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The *Lore* of It All: A Female Twist on the Homeric Hero

Abstract *Lore* (2021) is a young-adult novel that tells the story of a young woman by the name of Lore, a descendant of the Greek hero Perseus. Once every seven years, the Greek gods are forced to wear a human form and be hunted by descendants of different Greek heroes in the deathly Agon. When a hunter kills a god, he becomes a New God and gets their powers. Traumatized Lore is forced back into the Agon to protect Athena and avenge her family's murder. Bracken uses elements of Greek mythology and current trends from YA literature to create the heroine of her novel. Lore demonstrates characteristics similar to those of the Homeric hero while portraying her role as a 21st-century woman warrior, aka Girl on Fire. A comparison is drawn between Lore and the Homeric hero, with particular attention given to the masculine-feminine dichotomy.

Keywords Lore, Girl on Fire, The Homeric Hero, Classical Reception, Masculinity

INTRODUCTION

*Lore*¹ tells the story of Melora “Lore” Perseous, a young woman in modern New York City who is the last descendant of the mighty Greek hero Perseus. In this version of events, Zeus punished the Greek gods for their rebellion and decides to instate the Agon – every seven years they become mortal for one week and are being hunted by the descendants of the bloodlines, who wish to become gods in their place and strip them of their power. Lore, traumatized by the murder of her family in a past Agon, vows never to compete again but is forced into the current Agon by Athena.

Lore matches the mold of the Girl on Fire,² a strong female heroine that has been taking center stage of YA literature for a little over a decade now. By doing so, she is deviating from the archetype of the Homeric hero, the character she supposedly represents in the world of the Agon.

This contribution seeks to explore the differences and similarities between Lore and the Homeric hero, while demonstrating her Girl on Fire traits. Moreover, a special attention will be given to the other aspects of Classical Reception used in the novel, such as the Agon, the gladiator games, and the character of Medusa.

CLASSICAL RECEPTION

The current contribution lends itself to the field of Classical Reception Studies³. The accepted definition of Classical Reception consists of “the ways in which Greek and Roman material has been transmitted, translated, excerpted, interpreted, rewritten, re-imaged and represented”.⁴

1 Bracken (2021).

2 Hentges (2018).

3 I wish to thank Ayelet Peer from the Department of Classical Studies at Bar-Ilan University for her notes.

4 Hardwick/Stray (2008) 1.

More specifically, it follows James's⁵ approach. Based on Bowman's⁶ distinction, James⁷ argues that within the framework of Classical Reception Studies, scholars can analyze different types that are drawn from antiquity. Such types can include for example the theory of Greek heroic myth or the heroic figure. These types serve as an inspiration for different characters in modern popular media and culture, "without being a direct retelling of a myth".⁸

THE HOMERIC HERO

For the purpose of this paper, I regard the Homeric hero as an archetype. Of course, there are some differences between the heroes presented in the Homeric epics, but in order to show the deviation presented in *Lore*, there should be a standard to deviate from.

A Homeric hero is defined as such simply by the fact that he is born during the generation of heroes. The heroic generation has a "greater capacity for self-propelled vigor".⁹ Since it is the next generation after the generation of Gods, their action, thought and emotion heights are similar to those of the Gods. The heroic generation reflects the decline of mankind, characterized by their divine parentage. The men of the heroic race are characterized by strength and sometimes by wisdom. They are fierce and skilled orators.

Secondly, the Homeric hero is motivated by the need for status, respect and honor.¹⁰ Most of all, the Homeric hero seeks fame and glory (κλέος), the hero's actions will grant him *gloria mundi*.¹¹ Due to that, they are often pushed to extremes of anger, passion and even recklessness. Another important distinction

5 James (2009).

6 Bowman (2002).

7 James (2009).

8 Rea (2022).

9 Clarke (2006) 80.

10 Clarke (2006) 77.

11 Clarke (2006).

is made by Graziosi and Haubold,¹² suggesting that the Homeric hero “displays little or no sense of solidarity, collaboration or self-restraint”.

Thirdly, and most importantly to the current contribution, is the manhood of the Homeric hero. The Homeric hero is first of all a man, one who possesses an extreme level of male energy. The driving force behind manhood is the need for praise and admiration.¹³ The Homeric hero is the restorer of order.¹⁴ He is anti-social, and so the restoration of order includes his expulsion from society. He has no place in the restored society.

