

LEARNING MYTHOLOGY AT MUSEUMS, PALACES AND GARDENS

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Abstract

The project "Learning Mythology in Museums, Palaces and Gardens" aims to recognize some Myths existing in buildings and public spaces that have accompanied us throughout the centuries.

Keywords

Mythology; Museums; Palaces; Gardens.

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Heródoto, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.5, n.1 - 2021.1. p. 16-80.

DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13760

Resumo

Pretende-se com o projecto “Aprender Mitologia nos Museus, Palácios e Jardins” fazer o reconhecimento de alguns Mitos que nos acompanham ao longo dos séculos, representados em edifícios ou espaços públicos.

Palavras-chave

Mitologia; Museus; Palácios; Jardins.

“See, Atlas himself is troubled and can scarce bear up the white-hot vault upon his shoulders.”. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book II



Image 01: "Atlas and Europe" (Atlas e Europa), D. João VI Room, south/east. Archangel Foschini. Ajuda National Palace (Palácio Nacional da Ajuda). Lisbon.

1 - The Project

The great myths of ancient Greece are, directly or indirectly, still present in our Culture. In such a way that mythological themes and allegories are a constant in the decorative elements or furniture of Portuguese palaces, monuments and gardens. Many spaces and collections of our museums contemplate these themes, over the centuries.

We will therefore try to approach Mythology understood as “the story of supernatural characters, surrounded by symbology and venerated in the form of gods, demigods and heroes, who ruled the forces of Nature and the Cosmos; is told through a set of fables that explain the origin of myths, of mythological divinities, who held the destiny of men in their hands and ruled the world.

For the Greeks, as for the Romans, Myths are an integral part of their belief. A multitude of gods, demigods and heroes explain the origin of life, the Cosmos, the forces of Nature, the seasons, death, fertility, war, peace.

Among many gods of Nature, we have the world of the deities of the Forest, of the Fauns, of the Satyrs, of the Nymphs, in all their features, of Dionysus/Bacchus, of the Bacchae, and all other deities of the woods, of the mountains, of the seas, of agricultural properties and of the cycles or Seasons of the Year. Demeter/Ceres, Dionysus/Bacchus, Vertumnus and Pomona, Zephyr and Flora, Pan and Silvanus, protecting the gardens and fruit trees, are some that will now accompany us.

The project “Learning Mythology at Museums, Palaces and Gardens” (Aprender Mitologia nos Museus, Palácios e Jardins) from the Clenardus Association: Promotion and Teaching of Culture and Classic Languages ([Associação Clenardus: Promoção e Ensino da Cultura e Línguas Clássicas](#)), Culture Groupe, whose main objective is to develop a set of activities aimed at the study of Classical Mythology, through Literature, Archaeology and Art History.

The strategy for the development of the project involves organizing guided visits to places where Mythology is present, holding meetings and training activities and creating a thematic database.

The Project began in 2018 with a series of actions carried out at the Ajuda National Palace and at the National Coaches Museum (Museu Nacional dos Coches), inaugurated in Lisbon on the initiative of Queen D. Amélia d'Orleães e Bragança, Princess of France, married in 1886 with the future king of Portugal D. Carlos I, with the designation of “National Coaches Museum”. However, it also included the National Museum of Archeology (Museu Nacional de Arqueologia), created by Royal Decree in 1893, under the name of “Portuguese Ethnological Museum” (Museu Etnológico Português), and the “Municipal Museum of Loures” (Museu Municipal de Loures).

It gradually extended to other locations, through participation in the “Roman Festival”, in activities promoted by the St. Miguel de Odrinhas Museum (Museu de S. Miguel de Odrinhas), Sintra; at the Alter do Chão

Roman Festival (Festival Romano de Alter do Chão); at Colégio Militar - Palácio de Mesquitela (Colégio Militar - Palácio de Mesquitela); at the Museum of the Foundation of the Roman City of *Ammaia* (Museu da Fundação da Cidade Romana da *Ammaia*), Marvão, at the Municipal Archaeological Museum of Fundão (Museu Arqueológico Municipal do Fundão) and at the Municipal Museum of Serpa (Museu Municipal de Serpa), among others². There were also several training activities and guided tours to other gardens of Portuguese Museums and Palaces, such as Quinta da Regaleira; of the Palace of Queluz (Palácio de Queluz).

Several conferences and training sessions on the subject were also held.

Due to the Pandemic that we are going through, many of the initiatives had to find non-face-to-face alternatives, having helped us the means available online, namely through the creation of quizzes (surveys). [Here](#)

Various contributions were also made to the execution of virtual exhibitions for Google Arts and Culture, with the collaboration of the signatory, such as the Mosaic of the Muses (Mosaico das Musas); The Long Way of Bacchus (O [Longo Caminho de Baco](#)) and A Long Journey: The Coaches and Their Myths ([Uma longa Viagem: os Coches e os seus Mitos](#)), held around the three majestic coaches from the Embassy of D. João V to Pope Clement XI (1716).

² I would like to publicly thank all the entities mentioned in this paper that made the development of this project possible.

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Image 02: The three coaches of the Embassy of D. João V to Pope Clement XI. Lisbon Coronation Coach (Coche da Coroação de Lisboa), Ocean Coach (Coche dos Oceanos) and Ambassador Coach (Coche do Embaixador), in the center Ocean Coach. National Coaches Museum, Lisbon. Photography: Pedro Beltão. National Coaches Museum.

The Embassy Coaches, built in Rome in the most perfect Baroque style, present several symbolic elements and allegories to the Fatherland that blend with classical Mythology, making it possible, through them, to know curious and unpublished episodes of the History of Portugal.

The exposition “[Long Way of Bacchus](#)” was organized around the Coche of Infantas (Coche das Infantas), an apparatus vehicle, dating from the mid-eighteenth century, used by the four infantas daughters of D. José I: D. Maria Francisca, future queen D. Maria I, D. Maria Ana Francisca Josefa, D. Maria Francisca Doroteia and D. Maria Francisca Benedita. Richly decorated with *rocaille* motifs, it depicts many mythological figures, such as Venus and Bacchus.



Image 03: Ajuda National Palace. Painting "The Council of the Gods" (O Consílio dos Deuses), D. João VI Room. Arcângelo Foschini. Photography: José Paulo Ruas, 2014 Copyright:© DGPC.

The thematic visits around Mythology were also accompanied by the literary component, because many of it influenced the creation of artistic works. This is the reason that we will try to associate them here as well.

