Kathryn Webber, "Entry on: The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins by Renae De Liz , Ray Dillon", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/926. Entry version as of November 01, 2026.

Renae De Liz , Ray Dillon

The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins

United States of America (2016)

TAGS: Alcippe Amazons Antiope (Amazon) Ares Artemis Athens Cetus Glauce (Amazon) Hephaestus Heracles Hercules Hermes Hippolyta Melanippe Pegasus Penthesilea Poseidon Themiscyra / Themyscira Themistocles Titanomachy Zeus



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

General information	
Title of the work	The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2016
First Edition Details	Renae De Liz, *The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins*. Burbank: DC Comics, 2016, 288 pp.
ISBN	9781401274252
Official Website	dccomics.com (accessed: December 9, 2019)
Genre	Comics (Graphic works), Graphic novels, Superhero comics
Target Audience	Crossover (Children and young adults)
Author of the Entry	Kathryn Webber, Victoria University of Wellington, webberkath@myvuw.ac.nz
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

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Creators



Renae De Liz , b. 1982
(Author)

Renae De Liz is comic book artist and author living in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. She was raised in Anchorage, Alaska, and spent much of her childhood making comics. Her husband Ray Dillon, who inked *The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins*, works with her in the comics industry. She has published comics with major comic houses such as DC Comics and Vertigo Comics. Her work deals in multiple genres, such as superhero stories and fairy-tale adaptations. She is known for her *Womanthology* and *Peter Pan* series.

Sources:

Blog (accessed: December 9, 2019)

Bio prepared by Kathryn Webber, Victoria University of Wellington, webberkath@myvuw.ac.nz



Ray Dillon , b. 1982
(Illustrator)

Ray Dillon is a comic artist from Kansas with more than 20 years of experience and De Liz husband. Like De Liz, he has stated having had an interest in creating comics from a young age. He is known for illustrating at both major comic houses (Marvel and DC), alongside other works such as *Star Mage*, *Mars Attacks*, *Robin Hood: Outlaw of the 21st Century*, *The Standard*, and George MacDonald's *The Light Princess*. The two have worked together as a writing and illustrating

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pair on *The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins* and an illustrating pair for the Anne Rice's *Servant of the Bones* series.

Sources:

Portfolio (accessed: December 9, 2019)

Profile at comixology.com (accessed: December 9, 2019)

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Additional information

Summary

The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins is a graphic novel retelling an updated origin story for the iconic superhero Wonder Woman. The story follows her journey from her island home of Themyscira into the outside world during World War II.

In ancient times, Zeus granted the Amazon Hippolyta and her sisters immortality. They created an island of women free from greed and hatred. Their island, Themyscira, is kept secret from the rest of the world in an unknown location. As an immortal, Hippolyta is unable to have a child, but she is so desperate that Gaea creates her a daughter from the clay of the earth. Her daughter Diana is a mortal, but as she senses an unspecified danger coming to Themyscira, she wishes to train to be a warrior and protect her home. We follow Diana as she grows up and becomes a fearsome warrior, but the sense of danger lingers, and she longs to understand what is causing it. One day, she comes upon a regular human pilot named Steve Trevor who has crashed on the island. After winning a battle to become the champion of Themyscira, Diana leaves to help return Steve to his home in the United States and hopefully find out why Themyscira is in danger. There, she meets another mortal, Etta Candy, and the two become friends.

The gods Ares and Hades have a champion of their own – the Duke of Deception, who is sent to aid the Nazis in the Second World War. Diana has a strong sense of justice and feels that she must aid in the war, so she disguises herself as a nurse in order to make it from America to the front lines in Europe. By donning the magical armour that her mother gave her, Diana is granted superpowers that she uses to fight the Nazi forces. Zeus offers Diana the power to defeat the Duke (and an even greater enemy, the Titan) if she pledges to become his champion. However, Zeus wishes to allow the world to be destroyed so he can rebuild it better than it was. Diana believes in humanity and its potential for growth, so she rejects him. As a result of defying Zeus, Diana is stripped of all her power. She then chooses to live a normal life with her friends Steve and Etta.

Soon after, Diana feels dutybound to return to battle despite the loss of her powers. With the help of Pegasus, Diana is able to defeat the Duke of Deception. An even greater threat appears in the form of the Titan, but Diana regains her power and is able to overcome him, too.

