Phoenix

antiquity issue

June 2023

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Introduction

Written by Daniek Garst - Edited by Helenie Demir

Dearest readers,

Welcome to the captivating world of Antiquity, where ancient civilizations, diverse cultures, and enduring legacies converge to create a mesmerising tapestry of human history. We present to you Phoenix's final issue this year, dedicated to exploring and celebrating the wonders of the ancient Greek and Roman world. I am particularly excited for this issue as it is a perfect addition to the course *Classical Mythology* I am currently taking (and enjoying!).

Step into these pages and journey back in time to uncover remarkable achievements and stories that shaped humanity. Antiquity is a living testament to human ingenuity, creativity, and resilience.

In this edition, we delve into the architectural marvels that have withstood the test of time. Furthermore, we venture into the world of art where we embark on a fascinating comparison between Greek and Roman artistic traditions and a literary adventure, as we delve into articles about *The Hunger Games* and *Percy Jackson.* Moreover, you will encounter many familiar characters, including Persephone, Helen of Troy, and Hades. You will find these and many more interesting topics and figures within this issue.

Immerse yourself in the allure of Antiquity and we hope this issue brings you a timeless voyage of discovery, where the echoes of Antiquity ignite your imagination.

Happy reading!

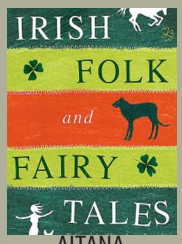
Word of the Board

I have always been impressed by old things.

When I was 16, my school went on a trip to Rome and I was definitely one of the students who was the most excited about visiting churches and ruins, even though the warm weather almost burnt me to a crisp on the day we visited Pompeii. The architecture of old Roman Catholic churches is stunning to me, with its columns and ornate characteristics. Although I am no longer part of a religious group, I still enjoy looking at large, windows with artful depictions of the Madonna on them. These days, I still collect a lot of vintage items. I recently bought a table set with four chairs that belonged to a sweet old lady who was moving to a retirement home. As long as I can look at and collect old things, I will continue to appreciate their history.

Love,
Mar

What we're reading



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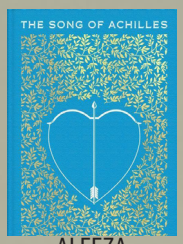

ALEEZA
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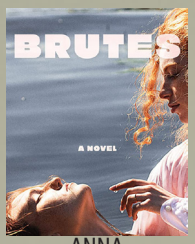

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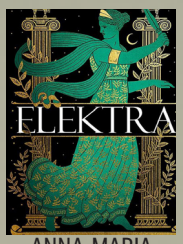

ANNA-MARIA
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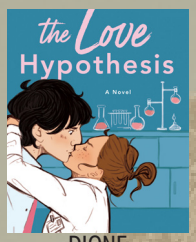

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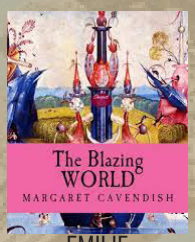

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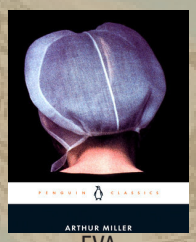

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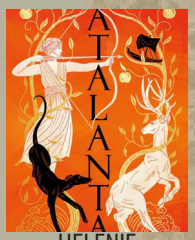

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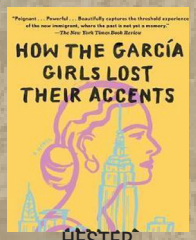
Jennifer Saint



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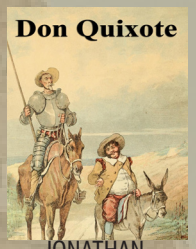

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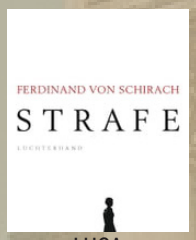

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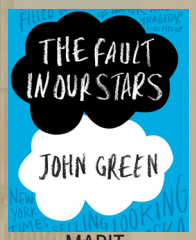

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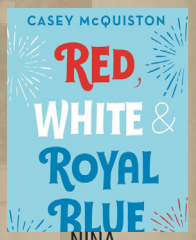

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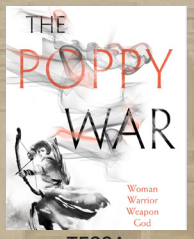

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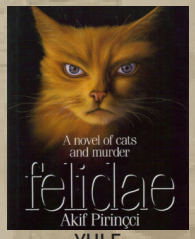

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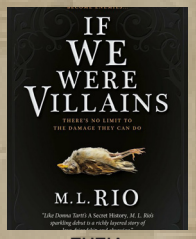

ZUZIA
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PHOENIX
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Beyond the Myths and Epics: Witches of Greek Mythology

Written by Anna Maria Popo
Illustrated by Emilie Wiingreen
Edited by Anna Preindl

Oh, Greek mythology, what a collection of ancient tales and epic poems. It encompasses gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, and mystical beings. Among these captivating figures, witches hold a unique place. And it is time that we explore the mysterious world of witches in Greek mythology, delving into their magical abilities, stories, and their significance in shaping the mythological landscape.

Magic played an essential role in Greek mythology, with witchcraft often being associated with supernatural abilities. The concept of magic encompassed various practices, including spellcasting, divination, and shape-shifting. Witches were portrayed as powerful individuals who harnessed this magic. They possessed the knowledge of herbs, potions, and incantations, granting them the ability to control the elements, influence fate, and even shape destinies.

Medea stands as one of the most prominent witches in Greek mythology. Her involvement with Jason and the Argonauts is an intriguing tale. Medea's extraordinary powers allowed her to aid Jason, manipulating fate itself to assist him on his quest. Medea arguably deserves her own story as a witch involved with the Greek Argonauts. It is worth noting how her actions showcase the complexities and consequences of witchcraft, even though they took a dark turn.

Circe, the enchantress of Aeaea, was another remarkable witch. She possessed the ability to transform men into animals with a single touch. Circe's encounter with Odysseus in Homer's Odyssey is a well-known story. Through her magic, she tested his resilience and ultimately aided him in his journey to go back home. Besides her encounter with Odysseus, the namesake retelling, written by Madeline Miller, is a great opportunity to read her own story and development into the witch we recognize.

Hecate, the goddess of witchcraft and crossroads, and personal favourite, held a significant place in Greek mythology. Often depicted as a triple goddess, she personified witchcraft, magic, and the moon. Hecate's powers were invoked during crossroads rituals, and she was believed to guide witches in their practices, offering protection and guidance.

Other lesser-known witches included Pasiphae, the sorceress queen of Crete, whose enchantments led to the birth of the Minotaur. The Erinyes, also known as the Furies, embodied vengeance and punishment. They were seen as supernatural entities with witch-like qualities, tormenting those who committed grave offences.

While Greek mythology often focuses on the tales of gods and heroes, the stories of witches shine with their own unique allure and coolness. From Medea's tragic and complex narrative to Circe's transformative magic, these enchantresses captivate our imagination. Exploring the depths of their powers and the consequences they face, we are reminded that amidst the grandeur of gods, the stories of witches offer an intriguing and mesmerising glimpse into the mythical realm of ancient Greece.

The Enigmatic Ancient Art of Healing: Rituals and Spells

Written by Mohana Zwaga
Edited by Hester Schneider

The ancient Greeks, renowned for their contributions to philosophy and arts, also held profound (and sometimes a tad odd) beliefs on the power of rituals, spells, and divine offerings to restore health and well-being.

In the ancient Greek society, the art of healing was a realm where the mortal and the divine intertwined. Temples dedicated to Asclepius, the revered god of medicine, stood as beacons of hope and restoration. These sanctuaries offered a sanctum for the afflicted, a place where the realms of human suffering and divine intervention converged.

Within the sacred walls of these temples, rituals took shape. The belief was that a bridge could be forged between the earthly and the divine, ushering forth the healing energies of the gods.

Spells, known as pharmakia, were believed to aid the healing process. Words of power were to possess the ability to cast away ailments and restore balance. These spells, often accompanied by the use of herbs and natural remedies, supposedly harnessed the mysterious forces of the universe and Gods to bring about healing and well-being. Just imagine someone reciting a carefully crafted incantation while sprinkling some crushed herbs over their head, convinced it will cure their headache. Maybe a goddess will spring from that headache too.

The Greeks also thought that placing an amulet shaped like a lizard under your pillow would ward off evil spirits and cure insomnia. Who knew that reptiles had the power to bring about a good night's sleep? And if that didn't do the trick, you'd have other options. One other curious practice involved sleeping within the temple's hallowed walls, in hopes of receiving a divine vision that would reveal the path to wellness. Forget cosy beds and soothing whale noise playlists; the ancients knew that a touch of divine intervention was the key to a good night's rest. But all at the low, low cost of the entry fees, of course.

Petrarch Walked so Shakespeare Could Run

Written by Yule Brückner
Edited by Marit Vogels

Petrarchan poems, named after the Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch), hold significant importance in English literature. They played a crucial role in introducing the sonnet form to English literature. With its 14-line structure, the Petrarchan sonnet became a favoured vehicle for expressing themes of love, desire, and introspection. Its influence can be seen in the works of prominent English poets like William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton.

They paved the way for themes of romantic and courtly love in English literature, with their focus on idealized love and intense emotions. These Petrarchan poems often portrayed unattainable or unrequited love, longing, and the conflict between passion and reason. Petrarchan poems also contributed to the development of the blazon tradition, which involved the detailed and elaborate description of a beloved's physical attributes. This tradition allowed poets to exalt the virtues of their loved ones and explore the aesthetics of beauty but also inspired later poets to employ vivid imagery and sensory descriptions in their works.