Here, we cannot fail to invoke the great poet Luís de Camões (1524-1580), author of the epic *The Lusiads* (*Os Lusíadas*). Being one of the most important works of Portuguese literature and exponent of Classicism, where facts of Portuguese History and intrigues of the Greek-Roman gods are mixed, which seek to help or inhibit the Portuguese navigator, Camões' epic begins with the Council of the Gods, a theme that will often be represented in painting or on tapestries since the 17th century.

20

When they who hold Olympick luminous height, 20 the Gods and Governors of our human race, convened in glorious conclave, all unite the coming course of Eastern things to trace : Treading the glassy dome of lovely light, along the Milky Way conjoint they pace, gather'd together at the Thunderer's hest, and by old Atlas' gentle grandson prest.

21

They leave the reg'iment of the Firm'aments seven, 21, to them committed by his high command, his pow'r sublime whose thoughtful will hath given Order to skies, and angry seas, and land : Then instant gather in th' assize of Heaven those who are throned on far Arcturus' strand, and those that Auster rule, and Orient tides, where springs Aurora and clear Phoebus hides."

2 - The Gods and Their Representation

We have verified, through our thematic visits, that, whether in the wall painting and tiles or in the statuary, in several other decorative elements and even in the furniture, in the Modern Era, since the 18th century, the gods are a constant in multiple spaces.

The set of aquatic deities is one of the most recurrent in the national territory, in all its forms, usually associated with fountains, *fontanários*, although they also appear in other contexts, namely in wall painting, but still in objects of common use, mentioning, only as an example crockery and even toothpick holders. Poseidon/Neptune, the god of the Seas is undoubtedly receive much of our esteem, as is his entire entourage.

Amphitrite, daughter of the nymph Doris and Nereus, therefore a Nereid, wife of Poseidon and goddess of the seas, is also often represented. The Tritons are, therefore, a constant in our mythological expressions. As if doing justice to the text of antiquity that described them as inhabitants of the West.

"An embassy from Lisbon sent for the propose reported to the Emperor Tiberius that a Triton had been seen playing in a shell in a certain cave, and that he had the well-known shape. The description of the Nereids, also is not incorrect, except that their body is bristling with hair even in the parts where they have human shape; for a nereid has been seen on the same coast, whose mournful song moreover when dying has been a lonh way off by the coast-dwellers; also de governor of Caul wrote to the late lamented Augustus that a large number of dead nereids were to be seen on the shore" Pliny, Natural History 9.4.9.

Also the primordial Ocean is much represented. It was, in Classical Mythology, the great River that surrounded the Earth, the eldest son of Uranus (Sky) and Gaia (Earth), that is, the oldest of the Titans. He was like the personification of running waters and all the sources of fresh water that exist on planet Earth.



Image 05: Amphitrite and her entourage. Coach of D. Maria Francisca Benedita, Giuseppe Troni (Turin, 1739 - Lisbon, 1810). Royal arena/ National Coach Museum (Picadeiro Real/ Museu Nacional dos Coches).

Pliny the Elder (23 -,79 A.D.) used to say that:

“O mundo inteiro é cingido por mar que corre a toda a volta segundo um grande círculo; e não é de modo nenhum necessário procurar provar por argumentos o que é já conhecido pela experiência.

Hoje em dia, a partir de Gades e das colunas de Hércules, navega-se em todo o oceano Ocidental, contornando a Espanha e as Gálias. Quanto ao oceano Setentrional, ele foi percorrido na sua maior parte, quando, sob os auspícios do divino Augusto, uma frota fez a volta à Germânia até ao promontório dos Cimbro; (...).” (Plínio, o Velho NH, II, 166-168).

The Ocean has, among us, representations since the Roman occupation of the territory, highlighting the fabulous “Ocean Mosaic” (Mosaico do Oceano) associated with the winds (Euro and Boreas) of *Ossonoba*, dating from the 2nd-3rd centuries. It seems to indicate the maritime importance of the city, a port where different influences from North Africa and East Mediterranean would cross. Also, in Alter do Chão, in the Mosaic of House of Medusa (Mosaico da Casa da Medusa), the Ocean is depicted.

In more recent periods of history, post-Renaissance, the Ocean and the Tagus River are often represented with attributes similar to Poseidon and the Nereids are replaced by the Tágides, or nymphs of the Tagus, alluding to the Camonian work.



Image 06: Ocean Mosaic. 2nd century or early 3rd century A.D. Municipal Museum of Faro (Museu Municipal de Faro).



Image 07: "Father Ocean seated on a whale, is accompanied by his Nereid daughters" (O Pai Oceano sentado sobre uma balêa, he acompanhado pelas suas filhas Nereidas). Inventory number: 51840 DIG. Ajuda National Palace. D. João VI Room, Topo Sul. Archangel Foschini. Photography: José Paulo Ruas, 2014 Copyright:© DGPC.



Image 08: Tejo River. Palace of the Marquis of Pombal (Palácio do Marquês de Pombal). Photography: Horacio Ramos.

The intervention carried out in the 19th century, in Palácio da Ajuda, which we will cover in this work, is an example of how this relationship with the deities of the classical pantheon is brought to exponents, when the king himself, D. João VI, is represented return to Portugal from Brazil, in the car of the god of the Seas with all his entourage.



Image 09: Allegory of the Happy Return of D. João VI (detail) (Alegoria do Feliz Regresso de D. João VI, pormenor). Ajuda National Palace. Arcângelo Foschini, 1825. Photography: José Paulo Ruas, 2014© DGPC. Inventory number: 51834.03.

Also in the hippo mobiles vehicles, whether Royal, Nobility or even Clerical ones, in their exterior panels, reflect the classicism that the poet Camões had consecrated in *The Lusiads* and that the baroque and neo-classicism will resume.

Some of the exponents of the consecration of the classical culture in the hippo mobiles vehicles are, from my point of view, the coach of D. Maria Francisca Benedicta, displayed in the old Picadeiro Real/Museum of Coaches, and the Coache of Infantas, in the new Museum of Coaches, as well as the Coaches of the Embassy of D. João V to Pope Clement XI.

The Palace of the Marquis of Pombal, Oeiras, built between 1720 and 1730, is a remarkable example of the heritage of that century, designed by Carlos Mardel, a famous Hungarian architect who played a privileged role in the Pombaline reconstruction of Lisbon, in the context of 1755 earthquake. The Palace Gardens, inspired by the Palace of Versailles, boast a remarkable wealth in terms of mythological elements, whether represented in tiles or in statuary. In one of these tile panels, the representation of Apollo and the Muses stands out.

