Zoia Barzakh, "Entry on: Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus. Book 2: Someone Else Will Return [Диомед, сын Тидея. Книга II: Вернусь не я (Diomed, syn Tideia. Kniga II: Vernus’ ne ia)] by Andrei Valentinovich Shmal'ko [Andrei Valentinov] ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/465. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Andrei Valentinovich Shmal'ko [Andrei Valentinov]

Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus. Book 2: Someone Else Will Return [Диомед, сын Тидея. Книга II: Вернусь не я (Diomed, syn Tideia. Kniga II: Vernus’ ne ia)]

Russia (2001)

TAGS: Achilles Aegiale Aeneas Agamemnon Amphilochus Amphitryon Athena Chronos Diomedes (Son of Tydeus) Fate Hades Helen Helenus Hera Heracles Hercules Menelaus Odysseus / Ulysses Palamedes Paris (Trojan Prince) Patroclus Priam Protesilaus Thersander Trojan War Tydeus



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.



General information	
Title of the work	Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus. Book 2: Someone Else Will Return [Диомед, сын Тидея. Книга II: Вернусь не я (Diomed, syn Tideia. Kniga II: Vernus’ ne ia)]
Country of the First Edition	Russia
Country/countries of popularity	Russia; Ukraine; Belarus; Moldova
Original Language	Russian
First Edition Date	2001
First Edition Details	Andrei Valentinov, *Диомед, сын Тидея. Книга вторая: Вернусь не я* [*Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus. Book 2: Someone Else Will Return*]. Moscow: Eksmo-Press, 2001, 378 pp.
ISBN	5040065078
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Fiction, Mythological fiction, Myths, Novels
Target Audience	Young adults (15–25)
Author of the Entry	Zoia Barzakh, Bar-Ilan University, zoia_barzakh@mail.ru

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

Zoia Barzakh, "Entry on: Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus. Book 2: Someone Else Will Return [Диомед, сын Тидея. Книга II: Вернусь не я (Diomed, syn Tideia. Kniga II: Vernus' ne ia)] by Andrei Valentinovich Shmal'ko [Andrei Valentinov] ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/465. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Andrei Valentinovich Shmal'ko [Andrei Valentinov] , b. 1958 (Author)

Andrei Valentinov is a penname of Andrei Valentinovich Shmal'ko, a Ukrainian Russian-speaking writer for young adults, historian (Ancient Greece and Rome) and archeologist, PhD (History; thesis title *Roman Policy in the Southern Black Sea Region in the 1st Century BC*), Senior Lecturer of Kharkiv State University. For many years Valentinov participated in excavations of Chersonesus, an ancient Greek colony founded in the 7th century B.C. in the south-western part of the Crimean Peninsula. (This experience is reflected in his autobiographical novel *Canis Major* [*Созвездье пса*, 2002]).

Valentinov wrote several novels in co-authorship with Henry Lion Oldie (Oleg Gromov and Dmitry Ladyzhensky, for biographies see the entry *A Hero Must Be Alone*).

The main genre of Valentinov's novels is alternative history, specifically, fictional (alternative) versions of historical events with strong element of fantastic and supernatural. Examples are *The Eye of Power* ([*Око силы*, 1996–2011], fictional history of 20th century Russia), *The Angel of Spartacus* ([*Ангел Спартака*, 2006], fictional history of late Republican and early Imperial Rome), *A Cleric of Auvergne* ([*Овернский клирик*, 1997], France, the 12th century) and *Triumphant Heavens* ([*Небеса ликуют*, 2000], Italy and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the 17th century).

All his novels are characterized by elaborate presentation of relevant historical background, including culture-specific elements of day-to-day reality. The idea of cultural relativity lies in the very structure of Valentinov's world. According to Valentinov's fantastic cosmology, adopted also by H. L. Oldie and fully explained in their coauthored novel *We Have No Other Place to Live* [*Нам здесь жить*, 1999], the Universe is discrete – it consists of mutually isolated *nomoi*, the inhabitants of each of which see the world in their own way. For example, for ancient Greeks centaurs were real, but we would see the same creatures as men riding their horses.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

The reading of Valentinov's novels can be considered both as entertainment and as educational activity for young adults. It is telling that in his fan-club in the Internet one can find discussions on serious historical problems, betraying rather broad and profound erudition of participants.