The Petrarchan rhyme scheme (ABBAABBA CDECDE or ABBAABBA CDCDCD) and the introduction of the "volta" also brought new dimensions to English poetry. Its intricate pattern influenced the evolution of English metrical and rhyming patterns, inspiring poets to experiment with different rhyme schemes and structures, thereby expanding the possibilities of poetic expression. As such, Petrarchan poems played a pivotal role in the poetic renaissance of the Elizabethan era in England. Poets like Shakespeare, influenced by the sonnets of Petrarch, created their own masterpieces in the sonnet form, infusing them with their unique styles and perspectives. This period marked a flowering of English poetry, with Petrarchan elements interwoven into the fabric of the literary landscape.

We could do this with just Zeus' bastards, but that would mean this quiz will never end. So, we'll make do with a small selection. Link the bastards to their godly parents and check out the answers at the bottom of the page! Disclaimer: there are multiple, contradicting versions of myths, causing the parents to sometimes differ.

Bastards In Overflow!

Written by Helenie Demir
Edited byAleeza van der Giessen

1. Aeneas	A. Zeus
2. Orpheus	B. Aphrodite
3. Meleager	C. Poseidon
4. Helen	D. Apollo
5. Bellerophon	E. Ares

The Hunger Games: Modern Classic or Classical?

Written by Eva Bleeker - Edited by Nina van Veen

Justifiably so, the classical period is often referred to as the start of Western culture, for we can still find many sprinkles of ancient culture in our modern world. Many of the more well-known Greek myths have infiltrated our culture in more ways than we often realise. Certain tropes that reoccur in today's fiction, fairy tales, or other stories all have been greatly influenced by classical myths. While the similarity between ancient mythology and recent novels or films is often overt, surprising traces of or references to Greek mythology can still be discovered by the mythology fanatic in more popular modern works. An example of this is *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, which many don't associate with the myth of Theseus and the minotaur but was certainly inspired by it. Collins herself even referred to Katniss as "an updated Theseus."

In the myth, king Minos' wife gave birth to the minotaur: half bull, half man. Ashamed of this creature, king Minos locked it away in an intricately designed labyrinth, using the creature as a weapon against his enemies. When one of the king's sons was killed in Athens by the bull that impregnated Minos' wife, Minos demanded the king of Athens send him seven boys and seven women to leave in the labyrinth for the Minotaur to devour. This, of course, sounds incredibly similar to the concept of the Hunger Games which the Capitol created as punishment for the districts for rebelling during the war. In this case, twelve boys and twelve girls were randomly drafted to participate in the Games as a form of entertainment for the Capitol while also oppressing the districts and spreading fear. In both the ancient myth and the modern dystopia, the king and the government decided to target children as the victims of their punishment, for they knew that attacking the innocent youth, often seen as a source of hope, would hurt and affect the communities the most.

While we all know Katniss' famous exclamation, "I volunteer, I volunteer as tribute!" Theseus also volunteered to be one of the children to go to Crete in order to murder the Minotaur and free the people of Athens from this punishment. Katniss might not have entered the Games with a similar intention, but she certainly caused a domino effect that resulted in a similar ending; she killed the president, ending the Games once and for all and freeing the districts of Panem from their punishment. She might not have fit the image of the classical hero, but she was a modern hero: the face of a rebellion that saved a society.

Despite all the similarities and parallels between *The Hunger Games* and the myth about the Labyrinth, it went over many people's heads that Collins' dystopian novel series was actually a partial retelling of an ancient myth. Perhaps we should look for the ancient culture in more parts of our lives to see how it inspired and has influenced our modern life.

answers: 1-b, 2-d, 3-e, 4-a, 5-c

Nurturing Bonds and Earthly Ties: Demeter and Persephone

Written by Daniek Garst - Illustrated by Tessa de Bosschere - Edited by Helenie Demir

In Greek mythology, Persephone, daughter of Demeter, is a captivating figure who embodies a profound paradox. As the goddess of the underworld, she is associated with death and decay, yet she also symbolizes new cycles and vegetation. This intriguing juxtaposition highlights the delicate balance between life and death and the transformative power of nature. Additionally, the complex mother-daughter relationship between Demeter and Persephone offers valuable insights into Ancient Greek culture and holds relevance in contemporary society.

Persephone's role as both the goddess of the underworld and the bringer of vegetation reflects the inherent duality found in the natural world; it signifies the cyclical nature of existence. Just as the seasons change, Persephone transitions between the Underworld and the surface, heralding the arrival of spring and summer, where life flourishes once more. Her descent into the underworld represents the necessary period of dormancy and reflection before new growth can emerge.

In ancient Greece, the mother-daughter bond was revered and held great cultural importance. It represented the nurturing and generational continuity within a family. Mothers were seen as providers, teachers, and protectors, passing down wisdom, traditions, and values to their daughters. The myth of Demeter and Persephone served as a powerful reminder of the eternal bond shared between mothers and daughters, reinforcing the strength that lies within such relationships.

The myths of Demeter and Persephone hold enduring relevance in contemporary society, transcending time and cultural boundaries. Its profound themes and dynamics continue to resonate with our lives, offering valuable insights and reflections. The story of Demeter and Persephone shines a spotlight on the multifaceted dynamics of female relationships. It delves into the unconditional love, protectiveness, and sacrifices that mothers often make for their daughters. This resonates with contemporary audiences, as evidenced by the numerous books, films, and TV shows that explore the intricacies of female bonds. From classics like *Terms of Endearment* to modern tales like *Lady Bird*, these narratives delve into the depth, strength, and complexities of such relationships, reflecting on the enduring power of maternal and sisterly love.

Demeter and Persephone's connection to the natural world underscores the profound influence of nature on human existence. In contemporary culture, as explored in Phoenix's *Cottagecore* issue, there is a growing appreciation for the environment and a renewed focus on sustainable living. This reverence for nature is echoed in artistic expressions such as eco-poetry, environmental photography, and films that highlight humanity's interconnectedness with the earth.

Through the lens of the mother-daughter relationship between Demeter and Persephone, Ancient Greek culture celebrated the importance of family bonds, a sentiment that continues to hold relevance in contemporary society and reminds us of the enduring power of love, growth, and renewal. Their stories continue to inspire creative works that explore the complexities of mother-daughter bonds and remind us of our deep-rooted relationships with the earth.

Bookshelf with Anna Preindl

Written and Photographed by Hester Schneider - Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

Over a wonderfully big cup of tea, I discussed Anna's love for reading with her. Entering the room, it immediately becomes clear what role literature and poetry play in her life, as books are scattered everywhere. The bookshelf is filled with novels from many different genres, ranging from poetry collections to classics to many golden treasures found in 'minibiebs'.

What is or are your current read(s)?

I like to read all over the board. I always have three or four poetry books lying on my bedside table. I like having them close by so I can just read one or two poems whenever I'm in the mood. Next to poetry I have also been reading *The Pisces* by Melissa Broder on my laptop; a very captivating read.

Were you always into reading?

I think I really was. My aunt and godmother Tina contributed a lot to that since they always used to give me a lot of books as gifts. And I think that's how my love for books really started. We still share the same taste in books to this day and it's always nice going through her library for inspiration. It's a special bond we have, I really cherish it.

Do you have a favourite author?

When it comes to German literature, my favourite author is Kim de l'Horizon, especially their work *Blutbuch*. As for English writers, two authors that come to mind are Ottessa Moshfegh and Melissa Broder. They're both very unhinged, haha. And for poets of course I love Sylvia Plath, as well as German poet Paul Celan.

If you could go on a date with an author, who would it be?

If I was able to go on a date with an author, it would be Hengameh Yaghoobifarah, they are very cool. They're an accomplished author and journalist, and I really love reading their column. I just think we'd have a really interesting talk; I'd have a lot to gain from the conversation. I bet they have a lot of viewpoints on life that I've never even considered.

What's your favourite bookstore?

I love going to Bijleveld for the great selection they have. They keep adding new books that really fit my taste. The Albion discount is of course a great bonus. I do miss German book selections; I really love going into German bookstores! Oh, and in Amsterdam, Atheneum has an amazing selection too.

What is your favourite language to read in?

It used to always be German, but I think it kind of switched. In some ways, I prefer English more. Or, at least, it has become more equal.

Can you name a book that kept you up at night?

So many as a kid! I could never sleep, and I would just read more and more and still not sleep. So, yes, mostly children's books, for like ages 8 to 12.

What is your ideal reading place?

Either in the sun by the water or in the mountains with no one around is super nice. I have many happy memories of that, it's a very immersive reading environment.

Do you have a particular way of ordering your books?

I think I put my favourite books together. I don't really sort by colour, but usually the middle shelf is the favourite shelf. And for the rest roughly what goes together, like the same author.

Would you rather have an unclear or heart-breaking ending?

Oh, I love open endings! It's the best; nice and ambiguous with room for interpretation. As for heart-breaking endings... I don't know, I don't think a book manages to break my heart easily. But maybe that's also not the type of book I'm reading in general.

What is the best strategy for getting someone to read a book?

Either lend it to them or, if I really like a book and think they would too, I would give it to them on a special occasion, for Christmas or a birthday. I believe books are a fantastic gift, they have so much potential.

Do you write in your books?

I love writing in books! My roommate Camille and our friends started doing this

thing where we underline in different ways and leave comments for the others to read. It's so nice reading your friends' thoughts, such an intimate thing to share. Putting small reactions or thoughts in books makes it more personal!

What is the most awkward book-related encounter you've had?

I had this sort of meet cute with a guy on the train. He was reading some book about Austrian emperors, and I was reading Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* for class. He was trying to talk to me, and I just wasn't interested haha. It was good he had to get off the train.