THIS GIRL IS ON FIRE

Over the past decade, the Girl on Fire has taken the center stage of young adult dystopian literature. This character type is a strong female heroine who fights for injustice and advocates for the oppressed among their community.¹⁵ According to Hentges¹⁶ the Girl on Fire is a “complex, intelligent, brave and a triumphant survivor of impossible situations”. The Girl on Fire takes ownership of her destiny while advocating for herself, and in some cases, her community.¹⁷ One other aspect of the Girl on Fire is that she is a political and transformative figure. She exudes empathy and compassion, and often aligns herself with vulnerable and socially marginalized people.¹⁸

Hentges¹⁹ describes the norms prevailing in the rebellious character of the Girl on Fire. In most cases, she is a young white woman. She is most likely poor or from a lower class, and she fits the model of the ordinary girl. Additionally,

12 Graziosi/Haubold (2003) 74.

13 Clarke (2006).

14 Rubino (1994).

15 Connors/Szwydky (2020).

16 Hentges (2018) 5.

17 Connors/Szwydky (2020).

18 Connors/Hentges (2020).

19 Hentges (2018).

“all of the Girls on Fire are an amalgamation of their identity traits, shaped by their life experiences and the dystopic conditions they live through”.²⁰

A prime example of this archetype is of course the character of Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* trilogy.²¹ Katniss is a “though-minded young woman who, throughout a mix of gumption and luck, challenges authority [...] strategize, make demands, and even hunt and kill”.²² The use of violence by Katniss throughout the series is seemingly justified. It is meant for self-defense and to fight the oppressor. It is especially important to notice she is struggling and grappling with her murderous actions and their consequences.²³

Death and trauma are interwoven into *The Hunger Games* universe, and Katniss is very much affected by it. Katniss carries deep trauma, which only exacerbates throughout the series. Growing up in Panem’s District 12, starvation is the main danger Katniss faces. Her father was killed during work, and she grew up with the loss of a parental figure which led to graver trauma in her life. Already traumatized, Katniss participates in two consecutive hunger games followed by a civil war.

Katniss is a paradoxical character; she is both a savior and a killer. In the first two volumes she is “causing death, defying death and acting to prevent death”.²⁴ Lore displays very similar characteristics to Katniss, and their journey is very much alike. The current contribution is not seeking to compare the two characters, or the two worlds, but it is important to notice that. A considerable amount of what scholars have written in the past decade about *The Hunger Games* and Katniss will aid the current analysis.

²⁰ Hentges (2018).

²¹ Collins (2008); Collins (2009); Collins (2010).

²² Broad (2013) 117.

²³ Finley (2019).

²⁴ Moffat/May (2021) 448.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO LORE

The first page of *Lore*²⁵ presents the reader with Zeus' order of instating the Agon:

The lord of sky stood bright against the fall
of twilight and spoke: Hear me, blooded heirs
of those proud men who ventured into the
darkness to slay those monsters and kings past.
I call you to a final agon to
win your own lasting glory. Nine gods have
betrayed me and now demand cruel revenge.
For seven days at the turn of seven
years will they walk as mortal so you men,
and all your heirs henceforth, may break your own
fated path and turn your thread of life to
immortal gold. Reveal your strength and skills and
I will reward you with the mantle
and the deathless power of the god whose blood
stains your bold blade. For this chance I ask much.
Gather at the navel of the known world
and begin your hunt when the day is born.
So it shall be until that final day
when one remains who is remade whole.

In this world, the gods have betrayed Zeus and tried to rebel against him. In return, he creates a punishment for them – the Agon. The Agon is a week-long “event” that takes place every seven years, where the gods are forced to walk the Earth as mortals, being hunted by the descendants of ancient bloodlines. If a hunter succeeds in killing a god, they gain their powers and immortality and become a New God.

Melora “Lore” Perseous is part of The Persides, the House of Perseus. Each house (i.e. bloodline) is named after its forefather, and so for example other houses are named after Achilles, Odysseus, Jason, Herakles and others. During the last Agon, Lore’s whole family (father, mother, sisters) was murdered, and so

25 Bracken (2021).

she swore to never take part in the Agon again and to leave it behind her. She becomes a caretaker of an old man named Gil (later revealed as Hermes) and lives in his house in New York City. Lore has to face the consequences of death once again when Gil dies, and instead of grieving and healing – she chooses to distract herself by participating in boxing fights.