The presence of Abundance, in the main hall of the Palace, takes us to other places where this allegorical deity, usually crowned with flowers, holding the cornucopia, guarantees the prosperity of the House or the Vehicle, like the Coache of Infantas that we will discuss.

Here, right at the entrance of the Palace of the Marquis of Pombal, although they do not belong to its original construction, we come across two colossal statues of Faun and Polyphemus, which introduce us to the myths of Nature. Also, on the facades of the Palace are other deities, such as Juno/Hera, Athena/Minerva and Aphrodite/Venus.



Image 10: Photo from Palácio Marquês de Pombal. [Here](#)

The Seasons of the Year, a recurring theme, over the centuries, since Roman times, are also present in the garden of the Palace of the Marquis of Pombal, as well as the marine deities.

In Greek mythology, *Horae*, daughters of Zeus and Themis, represented the seasons of the year and personified the order of the world and the hours of the day.

Initially, only three were mentioned: Irene (peace), Dice (justice) and Eunomia (discipline). However, there are nine more Hours that are guardians of the annual cycle of vegetation growth and the seasons. (Thallus, Carpus, Auxo, Acme, Anatole, Dice, Dica, a minor goddess of Justice, Euporia, Gymnasia).

For some authors Chloris, goddess of spring, whose Roman correspondent is Flora, was also one of the Hours.

The *Horae* were also the guardians of the gates of Olympus, they organized the passage of the stars and participated in the procession of Aphrodite and the other gods and goddesses related to agricultural work and the change of the seasons. They were responsible for guarding the ambrosia,

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DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13760

food of the gods, and offering it to humans who deserved immortality and divinization.

They were sometimes associated with the Moirai who were their half-sisters. They cared for Hera in her childhood and helped improve Pandora, having witnessed the birth of Hermes and Dionysus.

Gradually the Horae came to personify the division of the day and were considered daughters of Cronos - the Lord of Time who consumes his own creations - and companions of the Sun and Moon, reason why the presence of Cronos is felt even in the objects of furniture and personal ones.

Given its connotation with Time, representations of Cronos on watchmaking objects spread across numerous Portuguese Palaces are recurring.



Image 11: Table clock (three dials). Inventory number: 16127TC. photography: José Pessoa, 1996. Copyright: © DGPC



Image 12: Cover engraved with a mythological illustration commissioned by Carvalho Monteiro to Luigi Manini. Reverse. Photography: Museum of Time (Museu do Tempo), Besançon. in Manuel J. Gandra, *António Augusto Carvalho Monteiro. Imaginário e Legado*³

At Ajuda National Palace, we find one of the most beautiful representations of Cronos on the ceiling of the staircase leading to the first floor of the palace, a situation that is repeated in other places.

³The history of this watch, identified as Leroy 01, begins in 1867, when the Muscovite Count Nicolas Nostitz commissioned a watch with eleven complications from the famous watchmaking house Le Roy & Fils, later L. Roy & Cie. exhibited at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878. With his death, in 1897 António Carvalho Monteiro acquired the watch, however, he had more complications added to it.

The Leroy 01 watch, currently on display at the Time Museum (Besançon, France), after being acquired on March 26, 1956, by the inhabitants of the city, was manufactured between January 1897 and 1900 by the watchmaker Charles Piquet, from Precision Watch firm Le Roy, from Besançon (France).

The order was made by António Augusto Carvalho Monteiro, according to his idealization and detailed instructions. In: Manuel J. Gandra, *António Augusto Carvalho Monteiro Imaginário e Legado*.



Image 13: Cronus devouring one of his children, while Rhea holds one of the children in her left arm. XIX century A.D. Inventory number: PNQ 1884. Ajuda National Palace



Image 14: Cronus. Ajuda National Palace.

We would like to point out that, in Portuguese territory, there are several examples of mosaics, of which we highlight those from roman *Villae* of Rabaçal, Conímbriga and Pisões with representations of the Seasons of the Year.

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Also from Roman times, there are a lot of literary references to the Four Seasons, recalling the example of several authors, among them the poet Virgil:

“(...) In the dawning spring, when icy streams trickle from snowy mountains, and the crumbling clod breaks at the Zephyr’s touch, even then would I have my bull groan over the deep-driven plough, and the share glisten when rubbed by furrow (...)” Virgil, *Georgics*, I

In turn, Ovid (43 BC - 17 or 18 AD), making a correlation between the seasons of the year and individual life, reminds us that:

" Nothing retains its own form ; but Nature, the great renewer, ever makes up forms from other forms. Be sure there's nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form. What we call birth is but a beginning to be other than what one was before; and death is but things may shift from there to here and here to cessation of a former state. Though, perchance, Thus the ages have come from gold there, still do all things in their sum total remain unchanged. "Nothing, I feel sure, lasts long under the same to iron; thus often has the condition of places Appearance changed".
Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. XV. vv 252-255.



Image 15: Mosaic of the Seasons of the year: Spring, Summer and Autumn. Roman Villa of Rabaçal.

The representations of the Seasons of the year follow their most common figuration. Generically, Spring is symbolized by a young woman with flowers, personified by the goddess Flora; the goddess Demeter/Ceres is the allegory of summer, with the usual bunch of spikelets; Bacchus is the allegory of autumn and an old man with a brazier in his hands usually symbolizes summer.

Demeter, the goddess of agriculture and crops, was in Greek Mythology the daughter of Cronus and Rhea, according to Hesiod, or of Ops, Vesta, or Cybele, according to other versions of the myth. Demeter/Ceres appears in Rome, along with Persephone/Proserpine and Dionysus/Bacchus, around the 5th century BC., being given ample powers: goddess of the Earth, the “Goddess-Mother”, of Nature, protector of women and childbirth, and of maternal love. As the goddess of agriculture, she accompanies Dionysus, god of the vine and wine, to teach men how to cultivate the land.

She had a daughter with her brother Zeus called Persephone (the Roman Proserpine) who lived half a year in the depths of the Earth and the other

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half came to help her mother. With his return, the new season was inaugurated, marked by the Spring Equinox.

According to the version of the myth, one day in spring, Zephyrus, the west wind, saw the nymph Chloris, fell in love with her and transformed her into Flora. As proof of his love, Zephyrus named his beloved as queen of the flowers of fruit trees and granted her the power to germinate the seeds of cultivated and ornamental flowers, among them the clove.

The *Floralia* was the Roman festival held in honor of the goddess, to consecrate the spring blooms. Under the protection of the oracle of the Sibylline books, in 238 BC., a temple was built in honor of Flora, dedicated on April 28nd.