Do you ever visit a place just because you've read about it in a book?

For sure. Book tours are great, and even though I don't love Joyce, I would totally do a Joycean book tour in Trieste or Zurich.

Are you careful with your books or do they look loved and well-read?

I always intend to keep them nice and clean, but somehow they just end up torn and defaced... It doesn't end up bothering me so much, it's part of the reading process, I guess. It's kind of like a visual reminder for the time I spent reading, and can be part of some good memories.

Do you read out loud or imitate faces or voices while reading?

Of course! It makes it so fun and not monotonous! Especially with poetry, it really lends itself to being read. From time to time, I get some funny faces but it's worth it.

Helen Of Troy, Revered By Many But Known By Few

Written by Hester Schneider - Edited by Nina van Veen

For someone who is acclaimed as "the face that launched a thousand ships," the woman who supposedly caused the Trojan War, Helen of Troy, appears strikingly little in Homer's *Iliad*. Helen has been associated with the femme fatale trope, assuming the role of another Eve, a temptress who led the great men of the day astray and set the Near East on fire. Hector and Menelaus decide Helen will be the prize of their battle, a decision over which Helen herself has no influence. References to her are made almost solely with regard to her exterior appearance, thereby completely understating her intelligence. A close study of Helen in *The Iliad* reveals that conversations are nearly always instigated by others (men, that is), yet when Aphrodite comes to her room, something remarkable happens. Gods and goddesses are supposedly superior to any mortal, but when Aphrodite tries to manipulate Helen with her "superb neck, desirable breasts and sparkling eyes," Helen answers, "Mysterious goddess, why are you trying to lead me on like this? You are plotting, I suppose, [...] so now you have come here to try to lure me back to Paris?" To expose Aphrodite like this shows how intelligent Helen actually is. If, as is widely believed, her beauty is the principal element of the war, then this is through no fault of her own. It is the belief and objectifying views of the men around her which ultimately cause the war. At no point does Helen weaponise her beauty and, therefore, cannot be said to be a femme fatale.

Riddle

What appears once in a minute,
Twice in a moment,
But never in a thousand years?

Written by Yule Brückner
Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

Xenia and Xenophobia

Written by Helenie Demir
Edited byAleeza van der Giessen

Xenia was one of the most important concepts in Ancient Greece. Offering hospitality to the stranger knocking at your door was a law; those who didn't abide by it were often punished. A bed to rest in, a warm meal, protection, and gifts were all at the ready to be given to the person who could show up at any moment. Though it would be wonderful to assume that people did this out of the kindness of their hearts, it was more out of fear than anything else. The gods often disguised themselves as beggars or other such figures. If the person properly offered the god shelter, they were rewarded with gifts or blessings. However, should they reject hospitality, they would be punished. Xenia was a precaution against that. To prevent eternal damnation, the Ancient Greeks treated every guest and stranger as a potential god in disguise.

Xenia is a two-way street: both you and the receiver are expected to behave politely. That certainty was not a given then (Paris starting the Trojan War is a lovely example) and it is not a given now either. People allow suspicion to take the better of them when faced with a stranger. In a world where mistrust in mankind has grown, we relish in the small acts of kindness we see: being offered a seat on the bus, helping someone cross the street, or paying for someone else's coffee. We are surprised by these acts because we focus more on the bad things people can do.

This is where the opposite of xenia comes in: xenophobia, a concept which, I believe, we are more familiar with. If xenia is the embracing of the unknown then xenophobia is the rejection of it. We are almost scared of what we don't recognize. You see it more every day, but the primary example is migration. I refuse to call it an 'issue,' which is how it's been referred to in politics, because offering a person who's escaped death and terror should not be a debate—it should be everyone's first instinct.

Luckily, with the war between Ukraine and Russia, most refugees have a new roof over their heads. We quickly opened our arms to them and offered them a spare room in our homes, providing safety and a space to heal. But I wouldn't be the first person to make the comparison between this war and the countless other conflicts in the Middle East. Why is it that we didn't even bat an eye when the European refugees knocked at our doors but refused to offer the same kindness to Middle Eastern refugees? I have a theory, but I'll let you speculate on your own.

There are plenty of marginalized groups in our society that have been victims of discrimination, because that is what xenophobia is: not tolerating each other's differences. I don't want to end on something sappy like "be kind" because I know that the majority of the readers here don't need to be reminded of that. So, instead, I'll say this: correct others. The longer we fester this hate towards the unknown, the more bitter we become as a society. We learn more from each other than we learn from ourselves.

Ancient Greece vs. Ancient Rome an Overview

Written by Luca Salman - Edited by Hester Schneider

Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome are repeatedly, almost religiously, compared, measured and set against each other, but the Greeks and Romans had their differences and unique approaches to life and society.

Art

Greek art in the Hellenic Period (5th century BCE to the 4th century BCE) introduced the idealization of the human form. Phidias established the use of the golden ratio (mathematical ratio of 1.618) as a standard for the face and body proportions of his sculptures. One of his most famous sculptures was of Zeus, featured as almost nude, glorious and larger than life. Ancient Greek art celebrated the idealized version of bodies, often sculpting them without or with little clothing and glorifying the statues of Gods.

Although Roman artists consistently borrowed from Greek art, Roman sculptures shifted their focus onto their rulers to celebrate and appease them and presented them clothed in most cases. Rome's Arch of Constantine presents a sculpture of Constantine the Great after a battle victory and Constantine's soldiers can be seen in full armor.

Both Greek and Roman art centered around the idea of beauty. The focus was on symmetry and harmony in order to create a vision of the idealized body, the idealized human form.

Women

The idea of women in Ancient Greece evolved around the concept of the woman as the temptress. They were viewed to be unable to control the influence of Eros, the God of lust, and their subsequent behavior was expected to be detrimental to society and the cities surrounding them.

Ancient Greece did not see women as citizens, did not allow them to vote, or discuss politics outside the house. Women were dependent on their marriage, were expected to take care of the household, and were valued primarily for childbirth. The exception to this was Sparta. Spartan women were independent, allowed to be formally educated, and own property. This was the beginning of the idea that societies would benefit from educated and free women, as opposed to the suppressed and inert woman.

Roman women were still reliant on the men in their familieswhich prevented them from owning their narrative and independence. Their status was dependent on their fathers or husbands, but they gained independence and rights throughout the 500 years of Rome as a republic and were allowed to own land, run businesses, inherit wealth, and get a job (etc) during the time of Rome as an empire. The general idea of gender in Roman society fixated on the idea of 'vir,' manness which dictated the order of standing. Not all men would reach the ideal of 'vir,' therefore creating a ranking among men, but no woman would of course be perceived as superior to any man.

Gods

Many of the Roman gods are said to have been influenced by the Greek ones: the Roman god Jupiter is equivalent to Zeus, Neptune to Poseidon, Venus to Aphrodite, Mercury to Hermes, etc. However, the approach to gods differed. Greeks viewed the gods as unattainable beings - they were impervious and beyond reach, but their names were based on human personality traits such as love or honour, or determined by what they were the god of (Zeus - sky, Hades - underworld, etc.).

Romans wanted mortals to aspire to imitate their gods, partly because of the importance of the afterlife in Roman culture and partly in order to inspire a right way of living. Moreover, the names of their Gods revolved around objects, did not have gender, and the Gods did not have a physical appearance.

Tea Time with Allison Neal

Written and Photographed by Mohana Zwaga - Edited by Marit Vogels

For this issue's Tea Time, we invited the wonderful Dr. Allison Neal, one of Utrecht English Literature Department's newest Visiting Assistant Professors. On a sunny afternoon, Allison and I met up at Kluts cafe, to sit down with a cup of coffee and chat on the terrace. We talked for a few hours about her academic career, her love for poetry, modernism, art, and the magnificent city of Florence.

The students are always curious as to how their professors' academic careers came to be. Can you tell me a bit about your academic background and how you came to Utrecht?

I did my undergraduate degree at Berkeley, which is a four-year degree program. I'm from California, and in the U.S., students are not expected to become specialists so quickly, so you can just figure it out as you go. But I knew immediately that I wanted to study English literature; I had always liked to write and read, so it felt like a natural choice, just continuing to do what I had always loved.

I wrote my B.A. thesis for an entire year, and that's when I thought, "Oh, what I really love is doing this more in-depth research!" Reading the work of other critics felt like mind-reading—it opened up a new way of engaging with literature that I hadn't had access to before then. Before I realized that, however, I thought I might go to law school, which I can barely imagine now; it was just one of the few set career paths that you could pursue in the U.S. with a degree in English. But I had an amazing mentor who sat me down my final year and said, "You should go to grad school," and I took her advice.

I first took a year off to get my application together and worked for a little while at a greeting card company, writing the little messages on the greeting cards, which was a fun job. And then I continued at Berkeley for graduate school for about seven years, studying twentieth-century American poetry, which I still research now. Out of grad school, I got a post-doctorate position at Cambridge. It was a four-year research fellowship at Trinity, one of Cambridge's bigger colleges, and I was there for two and a half years. Unfortunately, I was there during the pandemic, and it was a weird, surreal experience: first, we made this huge move across the ocean, and then the pandemic hit, and I couldn't go home at all to California. At the same time, because of the magic of Cambridge—the rituals, the architecture, all of that—I felt like I lived in this fairytale land, which contributed to the feeling of complete irreality.

Following that, I was in Florence, in the first half of last year, researching my second book, while on a different fellowship with the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, which was a dream. I never wanted to leave! And then my partner was hired here, and they hired me as well, which is how I came to Utrecht.

When you were a BA student, what topics tended to interest you most?

