

# OUR ENGLISH CLUB

MAGAZINE 2018



## The Cover

"Hell is the other people."

*Jean-Paul Sartre*

The magazine cover portrays Pandora's Box and all the evils coming out of it. For instance, how women are stereotyped as objects, and as jealous and vengeful people. Technology is considered another evil too.

The box is sitting on the banks of the river where Orpheus mourned his wife. While we take selfies we may get distracted and fall into the river. So beware!

The eyes represent how stereotypes are created, how people help to feed these evils, and the colours depict the feelings that stereotypes produce.

However, Hope and Solidarity—in purple—to those in need are also coming out of Pandora's Box. You know what they say, "every cloud has a silver lining."

How do stereotypes make you feel?

By Lucia Alessandrelli

Welcome to Our English Club Magazine.

The December 2018 issue has tons of super interesting articles concerned with the way Greek mythology relates to our modern lives. So grab a nice cuppa and enjoy!

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## When Are We Going To Learn?

By Lucía Alessandrelli

Orpheus was the son of Apollo and Calliope. He was such a skillful musician that nobody could resist his music and melody when he played the lyre.

One day, Eurydice, Orpheus' wife, was going for a walk when she bumped into Aristaeus, who was so captivated by her beauty that he started to follow her. When she was trying to escape from Aristaeus, Eurydice was bitten by a snake and died.

When her husband learned that she had died, he was very sad but in spite of that, he tried to find a solution to get her back.

If Orpheus wanted to save Eurydice, he had to go down to the underworld where she was being kept. The god Hades was in the underworld and allowed Orpheus to save Eurydice on one condition: he told Orpheus that Eurydice could walk behind him as they walked towards the light, but under no circumstance was Orpheus to look back at his wife. Due to his arrogance, Orpheus did not believe what Hades had told him and for that reason, he turned round and, at that moment, Orpheus lost his wife forever.



I chose this myth because Orpheus represents the patriarchal system and represents all oppressed women. Eurydice is depicted as a passive being in rescuing, whose place next to her husband, whereas Orpheus' ruthlessness makes him pursue his goal without thinking of the consequences of his actions.

In my opinion, today, many women are also seen as passive beings. Besides, they are humiliated, discriminated against, marginalized and murdered, and all this is allowed by the oppressive and controlling system. Why does this happen? This is simply because men are afraid of us. We are not passive victims. We are powerful and we choose what path to follow.

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## Art in a Man's World

By Sheila Becker

In Greek mythology, the muses were nine women who not only inspired philosophers, poets and artists, but also were like teachers as they were worshippers of Art. They had an active role in this sphere. For example, there was Calliope, who taught the art of singing to Achilles, and also many poets went to her looking for inspiration and in search of wisdom. Then there was Erato, the muse of love, who invented several musical instruments, such as the flute.



In spite of the roles that muses played in Greek myths, they followed a patriarchal order just as our society. Through mythology, it can be seen that only men could be artists, only they could practice Art. Women were expected to be at home and do home stuff. They did not have a voice in politics or in any social sphere. The Muses in real life had a passive role too. They were expected to sit in a chair like objects while being portrayed by a man. Thus, the painter was not just painting a woman; he painted the society expected from women.

Art is not an isolated fact; actually, it is a reflection of society. Artists can create, naturalizing reality or criticizing it and making changes in their environment. The History of Art was written by men with an androcentric vision of the world. Thanks to feminism, female artists like Frida Kahlo rose to fame by being their own muses and telling society how we want people to see us, and what role we occupy.

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### Narcissus in Times of Selfies

By Natalia Cabrera

Nowadays, people are fascinated with sharing their lives on social media. They are in love with their image and expect everybody to do the same.

For some time now, an increasing number of people, mostly young adults, have been having accidents or even got killed after doing extreme sports, without enough preparation, or taking extreme photos in dangerous places, with the only objective of sharing their experiences with the community. For example, recently, a young man died, trying to take a selfie on the edge of a waterfall.

Something similar happened in the myth of Narcissus, whose life started when Cephisus, the river-god, raped the nymph Liriope.