Image 16: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Palace of the Marquis of Pombal. Oeiras. Photography: Horácio Ramos.

Autumn, represented by Dionysus/Bacchus, the Greek god of festivities, wine and fertility, whose representation in our territory, over the centuries, deserves a special mention. According to some versions of the myth, he

was killed by the Titans and cut into 14 pieces, which is why he is considered among the "Mystery Religions". In other versions of the myth Dionysus or Bacchus is assumed to be the son of Zeus/Jupiter and Princess Semele.

Associated with Liber Pater and his divine wife Libera, gradually these two deities related to fertility and wine were assimilated by Dionysus/Bacchus.

“Thus far the tillage of the fields and the stars of heaven: now thee, Bacchus, will I sing, and with thee the forest saplings, and the offspring of the show-growing olive. Hither, O Lenean sire! Here all is full of the bounties; for thee blossoms the field teeming with the harvest of the wine, and the vintage foams in the brimming vats. Come hither, O Lenean sire, strip off thy buskins and with me plunge the naked legs in the new must”.

Virgil, *Georgics*, Book II

Bacchus was one of the most prominent deities in Roman Lusitania. Centuries later, we will find him profusely represented in wall paintings, tiles or ceramics, as well as in coaches and berlins, richly decorated with paintings and mythological sculptures on their panels and elevations.



Image 17: Bacchus - Allegory of autumn (Alegoria do Outono). Ajuda National Palace.



Image 18: Dionysus/Bacchus. Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra.



Image 19: Bacchus. Queluz National Palace.

From the Roman period, we highlight the famous “Mosaic of the Muses”, from the Roman *Villa* of Torre de Palma, Monforte, where, in one of its panels, “the Indian Triumph of Bacchus” (o Triunfo Indiano de Baco) is represented.

Well-known is this great mythological journey traveled by Bacchus in the East, as far as India. On his return, victorious, he was accompanied by an entourage, including Sileno; Bacchae; nymphs; Satyrs and even the god Pan. “The Indian Triumph of Bacchus” is a recurring theme in painting, tapestries and other supports.

"(...) The priest had bidden the people to celebrate a
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Bacchic festival : all serving-women must be excused from toil; with their mistresses they must cover their breasts with the skins of beasts, they must loosen the ribands of their hair, and with garlands upon their heads they must hold in their hands the vine-wreathed thyrsus. And he had prophesied that the wrath of the god would be merciless if he were disregarded. The matrons and young wives all obey, put by weaving and work-baskets, leave their tasks unfinished; they burn incense, calling on Bacchus, naming him also Bromius, Lyaeus, son of the thunderbolt, twice born, child of two mothers ; they hail him as Nyseus also, Thyoneus of the unshorn locks, Lenaeus, planter of the joy-giving vine, Nyctelius, father Eleleus, Iacchus, and Euan, and all the many names besides by which thou art known, O Liber, throughout the towns of Greece "

(Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book IV vv: 1-25, 2004)



Image 20: Indian triumph of Bacchus. Panel of the Mosaic of the Muses. Roman *Villa* in Torre de Palma. National Museum of Archeology.



Image 21: Bacchus, Ceres and Cibeles. Coache of Infantas. Museum of Coaches. Photography: Pedro Beltrão.



Image 22: Bacchic representation. Quinta do Conventinho, Loures.



Image 23: Faience Vessel (Cangirão de faiança), depicting a satyr. On the lid is a female character, quite possibly a Nymph. Sacavém Crockery Factory, engraved with Sacavém brand and dated 1925. Photography and commentary by Loures Museums.



Image 24: Silver and ivory mug. Inventory number: 465. Ajuda National Palace. Cylindrical bowl decorated in high relief with satyrs and *putti* celebrating the wine festival. [Here](#).

The poet of the great epic *The Lusiads* gives Baco the role of opposing the Portuguese journey to India, at the Council of the Gods. However, he assumes the children or companions of Bacchus as the progenitors of the peoples of Lusitania, making it equivalent to the current Portugal.

"This is my happy land, my home, my pride ; 2 1 where, if the Heavens but grant the pray'er I pray for glad return and every risk defied, there may my life-light fail and fade away. This was the Lusitania, name applied by Lusus or by Lysa, sons, they say, of ancient Bacchus, or his boon compeers, eke the first dwellers of her eldest years".

(Camões, The Lusiads. III)

Pan (Lupercio or *Lupercus* in Rome) is also one of the constant characters in Portuguese iconography. Present in Bacchus' retinue, he was half man, half animal, representing the forces of nature. Son of Hermes/Mercury and Penelope, according to some mythological narratives; of Jupiter with the nymph Timbres or Callisto, according to others; or even from Air with a Nereid or even from Heaven and Earth, he would have been born with goat's horns and legs and was very restless.

It was to his desire for the nymph Syrinx, hidden among the reeds to escape him, that the appearance of the flute with his name is due. Music presents itself here, as in many other myths, as a civilizational and pacifying element, because it is thanks to it that Pan ends up being accepted by the nymphs who moved away from him, because his figure scared, causing panic.



Image 25: Panel with representation of Pan and Syrinx. Coaches of D. Maria Francisca Benedita. National Coaches Museum.



Image 26: Pan, Queluz National Palace.



Image 27: Representation of Pan. Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra.

However, the wealth of mythological statuary does not end here, in one of the spaces already mentioned, the Palace of the Marquis of Pombal.

Another Ceres had already approached the garden, on the balustrade that precedes it, as well as a set of other deities such as Diana/Selene, Minerva and even heroes, such as Hercules.

In fact, there are multiple representations of Diana/Selene in national museums and gardens.

Artemisa/Diana, Apollo's sister, is also represented on a recurring basis, as in the current National Costume Museum (Museu Nacional do Traje), formerly Angeja-Palmela Palace (Palácio Angeja-Palmela).

Just as Helios, from his identification with Apollo, is called Phoebus ("shining"), Selene, from his homologation with Artemis, is also commonly referred by the epithet Phoebe (feminine form). As Helios drives the chariot of the sun, Selene is the moon goddess and drives her chariot until dawn, personified in Eos.