I took a bunch of classes focused on twentieth-century poetry and modernist literature while doing my undergraduate degree, but I also always made time to take a lot of language courses—primarily French and Italian, which still shape my current work. In my final year, I chose to write my undergraduate thesis on a mid-century American poet named Frank O'Hara and on ballet... I had been a ballet dancer for most of my life, and I was interested in the relationship between the arts—which I still am. So, I thought when I applied to grad school that I would begin an interdisciplinary project on modern American poetry and dance, but I kind of drifted away from that topic during graduate school, moving from studying the relationship between poetry and dance to poetry and music, or sound studies more broadly.

When did you realize you wanted to pursue an academic career?

My BA program was huge, comprising about 500 students a year, and initially, I was a quiet student that enjoyed being anonymous, but I was very invested in what I was studying. I guess I just wasn't a big "performer" in the classroom—I struggled to feel like I could really make myself heard or think aloud—but I loved the writing and felt confident in that aspect. So, at my university, you had to apply to do an honours thesis your final year, and so, I thought, "Okay, I'll see if I like this, I'll see if I get into the program, and maybe academia will be a path for me." And it was in that class too that I became more outspoken. I loved the critical dialogue that would come up in the sessions. I felt part of an academic community, both in the classroom and on the page, and academic work suddenly felt a lot more meaningful. And then I was hooked!

Your current ongoing research project is a book titled Florentine Modernism: The American Avant-Garde, Renaissance Art, and the History of the Aesthetic. Could you perhaps talk to me a bit about what this project contains and what you're working on now?

Okay, so it's a new project, and it focuses on this group of Anglo-American modernists that either travelled extensively or lived in Florence in the first decades of the twentieth century. I'm focused on a few writers spe-

cifically, including Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy, and Mabel Dodge Luhan.

So, what I'm writing about is what these experimental, avant-garde female writers saw in a place that was so steeped in powerful notions of the aesthetic past. And at the same time, Florence was filled with a variety of powerful art collectors and connoisseurs, who were evaluating Renaissance art in new ways for the market and for professional, quasi-scientific purposes. They're kind of taking these artworks out of their time and place and selling them to wealthy American people, and at the same time positioning these works in a new sort of artistic canon forged from emerging professional norms. And it's this conflict between art as something that is historical or even 'outdated,' and as something that was being configured, commodified, basically transformed in the present that intrigues me, and which I think influenced how these avant-garde Anglo-American writers conceptualized the time and place of their own writing. More broadly, I'm also trying to recover the importance of Florence as a city to Anglo-American modernism.

I kind of dreamt this project to life and then realized it after I applied for my fellowship in Florence. It brings together a lot of things I love: Renaissance art, Anglo-American poetry, questions of gender, and Italian culture.

Why modernism?

It feels as if it has a gravitational pull on me—I guess it probably feels that way for anyone who works on twentieth-century literature. But I don't necessarily subscribe to the modernist/postmodernist divide; I am just mainly interested in twentieth-century poetry. I guess the thing I love about modernism is how it's really attentive to the medium of the work of art—as you can see from my work, I'm drawn to the boundaries between the written word and other art forms, like dance, painting, etc.

If I'd have to choose, my favourite mid-century visual artist would probably have to be Joan Mitchell. And my favourite artist more generally is Giotto! But I think what I also just love about modernism and the time period are its groups of artists and writers, these vibrant communities. I think it's a community I want, so I seek it out in my work.

I read that you work frequently with (modernist) poetry. Can you perhaps talk to me a bit about what it is about poetry that draws you in?

I love thinking about the relationship between the aesthetic and the broader world that plays out in the lyric. I feel like lyric poetry brings those questions to a head—it's typically considered the most literary of the literary genres, and "poetry makes nothing happen," and all that— but I also just love the musicality of it. I love how you can take your time to read poetry in extremely close detail. And I also love writing poetry myself!

What is a literary work you believe everyone should read in their lifetime?

For this, I feel like I'd best go back to my roots, so I would have to say *Lunch Poems* by Frank O'Hara. Everyone needs a bit of midday energy in poetic form!

And for a novel, I would have to pick *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton, although I find it hard to pick something that everyone should read! The beauty of what we do as academics is that you don't have to read anything. You get to forge your own path through the literature.

What is your favourite aspect of research? What keeps you going?

My favourite aspect of academic research is finding and realizing the miraculous connections between artworks, historical context, theoretical lenses, etc. It is like finding how the puzzle pieces suddenly all come together perfectly. I love that moment of research, when everything suddenly looks and falls in place while you're sitting there, over-caffeinated.

But the hard part is translating that into written form. Once you make the connections between various elements, you kind of see this dense web of connections, but then you have to somehow actually write it down on the page. A lot of thinking and processing happens on the page for me. I think a lot better in writing than I do in speech. I think that's why my first book was all about voices. I felt deeply sceptical of the idea of poetic voice because I think in writing myself, so I wanted to investigate that, showing how ideas about poetic voice are mediated through various institutions, technologies, and techniques.

And with that, our interview came to a close. We chatted for a bit longer about our favourite poets, the concept of the poetic voice, and life in the Netherlands. Finally, we said our goodbyes in the late afternoon sun. Thank you so much for your time and your thoughts, Allison, and your wonderful contribution to this issue!

Greek Philosophy in Literature

Written and Illustrated by Yule Brückner – Edited by Anna Preindl

Ancient Greek philosophy stands as a pillar of intellectual inquiry and a source of inspiration for generations of thinkers. Rooted in the rich soil of Greece, this profound philosophical tradition has significantly influenced the development of literature, shaping the minds of great writers throughout history. Let's delve into the world of Ancient Greek philosophy, its ideas, and its enduring impact on (English) literature.

Our voyage begins with the Pre-Socratic philosophers, such as Thales, Anaximander, and Heraclitus, who sought to unravel the fundamental nature of the universe. Their radical theories, ranging from water as the primal substance to the eternal flux of all things, posed profound questions about the nature of reality. These ideas provided a fertile ground for literary contemplation, inspiring authors to explore the depths of existential mysteries in their works. At the heart of Ancient Greek philosophy stands the iconic figure of Socrates. His emphasis on self-reflection and the pursuit of knowledge through relentless questioning set the stage for a transformative intellectual revolution. The Socratic method, a dialogue-based approach that challenged assumptions and fostered critical thinking, not only left an indelible mark on philosophy but also permeated the fabric of literature. Countless literary characters embarked on journeys of introspection and moral questioning, echoing the spirit of Socrates' relentless pursuit of truth. The philosophical insights of Plato, the renowned student of Socrates, reverberate throughout the realms of English literature. Plato's concept of ideal Forms posits the existence of a transcendent reality beyond the physical realm, characterized by eternal and unchanging

essences. His allegorical depictions of the journey to discover these forms have deeply influenced the literary landscape, inspiring authors to create vivid imagery and symbolic representations of moral and spiritual quests. John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* stands as a prime example, guiding readers through allegorical realms on a profound journey of self-discovery. Aristotle, Plato's prodigious student and a towering figure in Ancient Greek philosophy, made significant contributions to ethics and literary theory. His philosophy centres around the concept of the golden mean, advocating for moderation and balance between extremes. This ethical framework resonates with the struggles of literary characters grappling with moral dilemmas, as they navigate the complexities of virtue and vice. Furthermore, Aristotle's "Poetics," a seminal treatise on drama and storytelling, has served as a guiding light for playwrights, poets, and novelists. Its principles have shaped the narrative structure, character development, and the exploration of universal human experiences in literature across the ages. The Hellenistic period witnessed the rise of two significant philosophical schools: Stoicism and Epicureanism. Stoicism, epitomized by thinkers like Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, advocates for the cultivation of inner peace and acceptance of fate. These philosophical tenets find their echoes in literature through the portrayal of characters confronted with adversity, who seek solace within themselves and find resilience in the face of external challenges. On the other hand, Epicureanism, exemplified by philosophers like Epicurus, focuses on the pursuit of personal happiness and the avoidance of pain.

The Origin of Western Astrology in Antiquity

Written by Anna Preindl – Edited by Nina van Veen

Besides the obvious origins of the names of planets rooted in Roman visions of astrology, astrology has great roots back in antiquity. An ancient discipline rooted in the interpretation of celestial movements and their purported influence on human affairs, astrology holds a significant place in the historical and cultural legacy of the Western world. Its origins can be traced back to the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome, where astrology emerged as a multifaceted practice deeply intertwined with philosophical, religious, and political contexts. In ancient Greece, astrology flourished as an integral component of intellectual and philosophical pursuits. The Greek fascination with the cosmos and the interconnectedness of the universe and humanity spurred a profound exploration of celestial phenomena. Renowned figures like Pythagoras played a pivotal role in shaping early astrological theories, emphasising the inherent connection between numbers, geometry, and celestial bodies.

A groundbreaking work in Greek astrology is Claudius Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, written in the 2nd century CE. This influential treatise consolidated earlier astrological knowledge and provided a systematic framework for interpreting celestial influences. Greek astrologers employed a division of the zodiac into twelve equal parts, assigning specific qualities to each sign and associating ruling planets accordingly. They believed that the movements and positions of these celestial bodies exerted profound effects on human behaviour, shaping individual destinies and determining the course of events.

As the Roman Empire expanded, astrology migrated from Greece to Rome, assimilating into the cultural and religious fabric of Roman civilization. The pragmatic Romans embraced astrology as a practical tool for prediction and guidance in their daily lives. Consequently, astrology became closely entwined with Roman religion and gained increasing prominence within society. Marcus Manilius, a Roman poet and astrologer, composed Astronomica during the reign of Augustus, encapsulating the Roman perspective on celestial influences. Manilius poetically illustrated the connection between celestial phenomena and terrestrial affairs, offering insights into the intricate relationship between the cosmic and human realms. Additionally, the Roman Emperor Tiberius's appointment of Thrasyllus of Mendes, an esteemed astrologer, as his personal advisor exemplified the high regard for astrology within the Roman ruling class. Roman astrologers expanded upon the Greek astrological foundations, introducing innovative concepts such as the division of the sky into twelve houses. These houses corresponded to various aspects of life and allowed for more nuanced and individualised interpretations based on the positioning of planets within these houses.