At the start of the 211th Agon, two figures enter Lore's life. The first is Castor, Lore's long-lost friend, whom she believed to have died of leukemia. It is revealed that during the last Agon a wounded Apollo encountered Castor, and made the human kill the god. And so, Castor ascended as the New Apollo. The second character is a ruthless and cunning Athena. She hates the New Gods and wishes to kill them all. At the beginning of the book, she comes to Lore, pretending to be injured, and asks her to bond their lives together. Athena's plan is to "purify the lands"²⁶ and end the human race, who, according to her, poisons the world.

During the week of the Agon, Lore, together with Castor, Athena, Lore's roommate Miles, and Castor's cousin and messenger of the Achillides Van, search for Athena's aegis, which is believed to be stolen by the Kadmidés who are led by Wrath himself. In the meantime, Wrath is also looking for the aegis, because he believes it contains a missing piece of the order Zeus' gave when initially creating the Agon, which will tell him how he can harness the powers of more than one god at a time.

THE AGON

The Agon presented in *Lore* is inspired by the Greek word ἀγών (agon) and its various meanings. It is agreed by scholars that the meaning of the word is that of "gathering" or "assembly", and more specifically an "assembly to see games"²⁷ or "assembly with contests".²⁸ Scanlon,²⁹ who examined the occurrences of the word in Homer and Hesiod, found the word is used in various meanings that

²⁶ Bracken (2021) 515.

²⁷ Scanlon (1983).

²⁸ Ellsworth (1981).

²⁹ Scanlon (1983).

share a common element – a local sense. In other words, the word *agon* is used to describe a place associated with competition.

When examining the words of the Spartan legislator Lycurgus, a distinct connection between manhood and *agon* can be made.³⁰ Lycurgus discusses manhood being tested during a competition. Lycurgus explains that a legitimate *agon* contains a worthy field, a prize, mutually acceptable judges and an audience. These elements gave “courage, victory, and defeat their cultural meanings.”³¹ Lycurgus, like other Attic orators, articulated competitive values to validate valor and manliness.

Lore's *Agon* is the ultimate competition, designed to bring *kleos* to its winners. The prize of the *Agon* is becoming a god, which will bring along an immense *kleos*. When a hunter becomes a New God, he chooses a new name and loses his mortal name. This signifies him discarding his mortality. The new name is the one being known and the one being remembered. As *Lore* best explains to Miles, “For seven days, every seven years, the gods walk on earth as mortals. If you can kill one, you become a new god and take their power and immortality, but you’ll be hunted in the next *Agon* as well”.³²

Each cycle, the *Agon* takes place in a different location. The location of the *Agon* is selected by the place of the *omphalos*, a large stone known as the navel of the world. The *omphalos* is placed in the place in which the leaders of the bloodlines have the most power and resources, which is why it takes place in metropoli such as London, Tokyo, and New York City.

Lore's *Agon* is very reminiscent of the hunger games. The hunger games were formed as a punishment for the districts' rebellion. Each year, two children from each district compete for their lives. They are placed in an arena where the last person standing becomes the victor. The games are televised, and the Capitol's citizens watch this bloody event for their amusement.

Clearly, a comparison can be made between the hunger games and the gladiator games, as also confirmed by the author herself. One of the hypotheses on the purpose of the games suggests the gladiator games were used as a propaganda tool. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the first gladiators were prisoners of war, and so their failure in the arena served as a reminder of the

³⁰ Roisman (2007).

³¹ Roisman (2007) 394.

³² Bracken (2021) 59.

Roman victory.³³ As Moffat and May³⁴ explain, death is a political tool used by the Capitol as a control mechanism. And so, a line can be drawn from the gladiator games to the Agon.

IS THIS BURNING AN ETERNAL FAME?

In the world of *Lore*, the descendants of the bloodline are the “participants” in the Agon, and they are called hunters. Hunters are “trained to kill gods and anyone else that stands in their way.”³⁵ Similarly to the Homeric heroes, glory is one of the most important things for these hunters. As stated in the book, “the hunters believed that there was no greater honor than to die on the hunt in the pursuit of glory, rather than be taken by Thanatos, the god of gentle death.”³⁶

When speaking of people who are trained to kill, the author makes a connection to the Spartans. Lore tells Miles that “the hunters had adapted their training programs from those of the great Sparta, but they removed the things they didn’t like.”³⁷ In other words, the Agon is not solely based in the world of the gladiator games but also on the war-minded Sparta, which is known for its military force.

