**A conversation with Lisa Maurizio**

**OUP:** Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Lisa Maurizio: I’ve been teaching Classical Mythology for about twenty-five years, at a variety of institutions, primarily in the United States, but also in Italy. Scholars are also increasingly using ancient Greek myths and the Internet, students can look up all the information that formerly they had to get from textbooks. So, due to the Internet, students want to know different sorts of things about Greek myth, not just the “who,” “what,” and “where.” They want to know how to interpret the strange symbols and images.

**OUP:** So, student preferences and interests have changed. What about instructors’ interests? Has the course changed over the years?

Lisa Maurizio: The field of Classical Mythology among scholars has changed a lot too; they want to use theories from anthropology, psychology, and even cognitive science. This is something that really makes this textbook unique: its emphasis on visual sources, not just written ones. It contains sources from other parts of the Mediterranean basin—ancient myths, both visual and written. Finally, all of the Greek primary written sources are from somewhere in Greece, in the Western Classics, so they’re in up-to-date, readable translations.

**OUP:** Twenty-five years is a long time. How has the course changed over the years?

Lisa Maurizio: Most current textbooks really want to tell students about classical myths, and they spend a lot of time doing that. But that ends up being their primary focus. What they don’t do is provide students with ways to think about classical myths. So what I wanted to do was provide a textbook that helps students think about myths by asking challenging questions of them from different eras.

**OUP:** How is your book different from the other classical mythology books available to students?

Lisa Maurizio: Each chapter is devoted to a god, a goddess, a hero, or a heroine, or looks at them in pairs. Each chapter has four sections. In the first section, History, myth is treated as just part of the dynamic religious system of ancient Greece. In this section, we look at different sorts of questions and answering questions about Greek myth. In the Comparison section, we look at Greek myths by comparing them to myths from other cultures. Finally, in the Reception section, each chapter is asked: does the modern and contemporary audience see it as, in our own art form. Points of reception are obviously an essential part of this course. How do you treat sources in your book?

Lisa Maurizio: Each chapter contains three types of primary sources, both visual and written. This type of textbook that really makes this textbook unique: its emphasis on visual sources, not just written ones. It contains sources from other parts of the Mediterranean basin—ancient myths, both visual and written. Finally, all of the Greek primary written sources are from somewhere in Greece, in the Western Classics, so they’re in up-to-date, readable translations.

**OUP:** How are the chapters in the other classical mythology books organized?

Lisa Maurizio: The title of each chapter is an ancient myth. Scholars are also increasingly interested in thinking about Greece in relation to the Ancient Near East and Italy.

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