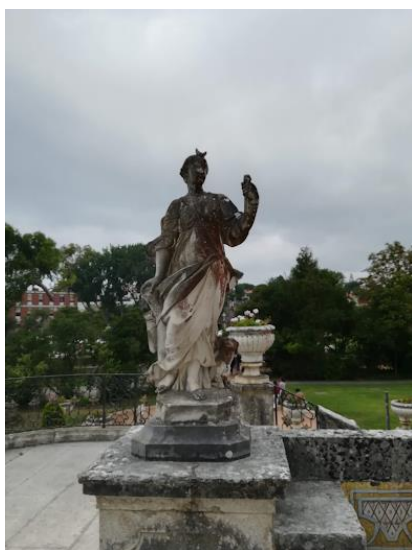


Image 28: Diana/Selene (?) Photography: Horácio Ramos. Palace of the Marquis of Pombal.



Image 29: Diana. National Costume Museum.

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Image 30: Coache of D. Maria Francisca Benedita, lower left side panel, front. Photography: Henrique Ruas, 1987. Copyright: © DGPC

In the Museum of Coaches, in the Coach of D. Francisca Benedita, there is one of the most beautiful representations of the myth of Selene and Endymião, the young man whom the Moon visits daily.

Zeus, at Selene's request, promised Endymion to fulfill a wish, however difficult it was. Endymion asked for eternal sleep, so that he could remain young forever. Wonderfully beautiful, he lay asleep on a mountainside in the Peloponnese, or on Mount Latmos in Caria, near Miletus. Night after night, Selene came down behind the hill to visit him.

The Four Seasons of the Year are also present in the hypomobile vehicles, each with its characteristic symbology. Silenus, the tutor of Bacchus, is also a constant presence, as well as a wide range of other deities.

Let us recall Virgil's text:

"Existem duas divindades (...) que ocupam o primeiro lugar no meio dos homens. Uma é a deusa Demetra ou Terra, seja qual for o nome que lhe deres, pois ela sustenta os mortais com alimentos sólidos. A outra divindade vem competir com esta e é o filho de Sémele. Ele descobriu uma bebida, o sumo de uva, e introduziu-a no meio dos mortais para libertar os infelizes humanos dos seus padecimentos, embriagando-nos com o néctar da videira. O seu presente é o sono, o esquecimento dos males de cada dia e não há outro remédio para as penas humanas. Ele, que é

deus, oferece-se nas libações aos deuses; a ele, portanto, devem os homens todos os bens.”

Virgílio, *As Geórgicas*, IV (ed. Ruy Mayer, Livraria Sá da Costa, 1948.)

According to the myth narrated by Claudian in the “Kidnapping of Proserpine”, from the 4th-5th centuries, the beauty of Proserpine, daughter of Demeter/Ceres, seduced the god Hades-Pluto, the lord of the dead and the underworld, who fell in love with her. However, Demeter-Ceres did not want this union, but Hades persisted, until, one day, Persephone, who was picking daffodils, was kidnapped by the deity and taken to the world of the dead. The drama of Claudiano's text was remarkable for countless artists, over time, and it became an inspiring mythological theme. To express this drama, we selected the sculptural group by John Cheere (1709-1787) from the National Palace of Queluz.



Image 31: Kidnapping of Proserpina. Cheere, John (1709-1787). National Palace of Queluz. Inventory number: PNQ 3266/1



Image 32: Flora, Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra



Image 33: Ceres, Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra.



Image 34: Ceres, Tile National Museum (Museu Nacional do Azulejo). Inventory number: MNAz 7015 Az. [Here](#).



Image 35: Ceres/Deméter National Palace of Queluz. Inventory Number: PNQ 3175. (1757 AD. - 1765 AD.). On her left arm she has a bunch of spikelets, which she holds with her right hand.



Image 36: Winter. Coache of Ocean. National Museum of Coaches.



Image 37: Winter. Palace of the Marquis of Pombal. Oeiras. Photography: Horácio Ramos. The Winter (O Inverno), Quinta da Regaleira.

Venus, the goddess of beauty and love, will be in the epic of Camões, one of the deities that supports the Portuguese on the sea route to India. It is, therefore, natural that her presence is a constant, over the centuries.



Image 38: Coache of Infantas (detail). Presentation of Afrodite swimming, among her children Eroles or Cupidos. 1750 A.D.. - 1760 A.D. National Coaches Museum. Inventory number: V 0020.

Multiple representations of Aphrodite/Venus are known, since the Roman occupation of the current Portuguese territory, either in inscriptions or in statues, of which we highlight the one from the roman "Villa" of Quinta das Longas, Elvas. However, there are several copies of statues or fragments, as well as epigraphs in her honor, such as the copy by Miróbriga, Santiago of Cacém, which José d' Encarnação studied and published, whose dedicator is a *magister*. To worship Venus was to pay homage to the imperial family, as has been known since its association with the imperial cult.

In Miróbriga there is also an apsidal building, possibly a temple dedicated to Venus. An inscription in honor of Venus corroborates the cult that the deity had in that place.

"But him opposed Venus, lovely fair,
whose heart her Lusian sons had won the more,
since in them seen the qual'ities high and rare,
the gifts that deckt her Romans dear of yore :
The heart of valour, and the potent star,

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whose splendour dazzled Tingitanan shore ;
and e'en the musick of their speech appears
soft bastard Latin to her loving ears."

Camões, *The Lusiads*, I,



Image 39: Inscription with dedication to Venus Miróbriga. Santiago of Cacém.



Image 40: Venus. Quinta da Regaleira



Image 41: Venus and Cupido. National Palace of Ajuda.

Although we focused more on the Museums and Palaces of Lisbon, we cannot fail to highlight the beautiful Flemish tapestry that belongs to the collection of the Machado de Castro National Museum (Museu Nacional Machado de Castro). It represents an episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (book IV), in which Vulcan traps Venus and Mars in a metallic net forged by himself, in order to be exposed to the gods of Olympus.



Image 42: Marte and Venus surprised by Vulcano. National Museum Machado de Castro. Inventory number: 6050; T774. 1530 A.D. - 1550 A.D. Flanders.

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“Even the Sun, who with his central light guides all the stars, has felt the power of love. The Sun's loves we will relate. This god was first, 'tis said, to see the shame of Mars and Venus ; this god sees all things first. Shocked at the sight, he revealed her sin to the goddess' husband, Vulcan, Juno's son, and where it was committed. Then Vulcan's mind reeled and the work upon which he was engaged fell from his hands. Straightway he fashioned a net of fine links of bronze, so thin that they would escape detection of the eye. Not the finest threads of wool would surpass that work ; no, not the web which the spider lets down from the ceiling beam. He made the web in such a way that it would yield to the slightest touch, the least movement, and then he spread it deftly over the couch. Now when the goddess and her paramour had come thither, by the husband's art and by the net so cunningly prepared they were both caught and held fast in each other's arms. Straightway Vulcan, the Lemnian, opened wide the ivory doors and invited in the other gods. There lay the two in chains, disgracefully, and some one of the merry gods prayed that he might be so disgraced. The gods laughed, and for a long time this story was the talk of heaven

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, L. IV.

