

## Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture

Images of episodes from Greek mythology are widespread in Roman art, appearing in sculptural groups, mosaics, paintings and reliefs. They attest to Rome's enduring fascination with Greek culture, and her desire to absorb and reframe that culture for new ends. This book provides a comprehensive account of the meanings of Greek myth across the spectrum of Roman art, including public, domestic and funerary contexts. It argues that myths, in addition to functioning as signifiers of a patron's education or *paideia*, played an important role as rhetorical and didactic *exempla*. The changing use of mythological imagery in domestic and funerary art in particular reveals an important shift in Roman values and senses of identity across the period of the first two centuries AD, and in the ways that Greek culture was turned to serve Roman values.

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# Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture

Imagery, Values and Identity in Italy,  
50 BC–AD 250

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ZAHRA NEWBY  
University of Warwick



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*For Oliver and Georgia*

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- 7.3 Shield sarcophagus with a central vignette showing Mars and Rhea Silvia. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano inv. 310683. Photo: by permission of il Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo – Soprintendenza speciale per il Colosseo, il Museo Nazionale Romano e l'Area archeologica di Roma. [345]

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- Pl. 1 Map of the *Horti* on the Esquiline, showing the location of the finds of the Marsyas (top left in Isola XXIX) and the Niobids (bottom, tentatively placed in Isola XXXII or XXXIII). © Chrystina Häuber, used by kind permission.
- Pl. 2 Room B of the Villa della Farnesina, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme. Photo: Miguel Hermoso Cuesta, used under creative commons licence.

- Pl. 3 Wall-painting showing Jason and Pelias from the House of Jason, Pompeii. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 111436. Photo: © Archivio dell' Arte. Luciano Pedicini.
- Pl. 4 Wall-painting showing Achilles and Polyxena from the House of Jason, Pompeii. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale inv. 111475. Photo: © Archivio dell' Arte. Luciano Pedicini.
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- Pl. 10 Engraving of the decoration of room C in the Villa Negroni, showing Aphrodite. Photo: Courtesy of the British School at Rome Library, Buti collection, pl. I.
- Pl. 11 Engraving probably showing the decoration of room E in the Villa Negroni, featuring an enthroned couple. Photo: Courtesy of the British School at Rome Library, Buti collection, pl. VI.
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- Pl. 13 Detail of the wall-painting showing Heracles and Alcestis decorating the back wall of the miniature tomb built into the external wall of Tomb 3, Via Ostiense Necropolis, Rome. Photo: Zahra Newby.
- Pl. 14 View of the back wall of Tomb I, Vatican Necropolis. Photo: by kind permission of the Fabbrica di San Pietro in Vaticano.
- Pl. 15 Tomb of the Pancratii, Via Latina, Rome. View of stucco decoration on the entrance wall and ceiling including a scene of the ransoming of Hector on the ceiling. Photo: Zahra Newby.



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Abbreviations

The abbreviations used follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, third edition, for classical authors and corpora of inscriptions and *L'Année Philologique* for journal titles, with the addition of those listed below.

ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Eds. W. Haase and H. Temporini. Berlin and New York, 1972–96
IGUR	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae</i> . Ed. L. Moretti. Rome, 1968–
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> . 8 vols. Zurich and Munich, 1981–97
LTUR	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> . 6 vols. Ed. E. M. Steinby. Rome, 1993–9
LTURS	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae. Suburbium</i> . 5 vols. Ed. A. La Regina. Rome, 2001–8
NSc	<i>Notizie degli scavi di antichità</i>
PPM	<i>Pompei, Pitture e Mosaici</i> . 11 vols. Ed. I. Baldassarre. Rome, 1990–2003