When Narcissus was still a little boy, his mother decided to ask the prophet Tiresias what her son's future was going to be like, as she was worried about the extraordinary beauty of the child. Tiresias told her that the boy would grow old only if "he did not get to learn about his striking looks".

Many years later, Narcissus became a young and coveted man, and because of his extreme beauty, both men and women fell in love with him. However, he rejected them all.

One day, while Narcissus was hunting in the woods, the Nymph Echo—who had been cursed by Hera by taking away her ability to talk—saw him and fell madly in love with him. As part of the curse, Echo could only repeat the sentences she heard. For that reason, when Narcissus asked "Who's there?" Echo responded, "Who's there?" That went on for some time until Echo decided to show herself. However, he rejected Echo and she was so completely heartbroken that decided to spend the rest of her life alone.

Consequently, Nemesis, the Goddess of Revenge, cursed Narcissus. She made him see his own reflection in a pool of water and, as his suitors he fell in love with it. Trying to reach his own reflection, he fell into the water and drowned.

The story of Narcissus is a myth, but today many people die unnecessarily, just for not taking into account the risks of their actions. And by keeping on sharing their photos on social media, they encourage other people to follow in their steps.



### Patriarchy or Female Hysteria?

Noelia Cabrera

Greek mythology is the body of myths and teachings concerned with its gods and heroes, the origins of the world, and the origins and significance of its own cultural and ritual practices. Ancient Greeks tried to explain the world and human soul through myths. Despite the unrealistic facts, they have managed to describe a universal truth, and for this reason, mythology can be related with modern society.





An example of this is Caenis' myth. She was raped by Poseidon, who then granted her request to be changed into a man so that she could never be raped again, he also made her invulnerable to weapons. Caenis then changed his name to Caeneus and became a warrior who got to travel all over Thessaly, and took part in the hunt for the Calydonian boar.

He met his fate in the battle between the Lapiths and the centaurs. In a description of the tale, a particular centaur, Latreus, mocks Caeneus' prowess and skill as a fighter after finding out Caeneus' female origin. Caeneus strikes Latreus a blow in the side, and is unharmed by the centaurs' last attempts at wounding him. In revenge for this, the centaurs pile pine trunks and stones upon him, since he was immune to weapons.

Caenis's story is about the way women have seen themselves since the beginning of time. When Poseidon raped Caenis, the only solution that she found was to change into a man because men are invulnerable. Since then, he was a trans man, not out of a real desire, but to survive in men's world.

Men's bodies are inviolable, sacred and private and nobody can touch them without their consent. It is not the same for women, whose bodies belong to the public. The female body is an object that can be judged and touched and used if it is desired, or otherwise, it can be ignored and despised if it does not meet current beauty standards.

"Men are simple", "Men suffer less than women", "I want a baby boy, because girls are complicated", "Women are troublesome", "I want a gay friend, because it's like a female friend without effort." These are commonly heard phrases in different contexts, but more frequently as jokes. We babble but deep down we have gender ideas that have existed since the origin of times.

In the ancient world, men were considered better than women, because of their strength, speed and ruthlessness. Men went hunting while women gave birth. Men defended their territory while women gave birth. Men felt desire, hunger, anger and happiness while women gave birth. A man was a subject and a woman was an object.

Today both of them can do and feel almost the same, because we do not need stronger and faster men. We need a mate, we need a father, we need a mother, and we need an intelligent, sympathetic, and yielding man. When women realize men will be in trouble because they will have to change for survival.

So, patriarchy or female hysteria? Maybe neither, maybe it's only the difficult transition to equality.



## Prometheus and Pandora

By Pilar Cativiela



When reflecting on the myth of Prometheus and Pandora, we can find a good amount of common ground with the present. For example, Prometheus wondered why the gods had more than humans and why they had fire but humans did not. He decided to change this despite the consequences. In real life, there are always people who try to make other people's lives better, like Prometheus, without fearing the consequences.

When Zeus found out what Prometheus had done, he became so furious he created a woman with a box and named her Pandora. Zeus sent her with her to Prometheus. Inside the box, there were only problems for humans, so it was never to be opened, otherwise it would let out all the ills of the world. As we know unfortunately, the box was opened.

