

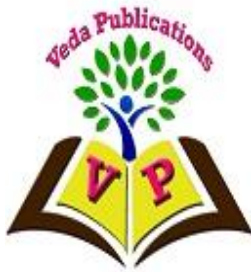
METEMPSYCHOSIS OF MYTHOLOGY: A DISSECTION OF POST MODERN HELLENISM

Krishnapriya V S

(M.Phil Scholar, Department of English and Languages, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kochi Campus, India.)

Email: Priyakrishna063@gmail.com

[doi: 10.33329/joell.7.2.55](https://doi.org/10.33329/joell.7.2.55)



ABSTRACT

Myths embody man's early explanations of the world he lived in and can be traced back to ancient native religions and are explicable in psychological or anthropological terms. Greek myths with their extreme diversity have been a fertile source for artists and poets for two thousand five hundred years. Post modern era makes a plausible sophistication of Hellenistic elements. Most of the new writers twist mythology. They adapt the mythological characters to suit the ordinary life, attires and culture. This paper deals with a post modernistic analysis of Jennifer L Armentrout's *Titan Series*.

Keywords: *Post Modernism, Mythology, Technology, Power struggle.*

Author(s) retain the copyright of this article Copyright© 2020VEDAPublications

Author(s) agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons

Attribution License 4.0 International License 



Different trends have emerged and are emerging in the twenty first century. One of the main trends is the adaptation of traditional movements and techniques which includes magic and mythology. Most of the new writers twist mythology. There have been various retelling of Greek mythology. The ideas of retelling of mythologies not only questioned the identities of gods but also have tried to naturalise the idea of gender fluidity in gods and goddesses. Through a realist tapestry new artists and writers threads a transrealistic face for mythology. Mythology aims at a very specific combination of the real and the fantastic, for a very specific purpose that seems to have become tremendously relevant for contemporary readers. Myths are now born and developed in conjunction with traditional and modern means of communication; they are perceived as ephemeral phenomena, and are exploited as needed in function with the interests of the market. It seems that in the early 21st century it is finally reaching its fruition as the most radical and challenging work in contemporary literature as it is also a retelling of myths. Jennifer L Armentrout's *Titan Series* is one such retelling of myths with a perfect blend of modern elements and is so well spun with the details of the Greek gods and the famous myths.

Jennifer L Armentrout's *Titan Series* is a New Adult paranormal which is a spin-off to *The Covenant* series and has four books *The Return* (2015), *The Power* (2016), *The Struggle* (2017), and *The Prophecy* (2018). It has a plethora of mythical gods, demigods, half-bloods and other mythical characters and creatures.

It is about Seth, the Apollyon who aided in a few indefensible wrongdoings a couple of years prior. So as to offer reparations for the entirety of his activities, Seth consents to be the bidding boy of the Greek Gods. This changes when Apollo tasks Seth with protecting someone at all costs no matter what. Seth despite everything feels awful about what occurred and he doesn't think he merits love and absolution. He doesn't need history rehashing itself and Josie reminds him of his past. He understands that he is extremely defensive of her. The whole arrangement is told in both Seth and

Josie's points of view which make the story a great deal clearer and we know both their actual sentiments. In this book we see what befell Seth, the arrangement he did with the divine beings and the new risks which takes steps to annihilate what was left. Seth must give his assistance to the divine beings to stop the Titans who got away before it's past the point of no return. The most recognizable quality about the arrangement is the way the author has spun mythology in order to coordinate the plot.

One of the in-depth mythological characters that are described in the book is Apollo. Apollo in Greek mythology is the Olympian God of sun, music, medicine, light, prophecy, healing, plagues, knowledge, order, beauty, archery and agriculture. He is portrayed as a young man wearing a laurel wreath and playing the kithara. He is also known as the god of fire and his symbols are the lyre and the raven. He is an embodiment of Hellenic ideal of *kalakagathra*, he is harmony, reason and moderation personified a perfect blend of physical superiority and moral virtue. He advanced to turn into a multifaceted God revered all over Greece as he totally created classical male nude, the kouros. Beardless and athletically built, he is regularly portrayed with a laurel crown on his head and a bow and bolt or a lyre and plectrum in his grasp.

