

# FIG Leaves

Volume 10 Issue 7

July 2001

## July Meeting

### WHY CHRISTMAS SHOULD NOT BE A FEDERAL HOLIDAY

At this meeting we will hear from a man who had the courage to take a public position which he knew would be unwelcome for most of the community. Richard Ganulin will explain why he sued the federal government to stop it from continuing to declare Christmas a national holiday. He will also tell us how he felt about the disapproval he received from some quarters in the community.

After a District Court ruled against his suit, he prepared a 47-page brief that set out the legal, historical, and constitutional arguments for regarding Christmas as a Christian holiday, a holiday that implicitly excludes non-Christians. In the brief he stated: "Christmas Day is the quintessential Christian celebration by name, origin, sectarian dictate, and modern practice." Unfortunately, both the Circuit Court and the Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal.

Mr. Ganulin has felt the negative side of Christmas in part because he is Jewish. He is employed as an attorney for the city of

## August Meeting

**Date:** Monday, August 13 at 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Vernon Manor Inn

**Topic:** What's Happening in Humanism

**Abstract:** Molleen Matsumura will report on exciting developments in humanist organizations around the country, including the just-completed annual conference of the Secular Students Alliance. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers.

**Bio:** Molleen Matsumura has been a church-state activist for over fifteen years. She worked for seven years as Network Project Director for the National Center for Science Education, the only national organization that specializes in defending the teaching of evolution in public schools. She is completing her third term on the National Advisory Council of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. As a member of AU's San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, she was a plaintiff in a lawsuit to end city ownership of a monumental cross. She was founding president of Secular Humanists of the East Bay, and is a frequent contributor to freethought publications and conferences. She recently joined the advisory board of the California 3Rs Project, and is Vice-President of the Internet Infidels, an online community of nonbelievers.

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## Events

### July Meeting

Tuesday, July 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Vernon Manor Inn

### August Meeting

Monday, August 13, 7:00 p.m.  
Vernon Manor Inn

### August Potluck/Pool Party

Saturday, August 25, at 1:00

## Loyal FIG Members:

The FIG Board is piecing together some long range goals and putting committees in place to attain them. Unfortunately we are human and we are weak. Please help us if you can. If anyone would like to lead an effort to realize any of these ideas or participate in some way, please contact Bob Riehemann at 859.491.7219.

1. Develop a FIG Logo for merchandise such as T-shirts or bumper stickers.
2. Sponsor a support group for those who have left religion. (Edwin Kagin is interested in this.)
3. Sponsor Darwin Day activities (12 February) in conjunction with other groups.
4. Reach out to other groups. (Tim Kelly is interested in this.)
5. Design and install a new "Wall of

- Separation." (Bob Riehemann has the old wall.)
6. Protest the National Day of Prayer.
7. Increase membership. (Joe Levee is interested in this.)
8. Organize a debate between a religionist and a nationally known atheist.
9. Start a FIG group at NKU.
10. Revive the Free Thought campout at John Bryan State park. (Bob Riehemann is gathering information.)

Congratulations are due to Tim Kelly who has arranged for Media Bridge to have the Humanist Perspective aired on channel 8 at 10 AM on Mondays and channel 24 at 4 PM on Fridays. The show is created in Buffalo by CSH member Joe Beck.

If you are interested in helping Tim, contact Bob Riehemann at 859.491.7219. If you watch, please send a review to FIG Leaves.

## Death-Penalty Dissenters

He (Justice Harry Blackmun) said that he and a majority of his colleagues on the court had struggled unsuccessfully for more than 20 years to bring an acceptable level of fairness to the system of capital punishment. But despite all good-faith efforts, he said, "I feel morally and intellectually obligated simply to concede that the death penalty experiment has failed."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/09/opinion/09HERB.html?ex=995701232&ei=1&en=8>

It is in the nature of theological cultures that they will not leave God alone, and spend much of their time splitting divine hairs. All monotheist religions confront a dilemma when it comes to imagining God. On the one hand, He is intimately involved in the lives of believers; to relate to Him, they must therefore imagine Him in terms intelligible to humans. Yet on the other hand, God has to be sublime, transcendent, unimaginably different from us.