What would come out of Pandora's Box today? We could find inequality, work stress, bullying, crime, political corruption, addictions, global warming, cancer, depression, gender violence, and so much more. However, we can choose what kind of things we would like to come out of the box; that is to say, we can create a better world. For example, there have been developments in science and technology that have made it possible to control diseases, improve feeding systems and facilitate communication.

Unfortunately, we have become more materialistic and have forgotten things like saying hello, talking face to face and listening carefully to others. But the name Prometheus is to speak of courage, generosity and good being. He lived for his ideas, principles and values, and above all he helped those who were in an unfavorable position, so he is the example we must follow.

We are used to thinking about what should be done, but the world needs action, not words if we want a real change. We should do something now and work cooperatively. A person cannot change the world singlehandedly, but if we work together, anything will be possible. It is about helping others in a disinterested way.

## Baucis and Philemon

By Brenda Fraunhoffer

This is the story of Philemon and Baucis, a very humble couple who lived in a small house. One day, they lodged two travellers in their home and offered them food and a bed to rest. In the middle of dinner, the humble couple noticed that inside the glass never disappeared...it never ran out. And this was because the visitors were gods, Zeus and Hermes. When the hosts found that they were very embarrassed and apologized for the little food they had to offer.

Zeus became furious because the only family who helped them was the poorest in the village. After dinner, Zeus stood up and said "I declare that this ungrateful and cruel village will be destroyed, but Baucis and Philemon will be the only ones to live!" Beside Zeus asked them what they wanted in life and the poor couple said that they wished die together at the same time



Immediately after that, the village got flooded except for Baucis and Philemon's house, which was turned into a beautiful temple to lodge and help travellers. For many years, the couple lived in that little temple meeting travellers' needs for food and rest. And one day, they died together and at the same time Baucis became a beautiful linden and Philemon, a mighty oak,

In my opinion, this story is connected to solidarity. We should be more helpful to others. There are a lot of people sleeping in the street, but we could make a change. For example, we could help them by giving them clothes, a blanket or some water when it is cold.

A word of warning: do your best to help others and you will know what they say: "You scratch my back, and I will scratch yours."



## Prometheus Today

By Beatriz Gil

The myth of Prometheus and fire brings up a serious question: If Prometheus had not stolen the fire from Zeus, what would have humanity done? But the fire, celebrated by human beings, was cruelly punished by the God of all Gods, Zeus. Let us start from the beginning. There was a time when the immortal Greek gods had a fun life on Mount Olympus, while the poor mortals survived on Earth as best they could. One day, Zeus decided to distribute some gifts to the Earth's inhabitants and commissioned both Prometheus and Epimetheus to perform a task. Epimetheus decided to do it single-handedly, without the help of his brother Prometheus. First, he gave "courage" to the lion, then "speed" to the horse, "shrewdness" to the fox, until he had given all the gifts out.



When he told Prometheus what he had done, Prometheus found that there were no more gifts for the mortals. They had run out of them. So Prometheus decided to steal the fire from Hephaestus and the Arts from Athena and gave them to the mortals; hence human beings, without being strong or fast like some animals, have managed to dominate Nature as they have both the technique and the science.

Oh, that action made Zeus mad, because his idea was not to have men with unusual power, and as he was tired of being defied by Prometheus, he decided that enough was enough and made Hephaestus chain Prometheus on Mount Caucasus where an eagle would eat his liver forever. As a consequence of this Prometheus is regarded as the great defender of human beings against the gods.

Prometheus gave us only two gifts, the Arts and Fire, but humanity has done a great deal of hard work. We have managed to adapt the world to our needs and our determination has helped us reach satisfactory levels of well-being. However, there are others who still need our help to get it. Said help is only possible if we rekindle the interior fire that Prometheus has given us to encourage our commitment in favor of justice and service to the poor.