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Thus, Diana comes into her own as a superhero and protector of the innocent. In doing this, she becomes the superhero known as Wonder Woman.

Analysis

The Legend of Wonder Woman: Origins, is a graphic novel created to re-tell the origin story of Wonder Woman. The comic is a coming-of-age story, in which Princess Diana of Themyscira leaves her secluded island home and grows to become the superhero Wonder Woman. By using the graphic novel as a medium, De Liz is able to rely on the distinctly visual aspects of ancient Greek culture in creating the world that Diana belongs to. By doing this, her culture is instantly recognisable even to those who have little knowledge of classical history. Similarly, the beautifully rendered drawings and visually dynamic action helps the story to appeal to younger readers who are intimidated by large texts, as well as readers of all ages who enjoy illustration or the superhero comic genre as a whole.

As a superhero comic, the story is mainly concerned with portraying Diana's growth from a naïve princess to a brave heroine. However, the story also depicts a fictionalised ancient Greek culture and religion through the society of Themyscira. Aspects of ancient religion and culture are depicted particularly at the beginning of the text when the Amazons are doing the bidding of the gods and participating in different Greek cultural activities such as fighting games, theatrical productions, and celebrating the Anthesteria. Diana's name is also a noteworthy example of classical influence as she shares it with the goddess of the hunt. Diana, who is the Roman equivalent of the Greek goddess Artemis, is a virgin goddess associated with hunting, chastity, the Moon, the wilderness, young women, and childbirth. By sharing a name with a goddess associated chiefly with women, Wonder Woman is reinforced as a hero primarily targeted toward a female audience. Similarly, as one of the most famous aspects of the character is her feminism and sense of justice for women, the naming of her character after an ancient protector of women makes perfect sense.

The story cleverly fuses the motifs typical of a superhero story with an ancient Greek hero story. By using Greek mythological stories and figures like the Amazons, gods, and titans, Diana's world is coloured with Greek culture and myth. These fantastical and magical elements are then translated into the real-word historical event of World War II. The magic and myth of the Amazons becomes more apparent when

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Diana befriends mortal people like Steve and Etta. Gods such as Zeus, Ares, and Hades, are presented as real and have a major effect on the story. Similarly, the major villain ends up being a titan. As an iconic feminist heroine, Wonder Woman comics have been depicting Greek mythology through a feminine lens since their inception in 1941. This comic continues this tradition by focussing on the relationships Diana has with her mother and the other mythological Amazonian heroines that populate her island. Similarly, Wonder Woman is often used across various media as a role model for girls, who demonstrates female empowerment and fights for equality. This text in particular focusses quite heavily on the mythological aspects of the Wonder Woman canon as opposed to the modern. This results in an exploration of feminine power in terms of mythological stories that were male dominated in origin.

The Classical allusions in this story work first and foremost to establish Themyscira and its inhabitants as a people separate from the rest of the world. Themyscira has remained an ancient culture while the outside world has developed from ancient to modern. Themyscira's existence as a remaining bastion of ancient culture also serves to explain their power and magic compared with the mortal world – and the leaking of these mythological figures into the outside world is also the main source of the story's conflict. In terms of the story belonging to the Young Adult genre, the Classical references in Diana's culture serve to place her as an outsider in the mortal world, making her feel isolated and alienated. However, this is ultimately what makes her special and powerful, and what gives her the ability to save the world. Additionally, not only is Diana's uniqueness what makes her powerful, it is also explicitly the fact that she is a woman belonging to a culture exclusive to women that gives her the tools to win. As a mythological adaptation, this creates a role reversal from the stories that traditionally resulted in men overpowering women.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Alcippe Amazons Antiope (Amazon) Ares Artemis Athens Cetus Glauce (Amazon) Hephaestus Heracles Hercules Hermes Hippolyta Melanippe Pegasus Penthesilea Poseidon Themiscyra / Themyscira Themistocles Titanomachy Zeus

Adolescence Adventure Coming of age Conflict Family Femininity

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Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Freedom Friendship Gender Gender, female Girls Good deeds Good vs evil Heroism Humanity Identity Integrity Journeys Love Magic powers Nation Princes and princesses Relationships Superheroes War
Further Reading	dccomics.com (accessed: December 9, 2019)

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