The mother of all theological controversies in this field was the question of how God speaks. We know that he talks. In the passage on the Sabbath-breakers, for example, He tells us the very words He addressed to them (Q7:166). More generally the whole Koran from beginning to end is God's word, and hence His speech. How then did he speak it? Are we to think of God as equipped with speech-organs in some way analogous to our own? Or does he speak in a different way, simply bringing sound into existence, as it were in mid-air?

Michael Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (pp. 108-109)

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I was almost persuaded to be a Christian. I thought I never again could be thoughtless and worldly. But I soon forgot my morning prayer or else it was irksome to me. One by one my old habits returned and I cared less for religion than ever.

-- **Emily Dickinson**, at age 15, shortly after a Christian revival in her home town of Amherst, Massachusetts, in a letter to her friend Abiah Root, quoted from Gary Sloan, "Emily Dickinson: Pagan Sphinx," *Positive Atheism* (June, 2001)

FIG Leaves Volume 10, Issue 7, July 2001 - Editors welcome thoughtful articles, letters, reviews, reports, anecdotes, and cartoons. Submit in electronic format via Internet to [figeditors@fuse.net](mailto:figeditors@fuse.net) or on disk or typewritten via mail to Editor, FIG Leaves, P.O. Box 8128, Cincinnati OH 45208. Contributions received before the first Tuesday of the month will be considered for publication that month. All material printed in FIG Leaves may be reproduced in similar publications of non-profit groups which grant FIG Leaves reciprocal reprinting rights as long as proper credit is clearly attributed to FIG Leaves and the author. Opinions expressed in FIG Leaves are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect opinions of the editor or the Free Inquiry Group, Inc., its board, or officers. © 2000 The Free Inquiry Group, Inc. FIG Board of Directors: President Bob Riehemann, Vice President Edwin Kagin, Secretary Philip Ferguson, Treasurer Joe Levee, Members: Nurit Bowman, Michele Grinoch, Helen Kagin, Tim Kelly, Inez Klein, Gary Weiss, and FIG Leaves Editor: Martha Ferguson.



## *Rationally Speaking*

A monthly e-column by  
**Massimo Pigliucci**  
Department of Botany,  
University of Tennessee

**N. 12, July 2001: "The Wedge: what happens when science is taken over by ideology?"**

**This column can be posted for free on any appropriate web site. If you are interested in receiving the html code, please send an email ([pigliucci@utk.edu](mailto:pigliucci@utk.edu)).**

By all accounts Phillip Johnson, a law professor at the University of California at Berkeley, is a congenial fellow with whom I'd like to have a beer one of these days. At the same time, he is keen to implement one of the most potentially destructive assaults on science ever consciously planned by a human being. He calls it the "Wedge" strategy, the idea being that there is a natural crack in the edifice of science and that evolution-deniers and other anti-intellectuals only need to widen the initial interstice to eventually bring down the whole evil tree of knowledge.

Johnson published a short version of the wedge idea in his book with the unintentionally ironic title *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*, and has followed up with another book called *The Wedge of Truth*. He publishes a weekly update on the Web site of the so-called Center for the Renewal of Science & Culture (CRSC), a mostly conservative Christian think tank consisting of a number of major creationists and intelligent design "theorists."

The "crack" that Johnson thinks is going to be so fatal to science is the very well-known fact that science is based on some (reasonable) philosophical assumptions (such as the existence of a physical reality independent of the observer), and it is therefore not an entirely self-consistent enterprise. I will return to this point in another column because it is too important to treat it in a few words here. What I'd like to discuss instead is what the Wedge strategy is and what would happen if it succeeded. For the first task, I will rely on Johnson's own words and on a document published by the CRSC. Lacking a crystal ball but firmly believing that we do learn from history, I will attempt the second feat by briefly discussing what happened in another occasion in which ideology overcame good science in the recent past.

The Wedge strategy document starts out with predictable rhetoric to the effect that belief in a personal God has been the bedrock of Western civilization, implying that if people should abandon such belief the

end of the world would surely follow shortly thereafter. By the same token, of course, slavery was the economic cornerstone of the economy in the southern United States during the first century of its history, but - amazingly - that economy has survived and prospered even without slavery.