Sources:

Profile at the fantlab.ru (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Profile at the odrozd.narod.ru (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Profile at the Wikipedia website (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Valentinov-uk.livejournal.com (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Rusfforum.org (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Profile at the Vk.com (accessed: February 16, 2018).

Bio prepared by Zoia Barzakh, Bar-Ilan University, zoia_barzakh@mail.ru

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Summary

This is a heroic fantasy fiction based on the myth of Diomedes, aimed at young adults, in novel format. The plot of the novel is reframing and reinterpretation of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The second part of Valentinov's novel on Diomedes is dedicated to the exploits of the hero during the Trojan War and subsequent events.

Diomedes has enough knowledge and experience to understand that the beginning of war between the West and the East on Troad plain would be suicidal: if Trojans call for help from Hittites, the Greek army would have no chance. Therefore, the good point to start is Pergamon, where Tydeus reckon upon the support of Telephus, his ally. He manages to persuade Agamemnon, but Telephus betrays the Greeks for the sake of Hittites. At the battle over Pergamon Thersander, who, like Diomedes, was one of the Epigones, was killed.

After the capture of Pergamon, Diomedes, following the plan he agreed upon with Agamemnon, secretly leaves the military camp of combined Greek forces, taking with him only his most trusted friends and well-tried troops – Argives and Caledonians. From here starts the story of Diomedes' military campaign at the East – the invention of Valentinov which has no base in any ancient narrative.

Diomedes destroys the city of Hattusa, the Hittite imperial city, which was indeed destroyed, together with the Hittite state itself, around 1200 BC, as part of the Bronze Age collapse. His victory brings him not only fame: people of the East start to call him a god. Worst of all, Uastis, the Lybian princess, who fell in love with Diomedes and saved him from her treacherous father, sacrifices herself to "Damada the god".

Eventually Diomedes returns to the Greeks at Aulis. When he gets there, he understands that, while three years passed for him, only several days passed for them. That is what "The Caldron of Cronus", a trap gods prepared for their human children and grandchildren, means. Diomedes understands that, even if heroes of Troy will win and survive, they will not be able to return: what will be only several months for them, will be long years for all others, and the heroes will not have homes to return to and will be forced to leave Greek *nomos* forever. But then Athena, his mother, explains to her son what could otherwise be felt as unnecessary cruelty of gods towards their

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

children: heroes are dangerous since they can become gods. She confesses to Diomedes that she killed his mortal father upon his attempt to become a god, which would mean, apart from a divine power, loss of everything that was human in him.

Diomedes himself feels that there is such danger for him also: he has already been "Damada the god" at the East. Nevertheless, at the moment of Theomachy, though he knows the way to become equal to his divine enemies – it would be enough to slaughter a Trojan captive with the words "I perform sacrifice to the god Diomedes" – the hero makes his final decision: "I am a human being! I will never be like YOU!" (i. e. like gods).

Nevertheless, at the end Diomedes in a sense becomes a god – but he is not a god demanding human sacrifices, but a god of new Golden Age of a new *nomos*, which is to become modern Europe. Valentinov accepts the well-established tradition, according to which Diomedes upon his return from the Trojan war was expelled from Argos by Aegiale and her lover Cometes and then came to Italy, where he founded several cities. Developing this tradition, Valentinov goes so far as to ascribe to Diomedes the foundation of all Greek colonies in Italy and even of Rome itself. Almost all Trojan war survivors – Odysseus, Sthenelus, Amphilochus, Aeneas, Helenus, both Greeks and Trojans – gathered in Italy under the reign of Diomedes, forgetting their former enmity. The novel ends with almost idyllic picture of the dawn of new civilization in Italian costs.

Analysis

This is, much more than the first book, the book of the ancient world historian, aware of the global processes of the late Bronze Age collapse period and sharing this awareness with his young readers in novel format.

