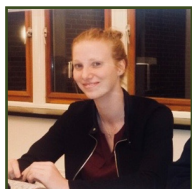


The Empty Shell of A goddess: Representations of Artemis Based on Literature in the Graeco-Roman period



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In antiquity, a push occurred for a universal Greek identity after the Persian wars. The Greek pantheon was used to support this new sense of nationality, relying on the shared mythology and understanding of the gods. Images of the goddess Artemis started to appear that reflected this, promoting a universalized system of religion relating to the changing political situation to give ancient Greek citizens stability within their vast, shifting world.

I argue that the representation of the goddess Artemis which followed the universalizing trend, underwent a significant change during the Graeco-Roman period. Even though the appearance of these works was consistent, the meaning transformed. Where her images at first were hyper realistic as they were based on literary sources and therefore contained much detail, distorting the line between experiencing the actual presence of the goddess and her mere representation; later Artemis imagery based on literature became removed from the notion of real presence, and the sense of life of the goddess found within the works slowly faded. Statues became empty shells, echoes of the presence of the goddess.

Biography:

Dr. Kyra Rietveld is currently an Assistant Professor of Art History at Centenary College of Louisiana, Shreveport, LA, USA. Dr. Rietveld received her BA in Art History from Oakland University, an MA in Art History from the University of Florida, and a PH.D. in Art History from the University of Florida in 2022. Born and raised in the Netherlands, Dr. Rietveld moved to America to pursue an academic career. Her research attends to active and passive interaction with images that shape social and cultural identity. Dr. Rietveld specializes in the iconography of the cult of the goddess Artemis in antiquity.