Apollo in the series is depicted as a young man with intense denim blue eyes and blond hair. He is capable of changing appearance at will and so he sometimes appears as a dark haired man with eyes the colour of sky. He wears modern dresses like jeans, shirts and uses branded items. God's ability of apparition is used as an element of humour. Apollo appears and pops out suddenly whenever something important is to happen which irritates the protagonist Seth and creates a space for petty arguments and criticism. As the God of prophecy he sometimes appears in the series with completely white eyes. He acts as a bridge between the gods and paranormal world in the series. He is also described as a loving father who comes bearing candies. Though an absentee father he tries to do the best he could. Gods in the series is



depicted as characters that are bound by fate. Even though a god Apollo could not control or change anything that was bound to happen. This is portrayed in many instances in the series. The death of his daughter and grandchild and Seth becoming an absolute God and Zeus sacrificing his love for the good of the entire universe are some examples.

He smoothed the blood from her forehead, blood I had tracked there. "I've seen this," he said, trailing his fingers down the side of her face. "I've known this was going to happen. You do not understand how hard it is to know how your daughter and grandson will die." I stared at him. "No." His gaze shifted to mine. "It is Fate, Seth. It is the prophecy written eons ago." (Armentrout 182-183)

Externally he is portrayed as a character that does whatever he wants but there will be some hidden reasons behind it. Overall he appears as an all know God but is prone to human emotions like love, anger, guilt and empathy.

Zeus is the Olympian god of the sky and the thunder, the king of all gods. Zeus was regarded as the sender of thunder and lightning, rain, and winds, and his traditional weapon was the thunderbolt. Zeus was the most remarkable of the Greek divine beings and had various forces. Zeus was thought to omnisciently watch the undertakings of men, seeing everything, overseeing all, and remunerating great direct and rebuffing detestable. Other than administering justice he had a solid association with his daughter Dike (Justice). Zeus was the defender of urban communities, homes, property, outsiders, visitors, and petitioners. As a rule, Zeus is depicted with a staff in one hand and a thunderbolt in the other – the two images shows his power and authority. Now and then he wears a crown of oak leaves – the oak was regarded to be his sacred tree. More often than not, Zeus is portrayed as a old man with whiskers and longer wavy hair, holding a staff or

thunderbolt and is accompanied with a falcon, his consecrated creature. In some cases, he is likewise delineated as a youngster.

In the series Zeus is described as an authority figure. He is an absolute God. He was viewed as light-hearted, reasonable, simple, kind, and judicious. He was likewise flighty and no one had the option to figure the choices he would make. He was additionally easily angered which could be dangerous. He has previously flung lightning jolts and caused vicious tempests that unleashed devastation on earth. Be that as it may, even Zeus powers had their cut-off points, for, anyway ground-breaking as he might have been, he had neither the privilege nor the capacity to mediate in the choices of the Fates. This is depicted in the final book *The Prophecy* where he confesses that he killed his love in order to save the world in the last battle against the Titans. He is shown as a guilt ridden God who lost his true love. When given a choice he chose to sacrifice his love even knowing that she will be erased from the history. He regrets his decision when he saw what happened to Seth for his choice. He appears as a guide in the book who shows Seth after effects of his actions.

"We've all made mistakes— mistakes that have laid waste to entire civilizations. Mistakes that have destroyed countless lives. You are a new god, the start of a new era," he said, and I turned to him, almost against my will. "And you're already beginning to learn the hard way. You do not need to follow in our footsteps. I would think you of all people would want to avoid that." Zeus's voice was quiet. "You have a lot of reasons to be angry. I get it. Your mother was a cold, heartless woman. Your father a man you never got the chance to know. You were used as a tool in a war you did not know was brewing, and you struggle with countless decisions, but you cannot let your



emotions rule you. Not anymore.”(Armentrout 43)

Zeus is also described as a show-off in the series. He likes to make late appearances when he is most needed. He uses his superpowers to entomb the Titans again which is a manipulation of myths by the author.