One of the main sources of Valentinov for the events near and around Troy is *Chronicle of the Trojan War* by Dictys of Crete. The book, published (and probably written) by a certain Q. Septimius in the 4th century AD, is probably the first known example of "secret history", Valentinov's favourite genre. Thersander's death, for example, together with the fact that Thersander was buried by Diomedes, is taken by Valentinov from Dictys' narrative (II, 2).

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

As we remember from *A Hero Must Be Alone*, the first novel of Oldie-Valentinov's *Achaean Cycle*, human sacrifices are what can transform demi-god into the god or at least divine creature, which has nothing human about it. That was what Diomedes felt upon self-sacrifice of Uastis, in a state which was appreciated by those around him as a mortal illness: in his dream he was "Damada the god" of Eastern *nomos*, who sees from far above the catastrophe of the Western world, his native *nomos*, and feels his enormous power over human creatures of the Eastern one. Nevertheless, having come to his senses, he rejects this temptation indignantly: he doesn't want to become a creature living on human sacrifices.

He chooses not only to stay human, but also to stay Greek, not barbarian. When in his victorious expedition against the greatest power of the East – Kemi, the Egypt – political reasons dictate him the necessity to destroy the city of Ashqelon for the sake of intimidation, though its citizens pleaded for peace, his Greek comrades refused to take part in it:

"– If you destroy Ashqelon, we will not serve you any more, Tydides! We do not want to serve DAMED… We are people, not beasts. We are Achaeans. We are Hellenes. – Hellas herself spoke with me. – We will not raise your sword, Tydides. We will leave. You can recruit a new army, make new friends, if you still need friends… – Hellas did not want such a prey. Hellas did not want such glory. Hellas did not want such power."

Diomedes lets his friend persuade him, and, what is more, ends his Eastern expedition and goes to Troy to join other Achaeans.

Therefore, the second book of the novel shows the way out from the circle of violence vividly depicted at the first book. This way out consists in valorization of civilized society values, such as value of human life, peace and humane attitude towards the enemy. These values are depicted as laying in the base of modern Western civilization, borne from the bitter experience of ancient wars and mass slaughters. Diomedes, the cursed exile, the son of Tydeus the Unforgiven, eventually finds his true home on the shores of Tiber by virtue of conscious acceptance of these values. "You can become accustomed to the peace as well as to the war," – he says in his last encounter with Protesilaus, who, being, according to Oldie's version of the myth, the last incarnation of Amphitryon, is the only hero who

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

	appears in all parts of Oldie-Valentinov's *Achaean Cycle* and the most incarnation of the heroic age. The themes of trauma, sex and love, taken from the first book, are developed along the same path. The teenager girl, who was raped by the hero in the first book, reappears as a majestic and haughty Eastern princess, "resembling golden idol rather than mortal women", the mistress of Sthenelus, Diomedes' best friend. Unrecognized by Diomedes, she attempts to kill him in revenge, but eventually kills his friend Euryalus, whom she has mistaken for Diomedes, and was killed herself. Sthenelus, revenging his beloved one, captured Argos and killed his wife Aegiale, thus depriving him from any hope of return. Nevertheless, this circle of violence is balanced by the final reconciliation: Diomedes makes peace with Aphrodite by means of love to Tzulijas, the daughter of the Hittite king and his former enemy.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Achilles Aegiale Aeneas Agamemnon Amphilochus Amphitryon Athena Chronos Diomedes (Son of Tydeus) Fate Hades Helen Helenus Hera Heracles Hercules Menelaus Odysseus / Ulysses Palamedes Paris (Trojan Prince) Patroclus Priam Protesilaus Thersander Trojan War Tydeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adolescence Child, children Coming of age Conflict Death Family Friendship Gaining understanding Heroism Identity Justice Love Memory Morality Multiculturalism Nation Parents (and children) Psychology Relationships Sexuality Tricksters
Addenda	The first book of *Diomedes, the Son of Tydeus* is described here.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.