Additionally, throughout the book, the reader is reminded of the significance of honor and pride. Over the course of the book, the reader receives glimpses into Lore’s past and her training as a hunter at Thetis House. When she first starts her training, she is very eager. Her goal is to train hard and achieve areté – “the perfect combination of courage, strength, skill and success”³⁸ – and kleos. Her instructor tells the class what their true goal and aspiration should be:

“Pain is the essence of life. We are born into it and, if you are to be hunters, if you are to honor your ancestors, you will die in it [...] You will strive for areté, but there

33 Kaczmarek (2016).

34 Moffat/May (2021).

35 Bracken (2021) 73.

36 Bracken (2021) 437.

37 Bracken (2021) 92–93.

38 Bracken (2021) 96–97.

is no greater death than that of a warrior who has attained the immortality of kleos for himself and his bloodline. Honor. Glory.”³⁹

Evidently, these desired aspirations are the same ones desired by the Homeric heroes. Kleos lies in the center of the heroic values, and it is something to be won.⁴⁰ It is “the objectification of the hero’s personal survival in epic song, the ‘imperishable fame’ which lives among men and keeps alive the hero’s name”.⁴¹ Lore, like all hunters, wishes to gain kleos and honor her bloodline. Additionally, the hunters are very proud people, so much so that Lore says that the “hunters could always be counted on for their monstrous pride, and none more so than the Achillides”.⁴²

Most of the New Gods, the winning hunters, are men and not women. It is explained that the elders of the bloodlines do not believe the female hunters are supposed to claim a god’s power. When Lore discusses this with Athena, she points a finger at the goddess’ approach, dating back to her presence in the journeys of the Homeric heroes. “... but they also look to you. To the fact that you only ever chose to mentor male heroes on journeys. You only helped *them* attain battle-born kleos – the only kleos that matters to the elders.”⁴³ In this excerpt, Lore addresses one of the main arguments of this article. The Homeric heroes are all men, and the idea of kleos can only be related to the battlefield.

I would like to dwell upon Pindar’s use of kleos in his poems. Pindar, a fifth-century BC poet, is well-known for his poems praising the victors of the Olympic Games. Pindar views kleos as the aim of the effort of the athletic activity. Kleos, the eternal fame, is bestowed upon the victors through the poems written on them by Pindar, who immortalizes them. Pindar writes about the success achieved by individual men at the expense of others, by defeating their competitors.⁴⁴

When Athena confronts Lore on her decision to leave the Agon and her past life, she reminds her of the importance of kleos.

39 Bracken (2021) 100.

40 Segal (1983).

41 Segal (1983) 26.

42 Bracken (2021) 119.

43 Bracken (2021) 339.

44 Goldhill (1990).

“... this world bore you. You belong to it. That is your birthright. You were always meant for glory, but it was taken from you, and now you will never feel satisfied – never *whole* – until you possess what you deserve [...] You are no monster. You are a warrior [...] And were you not meant for some greater role, you would have perished with your family.”⁴⁵

Athena tries to enlist Lore to help her by reminding her of her aspiration for kleos. Athena’s statement, that Lore cannot be “whole” without it, can be interpreted as reference to the Homeric hero. Since the Homeric hero’s ultimate goal is to win eternal fame, they cannot actually truly complete their journey without reaching this goal. Lore knows that she cannot truly abandon the game without fulfilling her destiny. She is a warrior, and so she has to continue fighting until she meets her demise in battle.

YOU’RE A WOMAN, I’M A MAN

The tension between masculinity and femininity is ever-present in the *Iliad*. Ransom⁴⁶ suggests viewing the ideal masculine identity in contrast to the “other”, which in most cases is the feminine. For example, Hektor contrasts his masculinity to the strength of a child and the knowledge of a woman:⁴⁷

... μή τί μεν ἤυτε παιδὸς ἀφαιροῦ πειρήτιζε,
ἠὲ γυναικός, ἢ οὐκ οἶδεν πολεμήια ἔργα.
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν εὖ οἶδα μάχας τ’ ἀνδροκτασίας τε.

... in no way try to frighten me like some puny boy
or a woman who knows not deeds of war.

Hektor is highlighting his masculinity in these lines by contrasting himself with the woman, who has no knowledge of warfare and is ignorant of battle. The Homeric hero is thus the opposite of the feminine. The Homeric warrior is phys-

⁴⁵ Bracken (2021) 342.

⁴⁶ Ransom (2011).