It can be said that Astrology's ancient origins in Greek and Roman antiquity establish its enduring significance in the cultural and intellectual development of the Western world. The Greek emphasis on philosophical contemplation and the Roman practical adoption of astrology converged to shape a complex and multifaceted discipline, leaving a profound and lasting impact on various facets of human life throughout history, and on how Western astrology is still viewed and used today.

Zodiac Signs as Greek Mythology Retellings

Written by Anna Preindl – Edited by Helenie Demir

Aries: Lore (Alexandra Bracken)
Taurus: Ariadne (Jennifer Saint)
Gemini: The Penelopiad (Margaret Atwood)
Cancer: Circe (Madeline Miller)
Leo: Helen of Troy (Margaret George)
Virgo: A Thousand Ships (Nathalie Haynes)
Libra: The Silence of the Girls (Pat Baker)
Scorpio: Lavinia (Ursula K. Le Guin)
Sagittarius: Horses of Fire (A.D. Rhine)
Capricorn: The Song of Achilles (Madeline Miller)
Aquarius: Girl Meets Boy (Ali Smith)
Pisces: Elektra (Jennifer Saint)

COMMITTEE MARKET

The AC

The *Academic and Alumni Committee* is dedicated to providing Albion alumni with some activities, writing alumni updates, and coordinating the Buddy Project, where alumni are paired with a student. AC also organises study and career-related activities, serves to get more of your feedback to the university, and discusses all things to do with studying in Utrecht. Whether it's the course material, the room that the seminars are in, or the limited number of spots available in the library, the AC is the place to go.

PartyCie

The *FeestCie* organises amazing parties year-round. Usually, these are in collaboration with other associations, so you can actually get to know people from other studies! But, once a year, Albion organizes its own party, 'Night of the Professors,' where your own professors play their favourite tunes.

Big TripCie

Every year, the *BigTripCie* organises a long trip away from all the studying! You might visit a museum, go on a pub crawl or do a picture hunt at the place you're visiting.

CampCie

Each year, the *CampCie* organises the best way for the new first years to get started with their university life: the Introduction Camp! This weekend is filled with fun activities and games, all designed around a special theme. The camp is perfect for getting to know other first years as well as the older Albioneers and getting an introduction to our lovely association itself. The camp will provide you with some of the most treasured Albion memories you'll ever have.

SympoCie

The *SympoCie* organises four symposia throughout the year with varying topics, from 'L2 development' to 'the Golden Age as Vegetarian.' You'll be in contact with our teachers and you'll be provided with interesting topics outside of our regular studies. You'll be making learning fun!

SportCie

Every year, the *SportCie* organises various sports-related activities, ranging from mini-golf to the autumn hike.

IntroCie

The Introduction days are very important for our lovely, new students: they will be led through the streets of Utrecht, meet their fellow first-year students, and get to know the English department of the UU as well as Albion of course.

AcCie

Who doesn't love some time off? The *Activities Committee* is here to guarantee that you have something to do during those hours that you really do not want to spend studying. The AcCie organises a wide variety of activities during the academic year. These range from pub crawls to whatever else the committee may come up with this year.

SUDS

Students of Utrecht Drama Society (SUDS) is an independent committee of Albion, which means that even non-Albion members are more than welcome to join. They have their own board and organise multiple activities each year, including a big play at the end of the year, and a One-Act Festival.

Phoenix

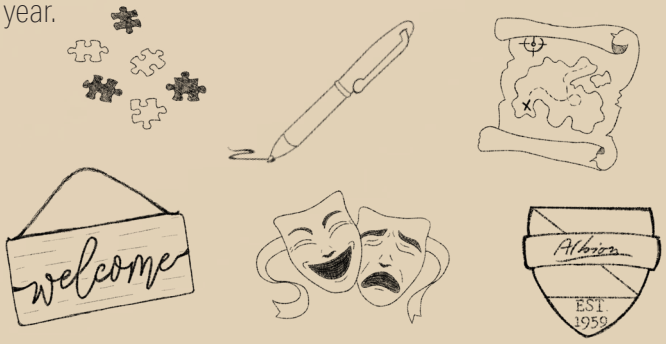
Phoenix is the magazine that focuses on a theme every quarterly issue. A team of writers, editors, and graphic designers works hard throughout the year to provide you with four issues, all filled with interviews, creative pieces, book recs, and more! Positions open to apply for: staff-writer, photographer, editor, and illustrator. Writers can also apply on a freelance basis.

Small TripCie

The *SmallTripCie* organises another trip during the academic year. This one is shorter and closer by, and is often realised in the form of a member weekend. It is a nice way to hang out with your fellow Albioneers and get to know each other better.

MerchCie

The *Merch Committee* will coordinate the design and distribution of Albion merchandise. The committee is chaired by the Commissioner of External Affairs. The committee will endeavour to have two moments of distribution per academic year.



MEET THE BOARD
2023-2024

Nova "Noof" (20) - Chair

"I am the commissioner of education, not the commissioner of your feelings"
- Thom, CoE

From: Delft
Favorite Book: Call Me By Your Name, **Artist:** Fleetwood Mac, **Song:** Little Lies, **Show:** Game of Thrones, **Movie:** Mamma Mia, **Place:** My vegetable garden.
Childhood dream job? An English teacher.
Current obsession: Gardening.
I would switch lives for a day with... Nijntje.
Linguistics/Literature, Contemporary/**Fantasy**, **Prequels-Sequels**/Retellings

Nina "Nien" (22) - Secretary

"Beauty is terror. Whatever we call beautiful, we quiver before it" - The Secret History

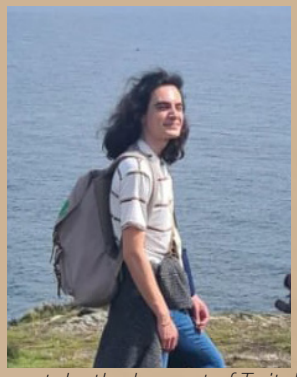
From: Haarlem
Favorite Book: Alias Grac, **Artist:** The Beatles, **Song:** I Me Mine by The Beatles, **Show:** Brooklyn 99, **Movie:** Legally Blonde, **Place:** Broese.
Childhood dream job? An archeologist.
Current obsession: Amanda Seyfried.
I would switch lives for a day with... Donna Tartt. - Linguistics/**Literature**, Contemporary/**Fantasy**, **Prequels-Sequels**/Retellings

Thijs " Tiessie" (19) - Treasurer

"Vergeet je niet te leven, dacht ik laatst" - Kees Hermis

From: Kruisland/Delft
Favorite Book: Pim Pandoer: De Schrik van de Imbosch, **Artist:** James Blunt, **Song:** Der Weg by Herbert Grönemeyer, **Show:** New Girl/Suits, **Movie:** Christopher Robin.
Childhood dream job? Paleontologist.
Current obsession: Somebody That I Used to Know - Glee Cast. **I would switch lives for a day with...** Matthew McConaughey.
Linguistics/Literature, Contemporary/**Fantasy**, Prequels-Sequels/**Retellings**

Amelia "HM the Queen" (21)
Commissioner of Internal Affairs



"You can take the boy out of Twitch, but can't take the Twitch out of the boy"
- William Gold

From: ' s-Hertogenbosch
Favorite Book: The Watchmaker of Filigree Street, **Artist:** Lovejoy, **Song:** Boogie Wonderland by Earth Wind & Fire, **Show:** Inazuma Eleven, **Movie:** Toy Story, **Place:** Wherever Comic Con is.
Childhood dream job? Owner of car dealership.
Current obsession: Eggs.
I would switch lives for a day with... Tallulah
Linguistics/Literature, Contemporary/**Fantasy**, **Prequels-Sequels**/Retellings

Thom "The Tank Engine" (20)
Commissioner of Education

"And she bade him gather thunderbolts in her garden, in the soft earth under her cabbages" -The King of Elfland's Daughter

From: Rotterdam
Favorite Book: The King of Elfland's Daughter, **Artist:** Hozier, **Song:** Wasteland, Baby! by Hozier, **Show:** Brooklyn 99, **Movie:** The Princess Bride, **Place:** My room.
Childhood dream job? Astronaut.
Current obsession: The Silmarillion
I would switch lives for a day with... Henry Cavill. - Linguistics/**Literature**, Contemporary/**Fantasy**, **Prequels-Sequels**/Retellings

Charlie *Tall* (21)
Commissioner of External Affairs

"According to all known laws of aviation, there is no way a bee should be able to fly. The bee, of course, flies anyway, because bees don't care what humans think is impossible."
- The Bee Movie

From: Utrecht
Favorite Book: The Secret History, **Artist:** Lovejoy, **Song:** Be Mine by The Covasette, **Show:** The Owl House, **Movie:** Little Women (2019), **Place:** 51.509285159336805, -0.1361445789775793.
Current obsession: Sleep.
I would switch lives for a day with... Scott Burnham, 1985. - Linguistics/**Literature**, **Contemporary**/Fantasy, **Prequels-Sequels**/Retellings

PLAYLIST OF MY LIFE

Edited by Helenie Demir

HESTER

1. "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Simon & Garfunkel
2. "Heroes" by David Bowie
3. "Shine On You Crazy Diamond, Pts. 1-5" by Pink Floyd
4. "Comfortably Numb" by Pink Floyd
5. "Mr. Blue Sky" by Electric Light Orchestra
6. "Wings of Time" by Tame Impala
7. "Cactus Tree" by Joni Mitchell
8. "Starman" by David Bowie
9. "Vincent" by Don McLean
10. "Layla" by Derek and the Dominoes

I started this playlist with the intention of making it related to the Antiquity issue, but I quickly realised it would be a forced effort and not actually songs that I love. So, I ended up putting some of my favourite songs from the 70s together to give you a journey back in time, albeit not as long ago as Antiquity. You can never go wrong with Simon & Garfunkel, and Pink Floyd is one of my absolute favourites. If I was honest, these would all be Pink Floyd songs, but hey, let's make it fair and at least try to get more people able to enjoy it! Highly, highly recommend checking out the album *Blue* by Joni Mitchell too, but that's not on Spotify anymore so you'll have to find your way over to Youtube for that one :) Enjoy!

