The Matriarch* and *The Dream Swimmer*" (forthcoming), I argue that Ihimaera's *The Dream Swimmer* adapts Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. For reference on classical subjects, I recommend the *New Pauly Online*; the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); and the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)*, edited by H.C. Ackermann and J.-R. Gisler (Zurich: Artemis, 1981–1999). I treat A.W. Reed's *Treasury of Maori Folklore* (Wellington: Reed, 1963) as a standard reference for Māori oral literature and mythology. Reed drew much from *The Lore of the Whare-wananga*, translated by S. Percy Smith, 3 vols (New Plymouth: Polynesian Society, 1913–1915).

⁶ Kennedy, *Striding Both Worlds*.

⁷ J. Ellis, "'The Singing Word': Ihimaera interviewed by Juniper Ellis," *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 34, no. 1 (1999): 175, quoted by Kennedy, *Striding Both Worlds*, 58 n.190.

⁸ I ignore common words and phrases like 'animus', 'odyssey' (lower-case), 'cyclopean', 'modus operandi', 'in situ', and 'catharsis'; I omit names of constellations or vessels. Ihimaera generally prefers Latin transliteration to Greek, and I have found it convenient to suppress my own inclinations otherwise. I eschew comprehensive analysis of each and every passage, not least out of concern for my reader: one could write a book on this material, and I hope perhaps to do so in due course. Within an otherwise strict chronological order, I have grouped together multiple references in a single work (e.g., Orpheus in *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*); see also the index at the conclusion of this article.

⁹ U. Ojinmah, *Witi Ihimaera: a Changing Vision* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1993) outlines a teleological reading of Ihimaera's early and middle works.

¹⁰ On classics and the Indian Civil Service, see P. Vasunia, "Greek, Latin, and the Indian Civil Service." In *British Classics Outside England: the Academy and Beyond*, edited by J.P. Hallett and C. Stray (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 61–93. On history, historiography, and intertextuality, see also D. Dowling, "Historiography in some recent New Zealand fiction," *Australian and New Zealand Studies in Canada*, 2 (1989): 37–62 and J. Tompkins, "'It all depends on what story you hear': historiographic metafiction and Colin Johnson's *Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*," *Modern Fiction Studies*, 36, no. 4 (1990): 483–98.

¹¹ I refer to the 2009 revision of *The Matriarch* by the abbreviation *Matriarch*². I treat both texts together in narrative sequence, quoting from the revision only when that text differs significantly from the first edition. In the references, '=' indicates *verbatim* repetition; '≈' indicates repetition with variation.

¹² In Greek myth, the witch Circe is unrelated to the goddess Artemis.

¹³ Hawaiki is the traditional point of origin for the Pacific diaspora and terrestrial home of the ancestral gods brought by waka (ocean-going canoes) to Aotearoa New Zealand. See Reed, *Treasury of Maori Folklore*, 69–70.

¹⁴ This description of Hinenuitepō is drawn, near-verbatim, from the first version of *Tangi* (93). See also Reed, *Treasury of Maori Folklore*, 35–7.

¹⁵ A. W. Reed, *Reed Book of Māori Mythology*, revised by R. Calman (Auckland: Reed, 2004), 35.

¹⁶ In a note to the revised *Matriarch*, Ihimaera describes ‘the set-pieces involving the *Takitimu* canoe and the adze, Te Awhiorangi’ as ‘homages to Maori oral literature as well as to the inventory of the Anglo-Saxon literary tradition’. See W. Ihimaera, *The Matriarch*, revised edition (Auckland: Penguin, 2009), 496–7.

¹⁷ On the Uranus/Gaea ≈ Rangi/Papa parallel see *Hesiod: Theogony*, edited by M.L. West (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 212.

¹⁸ Anaximander (died c. 547 B.C.) of Miletus in Asia Minor wrote the first prose treatise on the nature of reality (*Peri Phuseōs* = *On Nature*) and made the first map of the known world. Empedocles (c. 492–432 B.C.) of Acragas in Sicily composed a philosophical poem *On Nature*. Empedocles asserts that two balanced, alternating forces, namely Love (*philotês*, ‘love, friendship, affection’) and Strife (*neikos*, ‘quarrel’), govern the cosmos.

¹⁹ Thus, for example, proceeds Orpheus’ Empedoclean cosmogony in Apollonius of Rhodes’ Hellenistic epic, the *Argonautica* (1.496–511).

²⁰ Reed, *Treasury of Maori Folklore*, 16.

²¹ See “Greek Myth and Mythmaking” (forthcoming) on this and related matters.

²² I thank the anonymous JNZS reviewer for this reference.

²³ P. Millar, “Witi Ihimaera.” In *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, edited by R. Robinson and N. Wattie (Melbourne and Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), 255–6.

²⁴ J. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

²⁵ Kennedy, *Striding Both Worlds*, 188–203.

²⁶ I treat *The Dream Swimmer* in detail in “Greek Myth and Mythmaking”.

²⁷ Agamemnon: ‘I will walk into my palace on the purple.’ Clytemnestra: ‘The sea remains: who could exhaust it? It produces much valuable and renewable red dye for us to colour clothes.’

²⁸ A.S. Murray, *Who’s Who in Mythology: A Classic Guide to the Ancient World*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Bracken, 1988), 190; cf. Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.555, 7.324, 12.846. The earliest known use of these names is a group of inscriptions naming ‘Teisiphone’, ‘Megaira’, and ‘Allek(t)o’ on fourth-century B.C. South Italian vases: see LIMC, s.v. ‘Erinys’.

²⁹ A. Goesch, “Diana of Ephesus (CT).” In *Brill’s New Pauly*, accessed 9 May 2013, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/brill-s-new-pauly/diana-of-ephesus-ct-e1308880>.

³⁰ I thank the author himself for patiently correcting me on this point.

³¹ In the note, Ihimaera describes ‘hipi’ as ‘a fusion of Egyptian and Greek myth, Kabuki theatre, and including personal homages to the Japanese writer Ryunosuke Akutagawa and filmmaker Akira Kurosawa’ (299).

³² Oedipus (singing): ‘What use do I have for eyes when there is nothing good left to see?’

³³ Theon is the last known member of the *Mouseion* (‘sanctuary of the Muses’) at Alexandria, an institute of advanced study with an associated library.

³⁴ Marama Sublimis would be the correct form.

³⁵ See Patricia Grace, *Ned and Katina* (Auckland: Penguin, 2009), 148–9 for a reference to the same ceremony.

³⁶ In a footnote (67 n.7), Ihimaera’s narrator cites Christopher Woodward, *In Ruins: A Journey Through History, Art, and Literature* (London: Knopf Doubleday, 2002).

³⁷ T.B. Macauley, reviewing the 1840 English translation of Leopold Ranke, *The Ecclesiastical and Political History of the Popes of Rome, during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, reprinted in *Critical and Historical Essays*, vol. 2 (1843). I thank the anonymous JNZS reviewer for this reference.

³⁸ The seven wonders of the ancient world are typically held to be the Great Pyramid of Giza, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, the

Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, and the Lighthouse at Alexandria. See also Ihimaera's note to chapter twenty-four, 315–16.

³⁹ P. Grace, *The Dream Sleepers and Other Stories* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980), 8.