⁴⁷ Hom. Il. 7,235–7.

ically attractive, which is evidence of his godly parentage and noble status.⁴⁸ Thus, according to the ideas presented in the *Iliad*, masculinity is based on concepts such as martial fortitude and civic responsibility.

Even from the look of the conception alone, Lore is already deviating from the classic definition of the masculine Homeric hero. The premise of her being a female warrior is an antithesis to the ideas presented by Homer that were prevalent in the Archaic society. As already mentioned, Lore fits with the model of the Girl on Fire, who exhibits many masculine qualities.

Similarly to Katniss,⁴⁹ the character of Lore can be analyzed according to the theory of Female Masculinity.⁵⁰ Female masculinity is a phenomenon in which women bodies do masculine performative acts, it allows a “glimpse of how masculinity is constructed as masculinity”.⁵¹ Lore, like Katniss, lacks feminine qualities and is depicted in line with hegemonic masculinity and violent hegemonic masculine practices. She exhibits traits that are associated with the masculine; she is independent, fearless, and skilled. Lore embodies the character of the masculine woman in fantasy literature, who has “the capacity for violence, ownership and proficiency with weapons, and mastery of the self and others”.⁵²

The patriarchal aspect of the ancient world lives on in *Lore*. According to the fundamental belief, only men are allowed to claim the power of a god. Over the centuries, they allowed women to hunt, but in the present of the book, only a select few are chosen to work in a pack on behalf of the archon – the leader of the bloodline. Those are the léainas or the lionesses,⁵³ who hunt the gods and bring them to their leader to kill. The other women, the parthénoi, exist solely to ensure the survival of the bloodline by giving birth.

This tension reaches its climax in a brutal sexual assault Lore experience. As already mentioned, in the beginning of the book, Lore is no longer a part of the world of the Agon. She had abandoned her path as a warrior. Gradually,

48 Ransom (2011) 40.

49 Parvathi (2017).

50 Halberstam (1998).

51 Halberstam (1998) 1.

52 Evans (2018) 15.

53 Greek tragedy and poetry compare women to lionesses to show their active role and sometimes the inappropriateness of their position of power. For a comprehensive analysis, see: Konstantinou, 2012.

the reader receives more information about her past trauma and her decision to turn away from the Agon. Lore tells Athena about her time with the Odysseides, and their new Archon. The Archon touched Lore inappropriately during her training and gave her special attention. One night, he invited her to his office and told her that from that moment on, she would only serve him. He forced himself on her.

Lore tells Athena that at that moment, she “understood what that world was”.⁵⁴ Lore realizes that in this world there will always be a man who decides her fate, who controls her. But then she realized she did have a choice – and she chose to kill him so he would not be able to hurt her or anyone else. As Athena best describes it, Lore “knows the darkness of men yet refuses to be afraid”.⁵⁵ This traumatic experience made Lore leave the world of the Agon behind her and create her own destiny.

Castor, Lore’s long-lost friend, is the New Apollo. Interestingly, while Lore exhibits more of a masculine characteristic, Castor is more effeminate. This kind of “reversal” is also present in *The Hunger Games* books. Katniss, which, as we have seen, is more masculine, while Peeta exhibits feminine traits. Peeta bakes and paints – things that are considered more feminine. Similarly in *Lore*, Castor trains to be a healer and not a hunter, an occupation that is considered to be more feminine. The effeminate character of Castor enhances the more masculine character of Lore.

When Lore first meets Castor, he is sick, and so he is described as very weak and lean. The instructor pairs them together, claiming they will be “evenly matched”.⁵⁶ In his view, representing the patriarchal overview of the Agon as a whole, a sick boy and a healthy girl are even. Throughout their training, they form a bond, but it is Lore who mostly helps Castor. All through the book, Castor cannot manifest a physical form. When Wrath is trying to enlist the Achillides to his side, he uses Castor’s incompetence to persuade them. “He is weak, the weakest of the gods. Unable to manifest a physical form. Unable to tap the depths of his power”.⁵⁷ Once again, Castor is depicted as weak. Even as a god, he is still the weakest of them all.

54 Bracken (2021) 344.

55 Bracken (2021) 348.

56 Bracken (2021) 98.

57 Bracken (2021) 117.

The main villain of the story is the New Ares, who chooses the name of Wrath. This is particularly interesting since an almost immediate association, when hearing the word “wrath” in this context, is the wrath of Achilles. Achilles is the “epitome of heroism, the mightiest and most glorious of all his race”.⁵⁸ Since viewing Achilles as a prime example of the archetype of the Homeric hero, a norm which the character of Lore deviates from according to this article’s main argument, it is of great importance that her counterpart is also tied to the Homeric hero. In other words, Wrath’s name and his place in Lore’s story further assist in presenting this dichotomy between Lore and the Homeric hero.

