

The New Criterion

Poems

June 2009

Frieze

by [Angelos Sikelianos](#)

Kicking their steeds' flanks with the red apples
Of their heels, right where the bulging vein
Forks and ramifies, and the sweat dripples
In rivulets down to the hooves from the belly,

Driving them with palms slapped on the withers
Where the hair is parted so the mane
Falls on either side like swan feathers,
And crowned themselves with hats or wreaths, they urge

Them on— Heat splits the earth— The cicada's throb
In the olives heralds airy victory—
Here comes the procession, the ceremonial robe;

And then with a fair and following breeze, they surge
Past, abounding wave of horses, dancing—
Galloping, cantering or prancing . . .

Angelos Sikelianos's poems emphasized national history, religious symbolism, and universal harmony.

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 27 June 2009, on page 31

Copyright © 2009 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/Frieze-4119>