Another important God that plays a major role in the series is Hades. Hades in Greek mythology is the lord of the underworld and the name in the long run came to likewise depict the home of the dead also. He is married to Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, whom he got through trickiness in the wake of kidnapping her to the underworld and giving her the forbidden fruit pomegranate, compelling her to stay in Hades with him for one third of every year. He is rarely portrayed in art. As the leader of the dead, Hades was a troubling and shocking figure, rousing wonder and fear in everyone. Hades is normally spoken to as a vivacious unshaven man with a grave, distressed look. His symbols are the staff and horn of bounty. He's additionally regularly portrayed with the three-headed canine, Cerberus. Hades is described as a hilarious character in the series; he is described as a man who holds grudges. In the myths he rarely leaves the Underworld and cared little about what happened in the world above, as his primary attention was ensuring none of his subjects ever left. In the series he roams round the world and is a frequent visitor of the Olympus as all Gods needs the presence of aether to survive. The rift and the petty grudges between Seth and Hades becomes a good humoristic element in the series. He too appears in modern dresses. Persephone in the series threatens to leave Hades if he didn't agree to whatever Apollo had demanded and her leaving Hades will mess up the seasons. Persephone and Hades play Mario Kart in the series with the dead and when they lose at anything they use god bolt on the winners. All these descriptions about hell describe it as a normal realm where all its inhabitants are dead.

Another mythological character who plays a major role is Medusa. One of the most famous

beasts of Greek mythology, Medusa was a wonderful lady with brilliant hair. She pledged to be chaste her whole life as a priestess of Athena until she experienced passionate feelings for Poseidon. She broke her vow and wedded him. For this Athena rebuffed her frightfully. She transformed Medusa into a terrible animal by making her eyes ragged looking and seething and her face witch like. The once flawless hair was transformed into harmful, perilous snakes. Her unadulterated white smooth skin turned an alarming green tint. From that point on she wandered, disgraced, disregarded and hated by everybody. Thus, by Athena's curse anybody she viewed went to stone. Medusa in the series is described as a woman in black heels, pointy toed and spiked. She appears in a tight pencil skirt in charcoal. A white blouse is tucked into the skirt and ruffles travels up the centre of the women's slim waist and chest. She has blood red lips and wears huge dark sunglasses covering her eyes. Her hair which is very curly is pulled back in a tight bun. It appears to be moving. She has fangs and forked tongues. According to Medusa Peruses decapitating her is a myth where gods provided a hero when people needed one. She was not actually dead and is on guard duty for the Gods. This is a major manipulation of the myths by the author where dead characters are brought back to life. She is described as a woman with anger management issues and turns green when angry. She acts as a messenger in the series.

Aphrodite is another minor character in the series. She is the antiquated Greek goddess related with affection, excellence, delight, enthusiasm and reproduction. Aphrodite had numerous lovers. Her lovers incorporate the two divine beings and men including the god Ares and the human Anchises. Aphrodite was both Adonis' lover and his proxy mother. This prompted a quarrel with Persephone where Zeus announced Adonis ought to go through portion of the year with Aphrodite and half of the year with Persephone. Aphrodite in the series appears as a goddess in the gauzy white dress with beautiful blonde waves of hair. She makes sexual puns and is not ashamed to reveal her sexual life.