Another point of difference between Lore and the Homeric hero is related to the aspect of collaboration. As mentioned earlier, the Homeric hero shows no signs of solidarity,⁵⁹ while Lore is the complete opposite. Throughout her journey, Lore is working with a group. Interestingly enough, with the exception of Athena, all members of her group are male. Each member of the group has a different skill, and together they manage to help Lore in her journey.

Lore is also similar to the Homeric hero in her experience and journey. At the end of the book, when Athena is about to die by the hands of Wrath, she asks Lore to kill her herself, so Wrath will not get her powers. Lore hesitates at first but she accepts and gains the powers of Athena. She becomes a New God. In that perspective, she is similar to Herakles, who becomes a god after his death.

As discussed previously, the Homeric hero is considered the restorer of order. At the very end of the book, after Lore has already accepted the fact that in the next Agon she will be a target since she is now a goddess, she pleads to Zeus to end the Agon. Zeus agrees, and Lore and Castor become mortal again. Since the Agon is now over, so does the hunt and the killing. This is to say, Lore has succeeded in restoring the order of the world by putting an end to the deathly Agon once and for all.

58 Clarke (2006) 84.

59 Graziosi/Haubold (2003).

LORE AND OTHER WOMEN IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

From the first moment the reader comes in touch with *Lore*, they know to expect a connection between Lore and Medusa. The cover of the book depicts a marble statue of a young woman with snakes coming out of her head. Each house bears a mark, and the house of Perseus, which Lore belongs to, bears the mark of the Gorgon. The hunters wear masks of their ancestors' greatest accomplishments and kills.

At one of their pivotal conversations throughout the book, Lore confronts Athena about the way she punished Arachne and Medusa. Athena, on her side, claims that she helped Medusa. She suggests she transformed her so she would be able to protect herself from those who wish to harm her. Athena blames men for perpetuating Medusa's depiction as a monster, stemming from their fear "to meet the true gaze of a woman, to witness the powerful storm that lives inside, waiting".⁶⁰ Medusa, just like Lore, is now a "being who could gaze back at the world, unafraid".⁶¹

Lore may be deviating from the classic mold of the Homeric hero, but she does resemble other interpretations of the modern Amazon. As Potter⁶² best describes it:

"In ancient Greek mythology the Amazons are the barbaric other, women who behave like men and ultimately exist to be defeated, subjugated and domesticated by male heroes like Heracles, Theseus and Achilles. Living on the edges of the civilised Greek world, their all-female society where girl children are prized and women hunt and fight without the need for men is in opposition to the Athenian patriarchal norm".

Hardwick⁶³ reviews the description of the Amazon in ancient literature and points at three major ways of portrayal throughout history – heroes, outsiders and women. Homer describes the amazons as "men-like", suggesting they fight and look like men. He compares the amazons to men in their fighting skills

⁶⁰ Bracken (2021) 347.

⁶¹ Bracken (2021) 347.

⁶² Potter (2018) 31.

⁶³ Hardwick (1990).

and emphasizes their military reputation. It is worth noting that depicting the Amazons as heroes makes them worthy opponents, and so it is worth defeating them. By highlighting the heroic nature of the amazons, Homer is also emphasizing the virtues of his male heroes. More modern depictions of the amazons stress their unusual nature and their deviation from “normal”. Lore is one of recent examples of heroines who invoke the Amazonian myth. These new depictions paint the amazons not as women who should be tamed and conquered, but as “young female warriors, designed as admirable heroines in their own worlds”.⁶⁴

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main goal of this contribution was to highlight the similarities and differences between the traditional Homeric hero and a modern depiction of the archetype, embodied by the character of Lore in the YA novel by the same name. As a hunter, Lore exhibits the traditional traits of the Homeric hero: she seeks kleos, honor and pride. She is a skilled, strong warrior. The main deviation Lore has from the traditional Homeric hero concerns her gender – she is a female and not male. Although, as demonstrated above, she exhibits many masculine traits and is not associated with many traits that are considered feminine. The tension between masculinity and femininity is a central theme in this novel, and the contrast between the Homeric hero and the Girl on Fire enhances it.

⁶⁴ Graf (2015) 78.

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