ANNA-MARIA

As this is the final issue of the year, I was very excited to compile one of the playlists of the Antiquity issue. My goal was to create a playlist that would transfer me to this world of gods, heroes, witches, nymphs, and more magical creatures. I am not sure how it ended up being a playlist containing mainly tracks from Florence + The Machine and Hozier, but I am very happy with the result. I hope this playlist offers you a kind of escapism like the rest of the Antiquity issue. So sit back, relax, enjoy the music, and immerse yourself in your own world!

1. "Mermaids" by Florence + The Machine
2. "Swan Upon Leda" by Hozier
3. "Big God" by Florence + The Machine
4. "The Lakes" by Taylor Swift
5. "Angel of Small Death & Codeine Scene" by Hozier
6. "Which Witch" by Florence + The Machine
7. "Foreigner's God" by Hozier
8. "Oceanic Feeling" by Lorde
9. "June" by Florence + The Machine
10. "Venus Fly Trap" by MARINA

Riddle

I'm at the beginning of eternity,
The end of time and space,
At the beginning of every end,
And the end of every place.
What am I?

Written by Yule Brückner
Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

Zephyr
/ˈzɛfə/

Noun

A gentle, mild, wind or breeze

WORD OF THE MONTH

SELECTED BY
DANIEK GARST
EDITED BY
HELENIE DEMIR

This is June's word of the month, but it was written in early March when the world was still cold and a fire burned in the fireplace. This word is a manifestation for the beauty and tranquillity that June can bring. Summer is here, or approaching at least, and hopefully, the sun is shining and bringing warmth. Close your eyes, look towards the sun, take a moment, and romanticise your life. And the … just when you think you can bear the heat of the sun no longer and need to look for some shade, a cool zephyr flows by, bringing some relief and prolonging your enjoyment. We all know that feeling, and I look forward to many such moments this season. Happy summer everyone!

TROY AND THE SONG OF ACHILLES: A DIFFERENT STORY TO TELL ILIAD ADAPTATIONS

Written by Nina van Veen - Edited by Anna Preindl

The Iliad is widely regarded as one of the best pieces of literature that has ever been written and there are not many people who are not familiar with the Trojan War or the story of Achilles. Over the years, the story has been retold countless times in different media: film adaptations, books, and plays. Though all of these use the same source and tell the same story, some of them differ quite a lot. Two well-known adaptations of *The Iliad* are the film *Troy* (2004) and the novel *The Song of Achilles* (2011) by Madeline Miller. In order to not make the film too complicated, *Troy* differs from *The Iliad* in various ways. The war lasts for weeks instead of years, the death of several characters is changed, and Paris and Helen escape *Troy* together, instead of Helen being taken back to Greece. Although, the biggest difference, at least in my opinion, lies in the portrayal of Patroclus. In *Troy*, Patroclus is Achilles' cousin and pupil. Both Achilles and Hector are unaware that Patroclus is fighting in Achilles' armour and find out only after Hector has killed him. *The Iliad* tells an altogether different story. Patroclus is not Achilles' cousin, he is his best friend and companion and presumably also his lover. Achilles knows that Patroclus is fighting in his stead and Hector also soon finds out. After Hector kills Patroclus, he takes Achilles' armour off the body and wears it the next day when he fights Achilles. This is crucial because Achilles knows the weaknesses of this armour and is thus able to defeat Hector. Patroclus' death is the reason Achilles starts to fight again, and that is not because he was his cousin or his pupil, but because he loved him. This side of the story is left out in *Troy*, but it is told in another adaptation, namely, *The Song of Achilles.* The starting point of this novel is a while before the Trojan War, and its focus lies on the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. Patroclus is the narrator, and the story begins when he is only a little boy. He tells about his childhood, how he came to know Achilles, and how they went to Troy together. Not as friends, but as lovers. I won't give any more spoilers, but this is a heart-breaking novel that everyone should read. Patroclus and Achilles are the centre of this story, and it is much truer to *The Iliad,* which probably has something to do with the fact that Madeline Miller has a BA and MA in Latin and Ancient Greek and worked on this novel for years. The novel has won many prizes and is very popular: you've probably seen it somewhere on TikTok. Not all TikTok books are satisfactory, but in this case, the hype is certainly worth it. So, go read it, and I promise you, you'll have no regrets.

ASTERIX AND OBELIX

Written by Hester Schneider
Edited by Helenie Demir

One of the earliest encounters with Antiquity that I've had is probably the adventures of Asterix and Obelix. I have always associated them with the Roman empire, but that is quite the insult to these high-spirited figures. Asterix and Obelix always go on these crazy adventures fighting precisely *against* the Roman occupation. The comic books , that were originally written in French, always start with the same line:

The year is 50 BC. Gaul is entirely occupied by the Romans. Well, not entirely... One small village of indomitable Gauls still holds out against the invaders.

Although the comics and films are named after Asterix and Obelix, I would say for me the most memorable character was always Getafix (or, in Dutch, Panoramix), the village druid with his huge square nose and the one who is rarely seen without his ladle. Anyways, although Asterix takes his magic potions, one could argue his cunning and intelligence are his real strength. Dare I say Asterix could be one of the earliest superheroes of time? The absolute king of superheroes, might I add – quite literally they were because the -ix suffix alludes to -rix (=king) which many Gaulish chieftain names actually ended in. The comics are highly nostalgic for me, they are great reads and at the same time genuinely a good introduction to the Roman Empire. The historical aspect does have to be taken with a grain of salt, though, as not everything is as accurate and there are many fun cameos throughout the comics, such as Berlusconi, The Beatles, and Napoleon.

Zeus's Crimes Against Humanity

Written by Helenie Demir

Name: Zeus, King of the Gods, Ruler of Olympians, God of the Sky and Thunder, Father of (too many) Bastards, Unfaithful Husband, and Danger to Women

Appearance: white curly beard, toy thunderbolt, domesticized eagle, small... parts

Wanted for:
Illegal shapeshifting
Overpopulation
Gaslighting
Incest
Murder
Hubris
Patricide
Misuse of power
Torture
Cannibalism
Arson
Human/godly trafficking
Complicity in his wife's crimes
Absolutist rule
Mass murder
Bribery
Nepotism

A SECOND CHANCE FOR PERCY

Written by Nina van Veen - Edited by Eva Bleeker

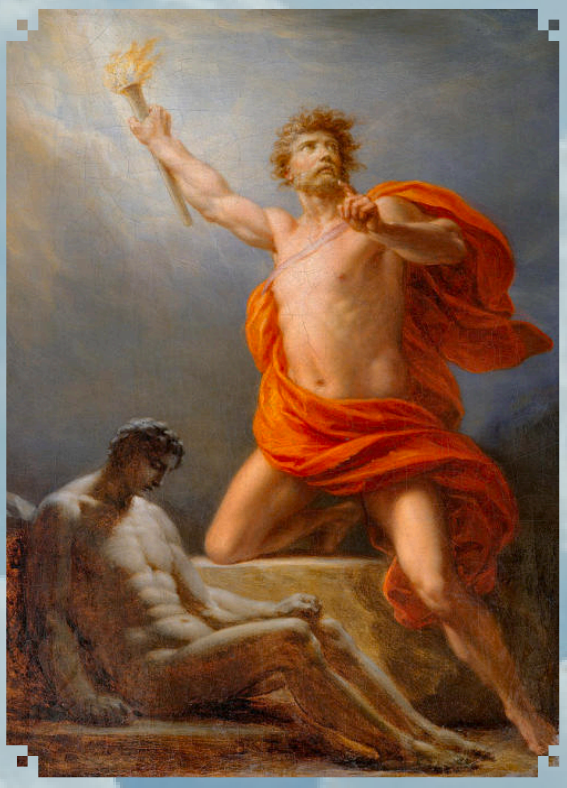
When I was still in high school, I believed myself to be an expert in classical mythology. Greek myths? They held no secrets from me. Why did I believe this? Was it because I paid so much attention when we were talking about it in history class, or because I watched countless documentaries? No. The reason I was an expert was of course because I had read the *Percy Jackson* series. I'm sure many of you can relate. Percy Jackson was not only a fun, relatable character who lived an exciting life full of mythological monsters and swordfights, the reader really got to grow up with him. In the first book, *The Lighting Thief*, he is twelve years old. As he got older, so did I. Imagine the excitement when it was announced that there would be a movie. So much source material, so much potential, and yet, that movie was the disappointment of a lifetime. Even Rick Riordan, the author of the series, wanted nothing to do with it. Luckily, or at least we hope so, the books are given a second chance. They have been picked up by Disney+ and will be made into a series. So far, things are looking good. Rick Riordan is closely involved and the cast looks great, with actors who are actually the same age as their characters in the book. Let us hope that these beloved books will finally get the screen adaptation they deserve.