The core of the Wedge consists of a detailed program, spanning 20 years, during which efforts will be made to bring about three phases labeled "Scientific research, writing and publication," "Publicity and opinion making," and "Cultural confrontation and renewal." The first phase is apparently already almost over. It took only a few years, no peer-reviewed publication, and a handful of books for intelligent design supporters to claim to have established the truth of their point of view and demolished hundreds of years of painstaking scientific research conducted by tens of thousands of scientists in laboratories world-wide. Kudos to the hyper-efficient fellows of the CRSC. We are now in the midst of the second phase, which interestingly includes such serious attempts at educating the public as engaging talk-show hosts and lobbying dimwit politicians on the evils of materialistic science. Hardly something one would expect from a serious intellectual think tank, but these are strange times indeed. Most interestingly, the third phase of the Wedge is entitled "cultural confrontation," something that immediately conjures up images of religious wars, and for a good reason: the underlying idea is essentially to turn the United States from a democratic republic into a theocracy dominated by conservative Christian groupthink.

Suppose Johnson and co. - God forbid - will succeed. What will likely happen? Let us turn to a fairly recent example of ideology passed for science, how it came about, and what consequences it brought. In 1940 the leading Russian biologist Nikolai Vavilov was arrested and sent to a concentration camp at Saratov. The reason was that he was denounced by a rising star of the Soviet establishment, Trofim Denisovich Lysenko, an agronomist who had come to believe half-baked ideas about the inheritance of acquired characteristics that had been rejected by mainstream science a century earlier.

Lysenko's wacky ideas fit perfectly well with Stalin's ideology: if the twisted version of dialectical materialism officially endorsed by the Soviet Union was true, then plants and animals (and by extension people) had to be infinitely pliable by changes in their environment and Mendelian genetics and Darwinian evolution must be simply the result of sick capitalist propaganda. Accordingly, Lysenko and his cronies took over Russian genetics and agriculture, exiling or putting to death the best scientists of that country and causing an economic catastrophe that probably didn't help the USSR withstand Western-imposed pressure during the arms race.

Lysenko retained control of Soviet biology well into the

*(Continued on page 4)*

# World Wide Web

## The virginity hoax

And finally -- whoops! -- when pledgers break their pledges they have a tendency to have unsafe sex. Researchers suggest that since the pledgers promised not to have sex, when they finally do, they haven't done much planning and are unlikely to use contraception. (Another favorite footnote here: "That pledgers who have sex are likely to be contraceptively unprepared is to be expected, for it is hard to imagine how one could both pledge to be a virgin until marriage and carry a condom while unmarried.")

[http://www.salon.com/mwt/feature/2001/01/08/virginity\\_pledge/index.html](http://www.salon.com/mwt/feature/2001/01/08/virginity_pledge/index.html)

Kansas Science Education Standard

<http://welcome.to/KansasScienceStandards>

## Thomas Book Author Says He Lied in His Attacks on Anita Hill

Describing an article he wrote for *The American Spectator*, a conservative magazine, in 1992, which became the basis for his book on Ms. Hill, he said he did everything he could to "ruin Hill's credibility," using "virtually every derogatory and often contradictory

allegation I had collected on Hill into the vituperative mix."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/27/politics/27THOM.html?ex=994823570&ei=1&en=>

A day before the Senate completed action on a comprehensive education bill that it had debated for six weeks, Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA) introduced a two-sentence amendment drafted by evolution opponents. The amendment, presented in the form of a Senate resolution, defines "good science education" and encourages teaching the "controversy" surrounding biological evolution. Amidst a flurry of other amendments, the Senate voted 91-8 in favor of the provision on its way to passing the entire bill by the same margin. Earlier, a group of conservative representatives had stripped a science testing provision out of the House counterpart bill in part because of concerns that the tests would include evolution-related questions. Differences between the two bills will be worked out in a House-Senate conference likely to take place in early July.

[http://www.agiweb.org/gap/legis107/evolution\\_update0601.html](http://www.agiweb.org/gap/legis107/evolution_update0601.html)

*(Continued from page 3)*

1960s, essentially holding the progress of Russian science in that area to pre-WWII levels. Of course, the rest of the world progressed while in Russia countless lives were ruined, economic opportunities were lost, and huge setbacks in science education afflicted a country in which ideology reigned supreme over reality.

This, I submit, is what would happen in the United States if Johnson and his buddies succeed in implementing the Wedge strategy. It will not be the end of the world, and not even the end of science. There will be a brain drain of scientists and educators (and probably artists) toward more fertile intellectual grounds in other countries, and the good ol' US of A will be left behind and will eventually have to struggle to catch up over a period of decades (unpleasant as it may be, reality does have a way of reminding people of the practical limits of their fantasies). Meanwhile, we will experience the same kind of waste of human potential and economic resources that cursed the USSR under Stalin and Lysenko.

