Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Hercules: Twilight of a God by Bob Layton, Ronald Ron Lim ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/260. Entry version as of November 07, 2026.

Bob Layton , Ronald Ron Lim

Hercules: Twilight of a God

United States (2010)

TAGS: Heracles Hercules





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

General information	
Title of the work	Hercules: Twilight of a God
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2010
First Edition Details	Bob Layton and Ron Lim, *Hercules: Twilight of a God*, vols. 1–4. New York: Marvel, 2010, 112 pp.
ISBN	9780785135463
Genre	Action and adventure comics, Alternative histories (Fiction), Comics (Graphic works), Mythological comics, Mythological fiction
Target Audience	Young adults (13 years and up)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Courtesy of the Author.

Bob Layton , b. 1970
(Author)

Bob is a highly prolific and imaginative American comic artist with over 5000 comic book credits. Bob works on comics as well as television and films. He worked for many companies, including Marvel and DC Comics. He reinvented the Iron man series in the 70s. He also launched one of the first mini-series in comic history, *Hercules: The Prince of Power*.

Layton said in an interview that “it took a bit of pushing to have a finite series about a drunken super-hero published at Marvel... I loved the big dumb lug and I've always had a soft spot for forgotten secondary characters. Plus, I felt that Hercules hadn't found his niche' in the Marvel Universe, being relegated to supporting roles and such. Also... I felt that the Marvel books took themselves WAY too serious in those days. I wanted to lighten things up a bit. I've always enjoyed writing comedy and Herc was a perfect foil for my brand of humor” (Cited from online interview, accessed: June 27, 2018).

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Profile on Comic Vine (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Online interview (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

Questionnaire

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1. What drew you to writing/working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?

Character… character… and character! The elements that make a good story are the conflicts that create change in the characters. A good character is always a work in progress, constantly adapting to challenges that life throws at him while trying to control the inner demons that sometimes push him down unexpected roads.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?

The positive aspect is that the film industry is keeping the super-hero genre alive and demonstrating that there is definitely an audience for this particular form of entertainment. I believe that these Hollywood producers, seeking to recapture the "sense of wonder" they experienced as youngsters, have now become a new creative extension for the medium of comics – taking their favorite icons back to their more accessible roots.
The truth is that many of the comic-based movies are what the comics themselves used to be, back when they were accessible on newsstands to a mass market.

And in a time where our belief in our time-honored institutions and public figures are being challenged, the genre offers hope that some of our ideals are being kept alive through these fictional heroes.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?) What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?

I learned to read from comics when I was only four years old, after my older sister Sue became bored with reading the same comic to me about fifty times. As I matured, I began to comprehend the true potential that the medium had and became obsessed with becoming part of it. My early days were filled with the literary tales from Edgar Rice Burroughs and Arthur C. Clarke. Having grown up dirt poor,

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college wasn't in my future. Fortunately, I was able to educate myself through the local public library and eventually was awarded an apprenticeship with a famous DC Comics artist. I worked for him until I was competent to get work on my own merit.

Prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com



Ronald Ron Lim , b. 1965
(Illustrator)

Ron is an American comic book artist from California. He mainly works on Marvel titles. Ron graduated with a BA in Graphic Arts at California State University, Sacramento.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Profile on Comic Vine (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Online interview (accessed: January 15, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

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Additional information

Summary

In these 4 volumes of the comic book series, Hercules has been the champion of the Andromeda galaxy for over 75 years, together with his son and grandchildren. It is a part of the larger Marvel universe. The mythical hero is again placed in a sci-fi environment. It continues his adventures from the Prince of Power series and there are recurring characters. It seems that his comic book version is a kind of stereotypical cliché of the strong man without too many brains. In this retelling he is also forbidden to drink because of his medical conditions. Yet here he gets the love and support of a close family, especially his granddaughter. Hercules might be a grandfather now, seemingly passed his prime, yet his potency is still as strong as ever, as his dedication to his family. In a fitting end Hercules disappears in space, as if becoming a constellation again. The fourth volume ends with his son looking at a statue of his father, wearing a short skirt, like a Greek hero. So the past is commemorated in stone even in a faraway galaxy.

Analysis

From a stylistic point of view, it is interesting that even in the celestial-space setting, Hercules has a resemblance to ancient Greece. Although he does not wear a chiton but tights and a vest, his appearance resembles the ancient Greek character. In a retrospective before his death, Hercules remembers his previous adventures, where we see him wearing the one-shouldered chiton and fighting the hydra, yet at the same time joining a group of other super heroes like Captain America. In the marvel universe the super heroes' culture is just as mythological as the ancient Greek mythology. Thus we have a nice reception of the mythological tale into a very different setting yet with the same hero.

The author intended to make his hero goofy and a little slow-witted, yet Hercules does use his wits to defend his family and his home. It is a nice touch that by the end of the volume, after his heroic self-sacrifice, he is honored by a Greek-style statue which celebrates the mythological as well as the super-hero character. Hercules is given a warm family here and a long life, of which he was deprived in the original myth. His true accomplishments are not the 12 labours, but his family and the city he helped established and protect against many threats. He is a hero because he defended his loved ones (in a true

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	super-hero fashion) and not just because he defeated all kinds of monsters. The only connection with the mythological tale is in Hercules' muscle man appearance, his name, and a few glimpses to his past adventures. Other than that this graphic novels give Hercules new adventures in another dimension.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Heracles Hercules
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Family Sacrifice Science Self Superheroes Tricksters Values
Further Reading	Kovacs, George and C. W. Marshall, *Classics and Comics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Kovacs, George and C. W. Marshall, *Son of Classics and Comics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

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