In the Coache of Infantas, of National Museum of Coaches, Venus appears to us along with her children Erotes or Cupidos.

Eros riding on dolphins is, in fact, a very common association, referring to marine environments or even aquatic infrastructures. He also assumes himself as the savior of the shipwrecked, recalling the legendary episode

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of Dionysus, when the deity realized that the pirates who attacked him had the intention of selling him as a slave. He then turned his oars into snakes, filled the ship with ivy, and sounded invisible flutes. Afterwards, he paralyzed the ship with vine wreaths. The pirates, maddened (with a madness strangely resembling holy intoxication), threw themselves into the sea and turned into dolphins. It is, therefore, a protective symbol of the life and activities of the seaside people.

Also the goddess of love Aphrodite metamorphosed into a dolphin, becoming the “woman of the sea”. Dolphins are often represented along with Poseidon (Neptune), the king of the seas.



Image 43: Eros riding on a dolphin, Lucerne disc from Roman times. Nation Museum of Ajuda. Inventory number: 987.55.38. Photography: José Pessoa DDF/DGPC.



Image 44: Eros riding on a dolphin. National Costume Museum . Lisbon



Image 45: Eros riding on a dolphin. Water Fountain of Ourives. Castle of Vide (Castelo de Vide). Photography : Joaquim Carvalho.



Image 46: Dolphin-shaped faucets. National Tile Museum, Lisbon.



Image 47: Eros “riding” on dolphins and swans. Detail of Coache of Infantas. National Museum of Coaches.

The Royal Palace of Nossa Senhora da Ajuda (Real Paço de Nossa Senhora da Ajuda) is another place impossible to forget, when it comes to

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Mythology. Built by King José I (1714-1777) at the top of the Ajuda hill, this building, built in wood to better resist earthquakes, became known as Paço de Madeira or “Real Barraca”. It replaced the sumptuous Paço da Ribeira that had been destroyed in the earthquake that devastated Lisbon in November 1755. The urgency of building a new Palace and the fact that the Royal Family survived the earthquake because it was located in the low-seismicity area of Belém/ Ajuda, justified the choice of location.

The new Palace, habitable since 1761, became the residence of the Court for about three decades. In 1794, during the reign of D. Maria I, a fire completely destroyed the royal house and most of its contents. Manuel Caetano de Sousa, Architect of Public Works, was given the task of designing a new palace. The project, begun in 1796 under the regency of the royal prince D. João, was suspended after five years of construction, when, in 1802, Francisco Xavier Fabri and José da Costa e Silva, architects trained in Italy, were in charge of adapting it, already in a neoclassical current.

This task was never fully accomplished, in part due to the flight of the Court to Brazil in 1807, following the Napoleonic invasions.

The best artists of the kingdom of Portugal worked there: Domingos Sequeira, Arcângelo Foschini, Cirilo Wolkmar Machado, Joaquim Machado de Castro and João José de Aguiar, dedicated essentially to pictorial and sculptural decorative elements.

When, in 1821, the Court returned from Brazil, the Palace was still unfinished, and was only used for protocol ceremonies. In 1826, after the death of D. João VI (1767-1826), with the east and south wings already habitable, the Infanta Regent D. Isabel Maria (1801-1876) and two of her sisters chose it for their residence⁴.

An intervention carried out in the 19th century brought to light the relationship with the divinities, when the king himself, D. João VI, is represented returning to Portugal from Brazil, in the car of the god of the

⁴ Text about the National Palace of Ajuda based on its very script. 2011. *Heródoto*, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.5, n.1 - 2021.1. p. 16-80.
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Seas with his entire entourage of Tritons, Nereids and Tágides, the nymphs of the Tagus.

Exclusive to national mythology, being the inspiration for many of the decorative motifs discussed in this work, it is from the Tágides that Camões asks for inspiration to compose his work *The Lusiads*, functioning as inspiring muses for the author to report the grandiose feats that is, the deeds of the "children of the Lusitanians".

The entry of the royal family into the Tagus is a painting, where Tritons announce the double royalty, the human and the divine, is a very interesting work. The prince regent is seated in Neptune's chariot, which gives him his place and is accompanied by the retinue of the King of the Seas, that is, surrounded by Nereids and Tritons.

However, the Palace is steeped in classical culture. Just as an example, we remember a statuette by B. del A Paris Chez N. Bonnart, dated 1888, which refers us to the myth of Eros and Psyche that was so well described in the work of the writer Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, written in the 2nd century A.D.



Image 48: Replica by B. del A Paris Chez N. Bonnart of the work "Cupid and Psyche" by António Canova, whose original is found in the Louvre. Inventory number: 43259. National Palace of Ajuda.

Venus, a great companion of the Portuguese since the time of the Discoveries, and Mercury, the Messenger and the Traveller, are deities that

also have great representation among us, as their destiny was to walk around the world.

About the Greek Aphrodite, the Roman Venus, there are countless stories surrounding her origin, as well as her love life and descendants.

The poet Hesiod (c. 700 BC) tells us in his *Theogony* that Aphrodite was born from the foam of the immortal organ of Heaven, cut by the sickle of Kronos.



Image 49: Quinta da Regaleira



Image 50: Aphrodite/ *Venus Calipigiam*. Quinta da Regaleira.



Image 51: Sculptural group representing Venus (Aphrodite) and Adonis, with a Cupid holding a Dove (the bird of Aphrodite/Venus) and a Dog (greyhound?) by John Cheere (1709-1787). Queluz National Palace.

Mythology tells us that when the lover Aphrodite saw her beloved Adonis wounded, death hovering over him, the goddess went to help him, having pricked herself on a thorn and her red blood colored the roses that were for her consecrated. Thus, in antiquity, roses were also used on tombs as a symbol of mourning.

In Rome there was a festival in honor of Flora and Venus called “Rosalia”, and every year, in the month of May, the graves were adorned with these flowers, probably.

They are the loves of Venus for Adonis that are enshrined in a sculptural group by John Cheere, dating from 1756, today located in the gardens of the National Palace of Queluz.

In turn, at Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra, the “Ground of the gods” (Patamar dos deuses) is marked by the alignment of 9 statues of classical deities, featuring Apollo Citharoedus, Venus *Calipigia*, Mercury, Fortuna (?), Faun-Pã, and four allegories: Flora, as spring; Ceres as summer, Pan, Dionysus as autumn and an old man with glowing embers, an allegory of winter.