PROMETHEUS: THE CONVERGENCE OF MYTH AND THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Written and Photos Edited by Jonathan van Noppen
Edited by Eva Bleeker

Can high-flown sci-fi concepts be merged with ancient Greek mythology? The 2012 film *Prometheus* does just that and serves as a prequel to director Ridley Scott's classic 70's space-horror film, *Alien*. At my initial and even second viewing, I found the film's narrative and visual style to be exceedingly esoteric, with many branching story lines and several unanswered questions. I will unpack this film starting from the title: *Prometheus*. In the film, it is the name of the spacecraft guiding the crew to their destination where they hope to find humanity's creators. In Greek mythology, it is the Titan responsible for stealing fire from the gods, which helped further the progression of humankind. For this, he was punished by Zeus and sentenced to eternal torment. A common thread connecting film and myth is that both represent the search for scientific knowledge and advancement. However, in both cases, the search ends in tragedy and death. This idea is also found in the Genesis tale of the Fall of Mankind. In the story, the devil, disguised as a serpent, tempts Eve to partake from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve's ambition for unacquired knowledge caused humanity to fall from their God-like state, yet she also gained the ability to see the world as a dualistic plain of existence—where the opposing forces of evil and good can co-exist. Circling back to the film, one crewmember on board Prometheus in particular embodies these themes, and it is often through her that we see them play out. She is Elizabeth Shaw, one of the scientists who made the discovery of the solar system capable of supporting life, where they believe humanity's creators reside. At the onset of the film, Shaw is optimistic that contact with these beings will lead to answers to the fundamental questions of life: "Where do we come from?" and "What is our purpose?" She is religious and holds belief in a God. In contrast to Shaw, the majority of the crew are skeptical that they will discover anything resembling creators on the planet of their destination. This is because they think that the belief in a higher power that created life discounts science—namely, evolution.

The relationship between creator and created is key to an understanding of this film. This comes to a head in the character of the android David—the film's mysterious antagonist. However, I am hesitant to label David as an antagonistic force in this movie. This is because the actions of the other characters, apart from Dr. Shaw, are not particularly commendable. Also, the fundamental feature of David as an android is that he must answer to his maker—Peter Weyland, the founder and main sponsor of the mission. Weyland seems to have an undisclosed agenda throughout the film, which involves using Prometheus' crew as expendable subjects to experiment on. Because he is not revealed to be alive until near the end of the film, David executes Weyland's plans in his place. One scene in particular encapsulates this concept of maker and subject perfectly. Dr. Charlie Holloway and David are on board the ship after they discover evidence of Engineers—humanity's creators. Holloway poses the question of why the Engineers created humans. David then counters this with an enquiry of his own: the reason for humans to create artificial intelligence. To this Holloway replies nonchalantly, "We made you because we could." Then David cooly utters the line, "Can you imagine how disappointing it would be for you to hear the same thing from your creator?" Ultimately, the reason for humanity's creation goes unanswered, which resulted in a mixed reception from critics and fans of the film. However, I think this is precisely the point of the filmmaker, for if our purpose is set for us by our creators, it would not match real life—which is a continual process of discovery.



THE GRAFFITI OF POMPEII

Written by Aitana Montoro – Edited by Helenie Demir

Buried in ashes, and purged by the fire of a great volcano, the city of Pompeii remains trapped in time. Skeletons of embracing lovers, amulets with engravings of gods and satyrs, and petrified food can all be found between the ruins like bugs in amber. Memory is set in stone, and in Pompeii, history is painted and scrawled on the crumbling walls of a long-lost empire.

The graffiti of Pompeii tell hundreds of stories: tales of forbidden love, drunken nights out, lustful affairs... What once may have been an act of vandalism has become an invaluable source for historians, a testimony of Roman literacy and art. The wind is a thief of words and paper is at the mercy of flames but the writing on the wall has remained through fire and flood. From electoral campaigns to obscene innuendos, the street art of Pompeii covers the walls of bars, brothels, and baths. It offers a glimpse into the politics, culture, and daily life of Ancient Roman people. Reading the graffiti of Pompeii, one realises how feelings like love, resentment, and hatred are so weaved in our heartstrings that are impossible to untangle. Emotions that are so deeply human that still resonate with us centuries apart. The need to be remembered has gripped humanity since the dawn of civilization. An obsession with posterity fuelled by the maddening awareness of death. History repeats itself, and what once were inscriptions on basilicas and gladiators' barracks have become doodles in bathroom stalls and spray-painted blocky letters in back alleys.

Here is a list of some of the most wonderful, hilarious, and bizarre graffiti found on the walls of Pompeii:

"We two dear men, friends forever, were here. If you want to know our names, they are Gaius and Aulus."

"If anyone does not believe in Venus, they should gaze at my girlfriend."

"Weep, you girls. My penis has given you up. Now it penetrates men's behinds. Goodbye, wondrous femininity!"

"O walls, you have held up so much tedious graffiti that I am amazed you have not already collapsed in ruin"

"Vibius Restitutus slept here alone with his heart filled with longing for his Urbana."

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A ROMAN

Written by Aleeza van der Giessen – Edited by Hester Schneider

What daily life during the golden days of the Roman empire looked like depended gravely on your wealth and status in society. In the city, you would either wake up in your *domus* (a large, gorgeous house with a private pool) if you were rich, or if you were less fortunate you would live in a cramped flat called an *insula*—sometimes without running water or a bathroom. In the case of the latter, there were public toilets available, but I refuse to go into detail about that. Now, time for breakfast (*ientaculum*, if you will). Nothing like some bread, cheese, fruit, and wine at dawn to kick off your day. Before leaving the house you would pull on a toga, the beauty of which once again depended on your wealth. Off to your job (cue *negotium*: time for business and daily tasks), which would have taken up most of the day. Some people were important politicians, others authors, doctors, engineers, teachers, or perhaps merchants. If you had some leisure time (*otium*) left, there's a big chance you would go to a gladiator fight. Or do you prefer something less gruesome? Reading books and socializing in the *thermae* (bathhouses) might be your thing. More of an introvert? Then you should try chariot racing. At the end of a long day, it's time to go to sleep on a mattress filled with feathers and some leaves that will be beneficial for your health while sleeping (and keep parasites away). Then dawn breaks and it's time to start all over again. What a life, right?

ALBION ABROAD

Written and Photographed by
Fabienne Bruggeman
Edited by Nina van Veen

I have been studying at Kyoto University for almost 2 months and the experience thus far has been hard to describe - but I am going to make an attempt. I arrived in Tokyo in March, spending 5 days wandering the streets of Shibuya before taking the Shinkansen to Kyoto in just under 3 hours. It is hard to compare Japan to any other country I have visited but I would use the word 'utopian' to describe it. The niche shops, beautiful shrines and aesthetic streets that I am fortunate enough to walk through on my way to university every morning are all part of something that is still hard to realize.

It should come as no surprise that I have been thoroughly enjoying the food during my time here. Even though I try to cook as much as I can as a student, I cannot resist the charm of small izakayas with tatami mats, shoji screens, and low tables. I have found it especially challenging to resist indulging in Japanese chicken katsu curry on a daily basis. While Kyoto's nightlife may not be the liveliest, it undeniably has the best cocktail and sake bars in all of Japan, which I may or may not have been taking advantage of during my "vrijmibo."

I recently had a conversation with an American friend here, discussing how living in Asia often profoundly broadens our perspectives as privileged Westerners. However, Japan has only made us more critical of our countries, considering the outstanding living conditions here. Given Japan's relatively homogeneous population, it is easy to recognize me as a foreigner, which sometimes makes it hard to fully integrate into society. For that reason, my perception of Japan's societal structure may be somewhat romanticized. Nevertheless, I must say that I have never felt as safe and relaxed as I do here (that is, not taking into account the frequent earthquakes in Kyoto, haha).

One cultural shock I have encountered in Japan is the working culture, particularly in Tokyo. Due to having jetlag, I often went out for food past midnight and it was not uncommon to see several businessmen passed out on the streets with bottles of sake and beer next to them. Another thing I have noticed is that it is quite hard to become friends with Japanese students. Despite trying to engage in friendly conversations, many students tend to maintain a formal demeanor towards internationals, making it hard to establish closer relationships.

Being in Japan is definitely one for the books and I already dread the day I return to Amsterdam. During the first month alone I have been able to visit Nara, Osaka, Tokyo and Nagoya. Okinawa, Mt Fuji and Hiroshima are next on the list. I definitely see myself returning to Japan long-term in the future. However, for now, I will enjoy the three months I have left in the 'Land of the Rising Sun'.

THE ORIGIN OF THE GOD'S SUN

Written by Zoya Tashi – Edited by Eva Bleeker

In most Western societies, there's one man whose name we say every day, sometimes subconsciously. He has influenced much of modern culture as we know it, for both religious and non-religious folk. As a bonus, he gives us holidays in the winter and spring! We all know his name: Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Recently, there has been a dispute over where he originates from. For this, we could start with a play on words: The Son of God, or the God's Sun?

The Sun has historically been one of the most beloved and revered celestial objects. Unsurprisingly, it is associated with happiness because it brings warmth, abundant harvests, and light to protect us from the night's dangers. The stars in the night sky, which seemed to be the only luminaries alongside the moon, were another highly praised feature. People have long used the stars to locate themselves and recognise and foresee events like full moons. Two of the earliest organisational structures used by humans, our modern time, and calendrical system, were made possible by the appearance of stars and the Sun.