It is somewhat amusing to ponder the symmetry between the two cases: communist and atheist ideology for Lysenko, religious and conservative for Johnson. The real danger does not seem to be either religion or atheism, but blind commitment to an a priori view of the world that ignores how things really are. In fact, if I believed in conspiracy theories, I would be tempted to suggest that the

Wedge strategy is a communist plot to have the West experience the same kind of tragedy that the East went through and level the playing field. But I am too busy attempting to insure the failure of Johnson's dangerous campaign to idly speculate on whose orders he may be following. For all I know he could be a lonely evil genius acting directly on the Devil's orders.

## Further reading:

*Lysenko and the Tragedy of Soviet Science*, by Valery N. Soyfer, Leo Gruliov, Rebecca Gruliov (Translator), Valerii Soifer

*Rise and Fall of T. D. Lysenko*, by Zhores A. Medvedev

## Web links:

Phil Johnson's *weekly* update of his Wedge project (<http://www.arn.org/johnson/wedge.htm>)

The Talk.Origins web, a sane response to creationists' insanity (<http://www.talkorigins.org/>)

Darwin Day International, to help educating the public about science and evolution (<http://darwin.ws/day/>)

**Next Month: "Frankenfoods vs. the neo-Luddites"**

**by Massimo Pigliucci, 2001**

# FIG Leaflets

Christ has Risen (Easter Sunday 1821. Pushkin was rebelling against long and tedious Holy Week religious services)

Rebecca mine, the Christ has risen!  
Today I'll follow laws divine,  
Bequeathed to us by the God made human  
Who perished for the world wide;  
I kiss you thrice, my angel mine.  
But on the morrow, once you're kissed,  
I won't be shy and I'll enlist  
In Moses' faith, that's yours, dear Jew--  
And, furthermore, I'll hand to you  
That thing that warrants best a telling  
Of who's a Christian or a Jew.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, *Epigrams & Satirical Verse*, ed. and trans. Cynthia Whittaker (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1984) Pushkin (1799-1837) was a romantic poet of the same generation as Keats and Shelley.

## An Important Social Commodity

The Knesset (parliament) is investigating the sex trade in Israel, where about 2,000 foreign prostitutes work. "Prostitution is an important social commodity and anyone who says differently is a hypocrite," argued advocate Yaacov Shklar, who specializes in defending pimps and sex workers, in testimony before the investigating committee. Moreover, he added, pimps should have the right to sell women they employ because of the high costs associated with smuggling them into the country. "There is no difference between trading ball players, computer programmers, or medical doctors, and selling women for purposes of prostitution," he claimed. (*The Observer*, UK)

Are you a believer?

"Don't misunderstand," Cray said. "*Moi non plus*. I'm a skeptic, not a believer. All the same, we must behave as if we believe. I know if I were a believer, I would give time and money to what I believed in religion, politics. So I do it anyway, with or without believing. Give, money, anyhow. I've read a certain amount of theology and political theory, I've decided on a rather arbitrary set of convictions, then I stick to them. Not based on faith, on decision which is not so subject to temperament, and not as shaky as faith. Would you characterize your own faith as unshakable?"

Diane Johnson, *Le Mariage* p. 95

As a child I was very afraid of the dark. I was also prone to terrible nightmares about fire and snakes and rabid foxes and nuclear holocaust. My parents tried to convince me that these things were not immediate threats, but their reassurances did not ease my fears. It wasn't until I was in high school that I finally quit having dreams that woke me out of a sound sleep shaking with fright. High school was also the time that I struggled with my religious upbringing and decided that I could not believe in the Southern Baptist God. Coincidence? I don't think so.

My parents meant well telling me that our house would not burn down, there were no snakes in the house, the fox rabies scare was over, and the bomb was not going to drop tonight. But they also told me that God was going to protect me because he loved me. This was the same God who drowned all of mankind except Noah and his family. This was the God who destroyed Job's life to win a bet. This was the God who created Satan and then created Hell for the eternal damnation of all who chose Satan's path over his own. This God was supposed to reassure me?