We are not the King of Creation, but we have the capacity to adapt Creation to our necessities. We have created big enterprises and made incredible advances in medicine and science that can control nature and improve our living conditions. Scientific development has made it possible to control diseases, improve food production systems, reduce pests, and facilitate communication and the distribution of culture. But with all these advances we have become more and more pragmatic and this pragmatism is a detriment to humanity. How is this possible? It is simple. We have been making ourselves more and more dependent on and tied to technology.

fashion and physical image.

In a world that is in constant movement, once a goal is met, before reflecting the work done, we jump into our next project blindly. Reaching a goal is just the springboard for the next. You might think that this is a positive attitude because as unsatisfied beings we forever want to go further ahead. Nevertheless, it is very important to enjoy our achievements, and to make sure that what we get is really what we want and need; otherwise our work will be eternal, Prometheus's punishment.

In conclusion, we have a lot to learn from Prometheus since he antagonized himself with Zeus for defending those he considered the weak. Talking about Prometheus is to talk about a brave and honored being. We, like the Titan, must take risks to defend our ideas, our principles and values to help those in a more disadvantaged position to reach their goals. Likewise, we should enjoy our achievements, share our joys, and we must never forget that, unlike the mythological immortal gods, we are finite.



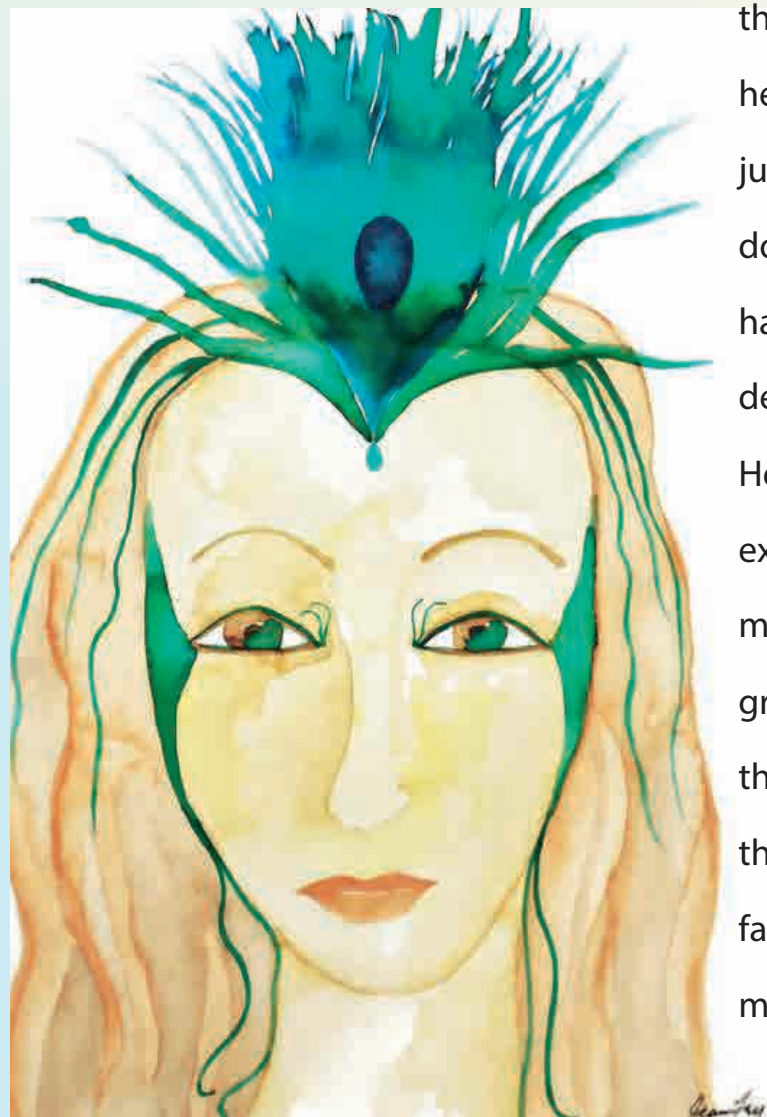
### Greek Mythology as a System of Patriarchal Indoctrination

Denisse Reyna Talledo

Myths are an important part of culture, and so it is really interesting to note we can learn about the role of women in different societies through myth. In this article, I will compare the present days with Greek mythology.