Dionysus is another minor character in the series. He is depicted as the God of partying. He dresses like he'd just gotten back from a Jimmy Buffett concert, complete with cargo shorts, sandals, and an ultra-bright orange and red Hawaiian-style shirt. Dionysus in mythology is the antiquated Greek lord of wine, winemaking, grape cultivation, fruitfulness, ritual madness, theater, and religious ecstasy. Prior pictures and portrayals of Dionysus delineate him as a developed male, hairy and robed holding a fennel staff tipped with a pine-cone. In any case, in later pictures the god is demonstrated to be a smooth, arousing, bare or semi-bare gender ambiguous youth. Athena on the other hand is dressed like a mortal in a high-powered business position. Demeter is shown wearing overalls. Hercules in the series is shown as a boastful, irritating and intolerable character. He is voluble, arrogant and thinks that the world revolves around him. While in the mythology he is portrayed as a great hero who performed amazing feats. Titan gods play the antagonistic side of the series. They are shown as power hungry wolves that are ready to do anything to overthrow the Olympians and takeover the power. Cronus in the series is an absolute Titan God and is depicted as a frail and sunken man before his captivity and after his escape, he is described as having shoulders broad and muscles straining the pale blue shirt he wore, covering what had been a sunken chest. His skin had smoothed and filled out. His wizened beard was trimmed into a neat goatee and his white hair was cut shorter, slicked back from sharp cheekbones. He is depicted in the series as a cruel God who kidnaps and kills demigods in order to feed aether and gain power. He plans, threatens and blackmails others to gain what he need. He uses modern technologies such as cameras to warn people. Another Titan who plays a major role is Atlas. He is portrayed as an arrogant God who uses demons and shades to kidnap and kill people. He is so cruel that he takes out the heart of man to kill him. And he was killed by Seth. Gods in mythology are immortals but in the series they can be killed by an absolute power. Only thing is that there will be major consequences resulting from their deaths as they represent and protect something. Hyperion,

Tethys and Oceanus are the other Titans in the series. Oceanus is depicted as a god with Mohawk and blue hair. He is the cruellest among the Titans. He finds pleasure in raping and in others pain. He is described as a sadist who is so arrogant that he thinks nothing is above him. Tethys is portrayed as gorgeous six and a half feet tall women with long sable hair and features that somehow managed to look delicate and fierce all at once. She wore leather pants like Hyperion did, but she didn't run around topless. A tight, black tank top covered her chest and stomach. Greek Gods in mythology are protectors of people but in the series the Titans brings destruction to the world just to prove their point. They are more like devils.

Another major humoristic element in the series is that the Gods seem to argue among themselves over petty childish matters. They appear to be more children who are having an argument than Gods at these times. Jennifer L Armentrout has made use of many mythological characters such as Furies, Pegasus, Hydra, Shades and Nymphs. Furies are goddesses of vengeance in Greco-Roman mythology who personified curses. And Furies in the series are a forewarning of God's wrath and anger. They usually go after those who've escaped judgment, and the gods use them as a warning system. They also play the role of guardian angels. They are described as vengeful characters in the series who bids the Gods orders. There is a minor appearance of a Pegasus and is described as curious creatures who are very beautiful and peaceful. Nymphs in the series are foretellers, messengers and guides.

Power play can also be considered as major theme in the series. The hierarchy of power between Gods, Demigods, Pures and Half-bloods is the foundation on which the entire series is constructed. Hybridity which is a modern literary development too plays a major role. Demigods for example are the product of union of a God and a human. Another major factor is the installations of an educational institution were the hybrids in the series are taught to use their super powers. Schools and colleges are a modern development. The incorporating of new statuses like Apollyon, God



killer, Sentinels, Daimons and Absolute Power into mythology is also a modern trend. An author develops his own creations and somehow fixes them into the cluster of their plot and myths. This is also a central element used by Jennifer L Armentrout in this series.

Thus we can see a powerful assertion of mythology employed in this series which vividly captured the mythic effect of timelessness and inevitability. Contemporary authors of twenty first century are drawn irresistibly to espouse these myths in various modes of themes and techniques. Inalterable qualities of mythology such as versatility and flexibility make it easier to adapt it to the conditions of the present society. A new manner of viewing myth is brought by the author where we reinvent myth through post modernistic reading. It's like the metempsychosis of a new contemporary myth where it retains all the qualities of myth but transforms itself to match that of the modern world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Armentrout, Jennifer L. *The Return*. Titan Series. United States of America. Spencer Hill Press, Feb 2015.
- Armentrout, Jennifer L. *The Power*. Titan Series. London. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, Feb 2016.
- Armentrout, Jennifer L. *The Struggle*. Titan Series. London. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, Mar 2017.
- Armentrout, Jennifer L. *The Prophecy*. Titan Series. London. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, Mar 2018.
- Pinset, John. *Greek Mythology*. England. The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd, 1982
- Ions, Veronica. *History of Mythology*. London. Chancellor Press. 2000.
-