I think that the very existence of God is a frightening concept. Here is a being who knows all, sees all, but never makes his presence felt in any verifiable way. He is constantly watching you, but you can never see him. You can talk to him, ask him for things, but chances are he will not answer your prayer in any way that you can anticipate. In fact the answers to your prayers will amazingly resemble totally random outcomes.

I may have been a child, but I noticed that some particularly ungodly people seemed to have wonderful lives. And I noticed that many seemingly devout people had more troubles than they surely deserved. So where was the fairness in all of this. How could I depend upon this God to protect me when he didn't really have the same sense of fair play that I had been taught. The promise of heaven where all good people will be rewarded and all the murky truths of life will be made apparent just did not appeal to me. I wanted life in this world to make sense and it did not within the context of Christianity.

I cannot say that humanism offers answers to all of life's questions. But it certainly makes a lot more sense to me than any other alternative. I believe in the life that I see and hear and touch. My children have nightmares, but seem to be having a lot less trouble with them than I did. I explain the brain's need to dream and our ability to control those dreams when they are too frightening. There is not a mixed message about the parts of life that we can see and control and the part that we cannot. My children recognize the randomness of life, but do not see it as the whim of a benevolent/malevolent spirit. They have a confidence in their environment that I envy. I hope that they manage to carry it into adulthood.

Martha Ferguson

Thank you for the quotes, Wolf.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## ***Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire***

by Chalmers Johnson  
(New York: Henry Holt & Co. 2000)

Blowback in this context really means retaliation, the reaction a bully will get when the worm turns and finds a chance to pay back in kind. It is term long used in the intelligence community to indicate unforeseen revenge from the mistreated and manipulated. Johnson's opening lines explain what he is concerned about: (p. ix)

Instead of demobilizing after the Cold War, the United States imprudently committed itself to maintaining a global empire. This book is an account of the resentments our policies have built up and of the kinds of economic and political retribution that, particularly in Asia, may be their harvest in the twenty-first century.

We maintain a kind of informal empire by projection of power into every corner of the globe. We have some 800 thousand military troops in 61 major bases stationed in 19 countries around the world. Our government seems determined to keep our ballistic missiles active and to build a missile defense system, even after the rest of the world has disarmed. President Bush seems prepared to break treaties to do so. Military "accidents," soldiers' crimes, and terrorist attacks on American installations and embassies help to build resentment to our presence. In Latin America we fight an active shooting war against peasant farmers as part of the struggle against a domestic drug problem. The extreme violence applied in Colombia we could not use at home.

American capital and markets are used to force economic integration on our terms regardless of costs to the well-being of others. Our informal empire includes control of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who are used to dictate to weaker countries how to organize their economies.

The United States is the only country which has flatly refused to consider reducing carbondioxide emissions, or to take any other action to counteract global warming. In a recent decision at the United Nations we refused to acknowledge an obligation to act against the world wide AIDS/HIV epidemic. We were alone in abstaining from a resolution which recognized that access to medication is a

fundamental element of the right to health.

Chalmers describes as an American empire, what we are pleased to call the "free world." He explicitly compares our satellites, Western Germany, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and others, with the east European satellites of the former Soviet Union. We are the only empire left, and we are earning the resentment of the rest of the world.

Just as the Soviet Union in the past, the United States has been willing to sacrifice certain economic advantages to tie the satellites to its interests. Particularly, we have become the market of first choice and last resort for the exports of our client nations in eastern Asia. Johnson considers that in the process we have destroyed many important and major domestic industries, such as iron, electronics, and automobile assembly. At the same time we have used our economic power, global financial markets, and control of UN institutions to prevent their economies from serving their own domestic ends.

American economic doctrine, so Johnson holds, is as much ideology and religion as Marxism was in the Soviet empire.

Americans tend to think (or pretend) that their economics is a branch of science, not a fighting doctrine to defend and advance their interests against those of others. They may consider most economists to be untrustworthy witch doctors, but they regard the tenets of a laissez-fairs economy with its cutthroat competition, casino stock market, massive inequalities of wealth, and a minor, regulatory role for government -- as self-evident truths.

This book ought to be very controversial. In my mind it raises comparisons with the hegemony of nineteenth century Britain, which ended in the challenge of the First World War. But there is a lot of truth to the idea that we are building a mass of hatred, which may eventually result in the world uniting against our domination. Then the Third World War.

