

HIRUNDO

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Hirundo is the Latin word for martlet, a mythical bird without legs, always shown in flight, unceasing in its quest for knowledge. The McGill coat-of-arms has three martlets.

HIRUNDO
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Book’s photo of the theatre at Epidauros, while the back is a picture of a statue of Apollo
taken by Patrick Helferty. Clara Nencu is the photo editor who transformed the pictures
into their final versions.

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Editor’s Preface

Presented here to you is the twelfth edition of McGill University’s undergraduate Classics journal, *Hirundo*. For over a decade, the journal has sought to give McGill undergraduates a place to publish and share their work with the world. Previous editions have seen quite a diverse range of disciplines brought together in this journal, and this year’s is no exception. Inside, you’ll find treatments of Greek philosophy, Roman literature, Egyptian history, Classical archaeology, Classical reception, and more.

Katrina Van Amsterdam opens the volume with a paper examining ancient Greek attitudes towards the other with special reference to the influence of the Persian Wars. Meghan Poplacean builds on the theme of ancient foreign relations in the context of the fall of Saguntum in the context of the Punic Wars. Continuing this edition’s Roman studies, Giulietta Fiore treats the foundations of Rome through the lens of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, paying special attention to Roman identity. Aaron Golish transposes us into a literary key with his paper, exploring and elaborating the distinction between self-reference and metatheatre in Greek tragedy. Madeline Silver then takes on the task of comparing Greek and Roman heroes as they are depicted in the great epics of antiquity in her paper relating Achilles and Aeneas. After this, we switch tracks to philosophy with Douglas Campbell’s treatment of knowledge as it is discussed in Plato’s *Theaetetus* and *Meno*. Erin Sobat follows with his paper describing the reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten, and the influence of his reign on Egypt’s religious landscape. Elizabeth DeBlock ends this year’s edition by bringing us back to modern times, discussing the role of the Classics in the world of the eighteenth century United States. Be sure to read on however, as students Daniel Galef and Jemma Israelson have made creative contributions to this year’s backmatter, in the form of an original dramatic composition and a photo essay, respectively.

Sincere thanks are due to this year’s academic advisor, Professor Michael Fronda. Just as in past years of *Hirundo*’s life, Professor Fronda has been a great source of help and direction for the journal. No less are we grateful for the generous financial assistance provided to us by Department of History and Classical Studies, the Papachristidis Chair, the Dean of Arts’ Development Fund, the Classics Students’ Association of McGill, and the Arts Undergraduate Society.

Personal thanks go to each and every one of this year’s editors. Despite busy school schedules and demanding curriculums, *Hirundo*’s editors managed to go above and beyond the call of duty. Special thanks go to last year’s Editor-in-Chief, Elizabeth Ten-Hove, who provided much assistance throughout the year. *Hirundo* is now in its twelfth year of publication, and it is the industriousness and passion of all those mentioned here that have made this possible. Happy reading!

Lewis Innes-Miller
Editor-in-Chief

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When In Greece, Do as the Persians Don't: Defining the Identity of the Greeks Against the Persian Imperial 'Other'

“By attributing a population with certain characteristics in order to categorize and differentiate it as an Other, those who do so also establish criteria by which they themselves are represented.”¹ This statement by Robert Miles is particularly true when applied to the ancient Greeks. The Greeks of the early 5th century defined themselves against the ‘other’ or the ‘barbarian’ in establishing their identity as a common people, both politically and culturally. In the wake of the Persian invasion of 480-479 BC, the Greeks reconsidered the values that gave them distinction and shaped those qualities by contrasting them with the Persian ‘barbarian’. By solidifying the opposition between the governments of the burgeoning Greek *poleis* and the Persian imperial monarchy, the Greeks defined themselves against the Persians as they developed and solidified their political identity.

The ancient Greeks did not recognize a common identity amongst themselves until the time of the Persian Wars. As such, there was little ethnocentric stereotyping, derogatory or otherwise, of ‘barbarians’ before this period. Indeed, Homer does not use the word *barbaros* as anything except a descriptive word.² Yet there were still no Greeks, at least not in the sense of a cohesive people with a common identity. Thucydides states that the term ‘barbarian’ is missing from the Homeric epics because there did not exist at that period a category such as ‘Greek’ against which a non-Greek could be defined.³ Thus, in order for some to be Greeks, it meant that others had to be declared barbarians.⁴

The attribution of superiority “to Greeks by Greeks” provided a highly subjective definition of cultural unity.⁵ While Hellenic identity was previously aggregative, with peer groups created around various genealogies, the construct of Greek identity in the early 5th century BC was primarily ‘oppositional’ in nature.⁶ The general separation between a Greek and a barbarian was the possession, or lack thereof, of specific characteristics. The

¹Robert Miles, *Racism* (London: Routledge, 1989), 38-39.

² Paul Cartledge, *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 53.

³ Thuc. 1.3.3.

⁴ François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, trans. Janet Lloyd (London: University of California Press, 1988), 323.

⁵ J.K. Davies, “Greece after the Persian Wars,” in *Cambridge Ancient History: The Fifth Century BC*, vol. 5, 2nd ed, ed. David M. Lewis et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 16.

⁶ Jonathan Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 179.