Recounting historical occurrences, folktales, and legends has always been one of humanity's favourite pastimes. People anthropomorphised the Sun and the Stars to make sense of the events they sparked. Over time, they saw the Sun as a life-sustaining God and the Stars as constellations, or zodiacs. Many people could not read, write, or access education, so they depended on symbolic figures to represent events, mostly to do with nature, in their everyday life. The sanctification of the Sun led to it being called "God's Sun" in many cultures. This was the beginning of numerous modern and ancient religions we are familiar with today, especially Christianity. Their roots were embedded in this anthropomorphism of nature.

During December, the Sun appears to set lower in the sky with each passing day until the 22nd of December. The Sun then repeats the same cycle for three days, rising and setting in brief periods, residing near the Southern Cross constellation, or crux. On the 24th of December, the brightest star in the sky, Sirius, aligns with three stars from Orion's belt, known today (and in the past) as the Three Kings. This alignment of stars subsequently points to the rising Sun on the following day - the 25th of December. On this day, the Sun progressively rises higher into the sky each day until it is at its highest point in the spring. Does this sound familiar?

In many worldwide religions, a revered religious figure is, almost always, born of a virgin on the 25th of December. This event is announced by a star in the Eastern sky, which three wise men follow to locate the birth. These figures often grow up to have twelve disciples. They perform miracles such as healing the sick, reversing death, walking on water, and feeding large populations with little food. The figure is then 'crucified' and is resurrected after three days.

There's no question that the life of Jesus, amongst the lives of other deities such as Horus, Dionysus, Mithra, Krishna, and Adonis, aligns with astrology. It is incredible to know that humankind not only pinpointed natural events in the Sun and stars, but also gave them a familiar face to remember. A face that brought safety, food, warmth, and hope.

HADES AND PERSEPHONE: A LOVE WE LOVE TO LOVE

Written and Illustrated by
Emilie Wiingreen
Edited by Eva Bleeker

The myth about Hades and Persephone has seen many iterations over the years. Even though we love to romanticise the meet cute of Hades and Persephone in pop culture, as seen in the many fictional literary romance adaptations like Scarlett St. Clair's Hades and Persephone romance book series, Rachel Smythe's web comic *Lore Olympus*, or even Suzanne Clay's LGBTQ+ M/M retelling *By Pain of Death*. However, as much as we like to romanticise it, these versions are far from the original myth. As Homer describes it, Hades had, like many other gods, taken a liking to Persephone, but when he asked for Zeus' permission and was left without an answer, he took matters into his own hands. He decided to kidnap Persephone with the intent of making her his wife. During Persephone's disappearance, her mother searched far and wide, growing more worried each day. Eventually, she asked Helios, who had seen the kidnapping happen, where her daughter might be, but the answer was far from what she would have liked. She was infuriated by Hades' actions and decided to go on a quest to get her daughter back, leaving the earth in disarray. Eventually, Zeus had to intervene, sending Hermes to the underworld to take Persephone home. This was naturally against Hades' wishes, but he reluctantly agreed after letting Persephone eat from the pomegranate, binding her to the underworld for a third of the year. Although not as romantic, it is believed that Persephone eventually fell in love with Hades.

Riddle

A peculiar object, hanging at the side,
Beneath its master's garment it does reside.
Pierced in the front, firm and unbending,
In a favourable position, always attending.

When the master's garment is lifted high,
With the head he aims to meet the nearby,
A familiar hole of equal measure,
One he's filled countless times with great pleasure.

What am I, this intriguing sight to behold?
Solve me to unlock secrets untold.

Written by Yule Brückner
Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

QUIZ:
HOW WOULD THE GREEK GODS TORTURE YOU?

Written by Eva Bleeker – Edited by Helenie Demir

The Greek gods are known for their vengeful spirits. When you have so many mortals and immortals to punish, you have no choice but to get creative. Luckily, the gods never seemed to run out of inspiration to come up with the sickest, cruelest, and most disturbing forms of torture and punishment. Take this quiz to see how the gods would torture you for your sins, wrongdoings, or just for being the scum of the earth.

What was the worst part of high school for you?

α. Health/biology class on procreation and giving birth

γ. Needing to wait until lunch break when you were hungry

δ. Gym class

Which of these descriptions fits you the best?

α. Most likely to not have any children (by choice)

β. Has an irrational fear of birds

δ. Will do anything to avoid physical labour

ε. A complete coward when it comes to riding rollercoasters

Which of these scares you the most?

β. Blood

ε. Your house catching on fire while you're in it

What annoys/bothers you the most?

γ. Dinner being late

δ. Sweating

ε. Experiencing motion sickness

Which of these descriptions is frighteningly relatable?

α. Obsessed with that girl on tiktok with the list on why never to have children

β. Flinches during surgery scenes in medical shows

γ. Cannot function without a little snack during the day

Mostly α?

Just like Hera tortured Leto, the gods will punish you by delaying your labour while you're suffering. They will make you go through all forms of hell before you can give birth. All the lands will be forbidden to provide you with a safe haven, so get ready for a long and painful labour. Did you have an affair with one of the gods to deserve this? Naughty.

Mostly β?

The gods will bind you to a rock and let an eagle eat out your liver every day, inspired by the famous punishment of Prometheus for giving fire to humans. Luckily, or perhaps unluckily, your liver regrows during the night, so you can experience it all over again the next day, and the next, for eternity.

Mostly γ?

Wouldn't it be tantalising if your only sources of food and water were always just out of reach? Just like Tantalus, you will be punished by being forced to stand in a pool of water under a fruit tree for eternity, with the water receding every time you try to take a sip and the fruit tree ever dodging your grasp. That's what you get for serving your son to the Gods, don't test them…

Mostly δ?

To pay for your everlasting, incredibly irritating cleverness, you will be forced to move a boulder up a mountain, just like Sisyphus. Seems easy? Don't worry, there's a twist. Whenever you almost reach the top, the boulder will roll all the way down again, just for you to attempt to push it up the mountain again, and again, repeating this pattern for eternity. Perhaps you shouldn't have tried to escape death and trick the gods.

Mostly ε?

You thought rollercoasters were bad? You're in for a treat then. The gods will punish you by binding you to a fiery wheel that is always spinning, and spinning, and spinning… You must have done something terrible to deserve the same punishment as Ixion, who is known as the first man in Greek mythology to be guilty of kin-slaying. Have fun with the eternal torture of motion sickness while being burned all over.

UNVEILING THE TIMELESSNESS OF ANCIENT GREEK COLUMNS

Written by Mohana Zwaga – Edited by Anna Preindl

The Ancient Greeks were true masters of column craftsmanship, and we can recognize three distinctive styles. Firstly, we have the Doric columns, sturdy and simple, symbolized strength and power. The shapes were simplistic, with little to no decoration. The Ionic columns that followed, with their graceful scrolls called volutes, exuded elegance and sophistication, showcasing simple curves and curls. And finally, the Corinthian columns, adorned with intricate acanthus leaves, beautiful, grand detail of epitomized opulence and grandeur.

These magnificent columns played a pivotal role in the construction of Greek temples. Their development over time accompanied the stark dramatization in Greek sculpting as well, which finally led to its most imposing form: the Hellenistic style. Imagine gory scenes of white marble with rippling muscles (more than actual human anatomy even allows for), and you are about halfway there.

The Ionic order grew more elaborate with the addition of decorative mouldings, while the Corinthian order became even more ornate, adorned with delicate foliage and acanthus scrolls. This evolution showcased the Greeks' innovative spirit and their never-ending quest for aesthetic perfection. But the influence of Greek columns did not end with ancient times. Today, Greek columns continue to perpetuate their timeless allure and inspiring architectural endeavours. From grand government buildings to majestic mansions, their influence transcends time. The neoclassical movement of the Renaissance revived the elegance and grandeur of Greek columns, infusing them with a contemporary touch. However, it is worth noting that during the 20th century, the neoclassical style also found itself entwined with the (ahem) ambitious visions of fascist regimes, giving rise to monumental structures that sought to evoke a sense of power and authority. Though we observe the lasting impact of Greek columns in various architectural styles, it serves as a reminder that even elements of beauty can sometimes be dislodged for darker purposes.

NATALIE HAYNES' A THOUSAND SHIPS: THE MODERN EPIC OF THE TROJAN WAR

Written by Helenie Demir – Edited by Marit Vogels

"He's worrying it will be more tragedy than epic [...] Men's death are epic, women's death are tragic: is that it? He has misunderstood the very nature of conflict. Epic is countless tragedies, woven together."

And that is exactly what Natalie Haynes has done. She created a modern epic of the classics. It seems an impossible task to fulfill, combining all the separate stories of the women who suffered during and after the Trojan War, but Haynes succeeded and created an image that is devastating, yet powerful.

Multiple versions of the Trojan War exist. It is the biggest and most discussed battle in Greek mythology because it is the only one in which the Olympian gods participated. But all the primary sources on the War are written by men and from a male perspective. The women barely have a voice to share their side of the story with.

Haynes gives them that voice. *A Thousand Ships* dives into the heart of these women. One by one, the women receive a moment of recognition, even going as far back as the very start of the war, to Gaia.

As the personification of Earth, Gaia was weary of all the people running on her back and war was the solution to her pain. Other POVs we see are from Zeus' advisor Themis; Eris, used as a pawn to indirectly start the War; Penelope, who wrote letters to her husband Odysseus; Calliope, who muses on man's failings and destructiveness. Every wife, every daughter, every woman... each of them finally recognized.

Though the multiple POVs are not for everyone – most characters get just one chapter—Haynes managed all of these individual stories to flow right into each other seamlessly. Concisely, yet beautifully written, *A Thousand Ships* is a modern classic in its own right.

Phoenix's Favourite Mythological Creatures

Collage by Zuzia Belauff