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New York's Catholics are outraged at an advert showing a churchgoer holding an onion dip as he waits for his communion wafer.

The advert in the New York Press shows a priest giving holy communion to a row of worshippers.

One of them is holding a bowl of Lipton's dip to accompany his wafer. The manufacturers have apologized and plan to cancel the campaign.

[http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm\\_328655.html](http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_328655.html)

# BOOK REVIEWS

## ***Beyond the Edge of the Sea: Sailing with Jason and the Argonauts, Ulysses, the Vikings, and Other Explorers of the Ancient World***

by Mauricio Obregon  
(New York: Random House, Inc. 2001)

The author of this book has been a professor of history at various universities, an ambassador of his home country of Colombia, an aviator of considerable accomplishment, and a sailor who retraced the steps of Columbus with Samuel Eliot Morison. He has written a number of books and a TV series on exploration. In this, his last work, he pursues several major journeys of classical antiquity and history. Several of these journeys may be legendary or even mythical.

He contrasts the sailors of the Mediterranean with the sea-peoples of the Pacific. "The prudent Greeks usually sailed along coasts or towards the visible peaks of high islands, preferably in the daytime and in summer. At night they pulled their ships up on the beach, ..." (p. 4) But then the ancients lived on an inland sea surrounded by the green earth, and the infinite ocean was far way beyond the Pillars of Hercules (Strait of Gibraltar) and past the Bosphorus and Hellespont. In contrast, the Polynesians were blue water sailors. Their world was the open ocean, which they encompassed in exploration and settlement.

Obregon further contrasts the gods of the Greeks with the Christianity of the age of exploration. The Greek gods were frankly human, they formed a clear hierarchy, they squabbled and fought with each other. They made love, and were jealous. When Hera, the chief goddess and wife of Zeus caught the nymph Calisto making love to her man, she condemned her to never again bathe in the ocean. She was flung into the heavens, and thus we have the constellation of the

Great Bear. The gods spoke in omens and signs to deceive us mortals; only experts and priests could interpret the divine mumblings. Yet, when the gods wished to be understood they could disguise themselves as man or woman and speak clearly. "One might say that whereas we have to make do with an imperfect faith in a perfect God, the Greeks were more comfortable with perfect faith in imperfect gods" (p. 7). Clearly, the author believes in the ancient gods in some way and regrets their passing. He comments that "we, ... always seem ready to

unload our problems on the state and to throw morals out the window, the young bent on replacing manners with fashion; the old, morals with money (p. 7).

An understanding of Greek culture aids the author to interpret the legendary voyages. He introduces us to the wind and stars by which the sailors navigated, and to the ships which they rowed more than sailed. He draws his ship lore from archaeology and inscriptions, but even more from the narrative of Homer and the Argonauts themselves. The height of a ship's stern, for instance, is clear, "since Achilles rested his hand on it while standing on the beach" (p. 31). And using this, and given its length by Homer, we can calculate the ship's draft as it was fully loaded or when empty.

Here is an example of the author's reasoning, a description of the Argonauts entering the Aegean Sea (p.45, 48)

Apollonius tells us that Notus, the south wind, made up at last, and the tired Argonauts stepped the mast and hoisted the sail. So we know that they rounded dark Cape Sepias to the east and, leaving the island of Skiathos to starboard, ran north with wind and current up the magnificent coast of Magnesia. The "tone" of the stays took over Orpheus' song, and fish played in the roiling wake as the Argonauts passed under Mount Pelion, whose seaward slopes dress for summer with herbs, flowers, fruit, walnuts, pines, and olives. Cheiron the centaur saw them come and galloped down to the beach. His wife, Chariclo, followed, carrying the infant Achilles so that he might watch his father, Peleus, sail by, and begin to dream of Troy. All this surely happened at beautiful Milopotamos under high Tsangarada.

It may not be a very precise bit of historical narrative, but the book is fun and romantic, and we

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"Is it possible that an infinite God created this world simply to be the dwelling-place of slaves and serfs? Simply for the purpose of raising orthodox Christians? That he did a few miracles to astonish them? That all the evils of lie are simply his punishments, and that he is finally going to turn heaven into a kind of religious museum filled with Baptist barnacles, petrified Presbyterians and Methodist mummies?"

Robert Green Ingersoll, *The Great Quotations*, George