Image 52: Quinta da Regaleira. Ground of the gods. Photography [Here](#).

We highlight *Fortuna Primigenia*, because its representation is also recurrent in the national territory. Feared among the Romans, because wealth or poverty, power or servitude depended on it according to their whims, Fortuna commands all the events of men's lives, which is why she has a rudder as her attribute.

She was represented with a cornucopia or horn of abundance, one of her attributes, and a wheel, which symbolized the distribution of goods and the coordination of men's lives.

Blindness or blocked vision (like the modern image of justice) are also common in his representations, as he randomly distributed his designs. She was even referred to as bald, with two wings on her feet and with a wheel.

Sometimes she is associated with a Sun or a Crescent, for like them, she presides over life on earth.

The myth tells us that Amalthea was the goat that fed the god Zeus/Jupiter with her milk. As a child, when playing with her, the little god would have broken one of his horns. As a proof of gratitude, Jupiter transformed him

into the horn of abundance, or the Cornucopia, which is the symbol of most Roman personifications of Abundance, such as Fortuna or Flora. After her death, she was transformed into the constellation Capricorn.



Image 53: Abundance or allegory of Spring. Coache of the Oceans. National Museum of Coaches.

Mercury is, as we mentioned, a deity with wide representation in the national territory, since remote times. He was the Roman counterpart of the Greek Hermes, son, according to some versions of the myth, of Zeus/Jupiter and the goddess Maia. Before seeing his powers increased and becoming the protector of traders and travelers, he was more associated with fertility, luck, roads and borders.

Its name derives from the word *herma*, a square or rectangular column of stone, terracotta or bronze that served as a mark for crossroads and paths protecting travelers or shepherds, and was placed in houses as a guarantee of fecundity.



Image 54: Mercury represented standing, as a young naked ephebe, holding in his left hand the emblematic caduceus and presenting, on his head, the petasus, with wide brims, characteristic of travelers. In his right hand, semi-closed, he holds the top of the bag. Mount Molião. National Archaeological Museum.



Image 55: Marble sculpture, in perfect form, of a young man standing, facing left, representing Mercury/Hermes. Queluz National Palace. Inventory number: PNQ 3157



Image 56: Mercury. Quinta da Regaleira.



Image 57: Detail of one of the Coaches from the National Museum of Coaches.

Camões refers to the messenger deity who, with his caduceus, turned everything he touched into gold:

" And thou, O Sire of surest constancy !
from the determined purpose of thy mind
turn thee not backwards; weakness 't were in thee
now to desist thee from the thing design'd
Send forth thine agile herald, Mercury,
fleeter than trimm'd shaft, or winnowing wind,
and show some happy hythe where Rest shall joy
all weary breasts with news of India nigh."

Camões, *The Lusiads*, I

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Both Apollo, in his sitar version, and the Muses are constant representations in iconography since Roman times.

Apollo, also identified as Phoebus (bright), was considered the god of youth and the light of truth. Primarily recognized as a solar deity, he appears, associated with Helios. He was Artemis's twin brother, connoted with the Moon.

He was described as the god of divine distance, who threatened or protected from above.

Phoebus-Apollo's love for the nymph Daphne is commonly represented over time.



Image 58: Apollo and Daphne, Panel VI (Apollo and Daphne). Mosaic of the Muses. Roman *Villa* of Torre de Palma., Monforte. Photography: José Pessoa. DGPC (General Direction of **Cultural** Heritage) MNA. Inventory number: 999.149.1

Mythology tells us that Phoebus-Apollo fell in love with the nymph Daphne, who did not respond to her. Daphne could no longer stand the persecution of the beautiful god Apollo and asked her father Peneus to change her form. Her father complied and turned her into a laurel tree. With the leaves of this tree Apollo wove a crown. It became the symbol of divinity, representing victory and glory.



Image 59: Apollo Citharoedus. Quinta da Regaleira, Sintra.



Image 60: Apollo, Palace of Mesquitela, Lisbon.



Image 61: Museum of Coaches. Coache of the Oceans. Embassy of D. João V to the Pope Clemente XI. Photography: Pedro Beltão. National Museum of Coaches.



Image 62: Tile of Apollo and Daphne. National Tile Museum.



Image 63: B. del A Paris Chez N. Bonnard. XVIII A.D. Room of the King's last Rooms . National Palace of Ajuda. [Here](#).

The poet Ovid gives this episode an extraordinary emphasis in its Metamorphoses:

“Now the first love of Phoebus was Daphne,
daughter of Peneus, the river-god. It was no blind
chance that gave this love, but the malicious wrath
of Cupid. Delian Apollo, while still exulting over
his conquest of the serpent, had seen him bending
his bow ^vith tight-drawn string, and had said:
What hast thou to do with the arms of men, thou
**

wanton boy ? That weapon befits my shoulders ; for
I have strength to give unerring wounds to the wild
beasts, my foes, and have but now laid low the
Python swollen with countless darts, covering whole
acres with plague-engendering form. Do thou be
content with thy torch to light the hidden fires of
love, and lay not claim to my honours.'* And to him
Venus' son replied : ** Thy dart may pierce all things

else, Apollo, but mine shall pierce thee ; and by as

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much as all living things are less than deity, by so much less is thy glory than mine." So saying he shook his wings and, dashing upward through the air, quickly alighted on the shady peak of Parnasus.

There he took from his quiver two darts of opposite effect : one puts to flight, the other kindles the flame of love. The one which kindles love is of gold and has a sharp, gleaming point ; the other is blunt and tipped with lead. This last the god fixed in the heart of Peneus' daughter, but with the other he smote Apollo, piercing even unto the bones and marrow. Straightway he burned with love ; but she fled the very name of love, rejoicing in the deep fastnesses of the woods, and in the spoils of beasts which she had snared, vying with the virgin Phoebe.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. L. I

Also in the National Palace of Ajuda and in the Correio Mor, Loures, there are beautiful paintings depicting this myth, the last one by José da Costa Negreiros. (1714-1759).

The presence of the Muses is also a constant in our Palaces.

The inspiring sisters and companions of Apollo are thus introduced to us by Hesiod:

"These are the goddesses who bedded beside mortal men and, immortal themselves, gave birth to children equal to the gods. And now sing of the tribe of women, sweet-voiced Olympian Muses, daughters of aegis-holding Zeus..."

Hesiod, *Theogony*



Image 64: Apollo and the Muses, King's room's roof. National Palace of Ajuda.