In my opinion, all Greek myths transmit the dominance of patriarchal system in their culture. For example, in the myth of Cuckoo, Zeus transforms himself into a cuckoo in order to get Hera's love. When Hera sees the cuckoo through her window, she takes pity on it and decides to hold it to her breast. At that moment, Zeus turns back to his original state and rapes her. As a result, Hera is so embarrassed of being "exploited" that she accepts to marry him. The wedding is celebrated with honours and sacrifices. The honeymoon goes on for about three hundred years. This myth has its analogy in the present in situations where parents marry their daughters off to the men who sexually abuse them. The wedding in this way, in a patriarchal society, is a means to recover lost dignity.

Moreover, Greek mythology depicts Hera as a jealous and vengeful woman. It shows these characteristics as negative aspects of her personality. Besides, it is the way to justify Zeus's infidelities. In a male-dominated world, where male infidelities have political and moral support, Zeus is depicted as having no responsibility for Hera's jealousy. Zeus's cheating is also excused as he needs to produce many children who will inherit his greatness and become rulers and heroes. In the light of this scenario, Hera does not have the right to fight for her marriage and for her family (rights that she earned when she married Zeus).





On the other hand, there is a Greek myth in which Hera appears as a free independent woman. In this myth, she decides to conceive her child by herself in order to prove that she does not need his. This way, she breaks with the traditional role of the male as the figure of the family. This is an example of female empowerment, which is very common in our present society. In my conclusion, Greek mythology is an excellent way to get a better understanding of women's role in our present society, as it shows some attempts of female empowerment in a male-dominated society. Unfortunately, there are some exceptions in our culture where men have the power and the last word.



## PENELOPE

By Mora Vinokur

In this day and age, women's role in society is changing, but they have been fighting to put an end to the way they are treated. Freedom is reflected in different spheres of life, like work, family, and love relationships, among others. In this article, I will talk about women's role in the romantic mechanism. According to Foucault, this mechanism can be effectively employed to control and/or modify the body according to society's necessities. There are a lot of mechanisms, but the romantic mechanism is the most important one, because it structures every relationship. This mechanism affects women and men differently. For one thing, it expects women to be good wives, monogamous and heterosexual. Along these lines, I will explain how fidelity is understood by this mechanism, because this kind of love is one of the most important topics within romantic love. I use the Penelope to illustrate and explain this mechanism. Penelope is Odysseus's wife who is known for her fidelity to her husband while he is away fighting the Cyclo-

despite having many suitors. Her name has therefore been traditionally associated with marital fidelity.

Penelope represents the stereotypes of the woman who is incomplete without a man. So when Odysseus does not return she "needs" a new husband, a man in her life that comes to complete an incomplete subject. In addition, it is important to analyse the oppressive mechanism of romantic love: the woman needs a man and only one man because she is nothing without him. So she waits twenty years for him in order to "protect" fidelity, which means that there is only one way to bond between a woman and a man and the couple will go out of their way to stay monogamous till death parts them. In this system, women occupy a subordinate position.



Throughout history, there have been many women who participated in movements to fight for women's rights. For example, the Suffragettes in London, Eva Peron in Argentina, and Simone de Beauvoir in Paris, among others. It is interesting to analyze the movement in Argentina. In this country, there is a women's movement which is changing the course of history because it is fighting for women's rights and it is developing theories in order to offer arguments and tools to change women's reality. In particular, these women have been fighting for the legalization of abortion. Unfortunately, last August, most senators voted against this law. But women have not laid down their arms, and keep up the fight to change history.

I think that feminism is the tool to finish all kinds of oppression in the world. According to Bell Hooks (2017), feminism aims to put an end to patriarchy in order to develop an equal society. For that reason, feminism embraces oppressed people in order to change their situation.

All things considered, I think that the case of Penelope represents women's suffering. From childhood, they learn to see themselves as incomplete. In this society, a woman is not as worthy as a man. For this reason, she has been oppressed throughout history. Luckily, society is more aware of what oppression is. What is more, if feminism expands, our unequal society will finally change.

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