The famous “Mosaic of the Muses” comes from excavations carried out in the Roman *Villa* of Torre de Palma, Monforte, one of the most remarkable agricultural houses from the Roman period known in the south of Portugal.

It is a late mosaic from an African (possibly Tunisian) itinerant workshop.

Discovered in 1947, it was raised after excavations and taken to the National Museum of Archeology. It consisted of 11 figurative panels with mythological themes: Panel I (The Nine Muses); Panel II (Bacchic Scene); Panel III (Sileno and Satiro); Panel IV (Two Maenads); Panel V (Two Members of Tiaso); Panel VI (Apollo and Daphne); Panel VII (Hercules and Mercury); Panel VIII (Infanticidal Medea); Panel IX (Megara and Hercules); Panel X (Triumph of Bacchus); Panel XI (Theseus and Minotaur).



Image 65: Mosaic of the Muses. National Museum of Archaeology. At the base it reads: SCO [pa a] SPRA TESSELLAM LEDERE NOLI VTERI F[elix] ("don't ruin the mosaic with a rough broom. Cheers").



Image 66: Sarcophagus lid frieze – Philosophers and Muses – representation of Clio (detail). Marble. National Museum of Archeology. Inventory number: 994.21.1. III A.D. - Roman Age. Photography: José Pessoa DGPC- General Direction of Culture Heritage.

Medusa has also been with us since Roman times, and it is common to recognize her over time. It was that monster from which serpents came out of the head with the power to turn into stone all those who look at it directly, it was part of the Gorgons. Greek mythology referred to the existence of three: Medusa, Stheno and Euryale. Unlike the other two, Medusa was mortal and was, therefore, beheaded by Perseus. This one used its head as a weapon that was offered to the goddess Athena, for

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which it appears represented in the shield of the deity. It is also for this same reason that the image of Medusa's head is represented on amulets and even on the shields of some emperors with an apotropaic, that is, protective, character.

"When you have crossed the stream that parts the two continents, do on towards the fiery rising of the sun, crossing a waveless sea until you reach the land of the Gorgons, the plain of Cisthene, where the Phorcides dwell, three ancient maidens of swan-like aspect, owing an eye in common and having only a single tooth only share one eye and one tooth whom neither the sun with his rays, nor the moon by night ever looks upon; and near them their three winged sisters, the snake-tressed Gorgons, haters oh humans, whom no mortal can look on and draw another breath. "

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*.

One of the most extraordinary examples of the Perseus myth in Portuguese territory is the Patera da Lameira Larga, Penamacor. (Barata, 2018)



Image 67: Detail of Patera with the myth of Perseu. Lameira Larga, National Museum of Archaeology,



Image 68: Medusa House Mosaic. Alter do Chão. **

—

" She was once most beautiful
in form, and the jealous hope of many suitors. Of
all her beauties, her hair was the most beautiful
for so I learned from one who said he had seen
her. 'Tis said that in Minerva's temple Neptune,
lord of the Ocean, ravished her. Jove's daughter
turned away and hid her chaste eyes behind her
aegis. And, that the deed might be punished as was
due, she changed the Gorgon's locks to ugly snakes.
And now to frighten her fear-numbed foes, she still
wears upon her breast the snakes which she has
made. "

OVID, *Metamorphoses*, Book IV

The apotropaic character of Medusa will cross the times, having even
penetrated the popular imagination and, therefore, we find it represented,

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either in paintings, inside and outside of buildings, or in hypomobile vehicles and in countless decorative or utilitarian objects.⁵



Image 69: Tournament Shield . National Museum of Coaches (1770 d.C. - 1795 A.D.).
Inventory number: A 2575

Athena and her Roman counterpart Minerva also have numerous representations in Portugal, both from the Roman period and in the post-Renaissance phase.

In Mythology, she is “daughter of Zeus, holder of the aegis, Athena with her eyes” (Hesiod, *Theogony*, ed. 2014). Goddess of Wisdom and Reason,

⁵ According to the technical file of a tournament shield from the National Museum of Coaches, “in the old equestrian games, the dexterity and skills of the riders were put at the service of the selection of the famous Hispanic riders of apparatus, for which the richness and color of the harness and other cavalry accessories contributed- spears, swords, reeds and pistols - as well as shields, decorated with figurative and symbolic motifs (...) From contemporary descriptions and engravings, it is possible to conclude that one of the recurring motives was the “head of Medusa”, used both in shields and in fixed targets. The objective was identical: to petrify the attacker who, in a mixture of horror and delight, would be compelled to attack, simultaneously to shoot down the opponent (fulfill a task) and to conquer the desired “fruit”. This ambivalence is, in fact, a timeless constant, connoted with the most famous of the three Gorgons. (...) The shield has, therefore, a simultaneously defensive and offensive function, through which the hero appropriates the strength of the opponent, becoming invincible. The same double meaning can be found in the representation of Medusa's head in 18th-century tournament and equestrian game accessories. For the knight who carries it on his shield, Medusa symbolizes unquestionable supremacy and the certainty of a dazzling victory; she is his ally in the fight, while at the same time ensuring a fierce combat by producing a perverse effect on the enemy”.

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“Minerva, from the olive tree to the inventor”, is also the goddess of the arts of war, which is why she is represented with a spear. These same attributes are a constant of her representations over time.



Image 70: Athena. Tile Panel 1725 A.D. - 1759 A.D. National Tile Museum. Inventory number: MNAz 6116 Az. Photography: Teresa Henriques.



Image 71: Minerva - Allegory of Knowledge and Wisdom. Oil on canvas from the ceiling of the Ambassador's Room, depicting a woman in military garb, sitting in the clouds. Inventory number: PNQ 970/20. XVIII A.D. - XIX A.D.



Image 72: Triumph of Minerva Tapestry / Triumph of the Gods Series (Tapeçaria Triunfo de Minerva/ Série Triunfo dos Deuses). Urbanus Orley, Jan Van Orley, Augustin Coppens. Brussels. 1728 A.D. - 1729 A.D. National Palace of Ajuda. Photography: Henrique Ruas, 2003

Also in the Ambassador's coche (Embassy of D. João V to the Pope Clemente XI) deserves some highlight. The front elevation is dominated by four mythological figures: Silenus and a seahorse and two life-size characters of the goddess Palas (War), represented with her right hand raised in an act of command, and of Hope Reborn, on the left, with a branch of flowers in hand.



Image 73 - Image 74: Coche of the Embassy of D. João V to the Pope Clemente XI. Coche of the Ambassador Photography: Henrique Ruas, 1987. Copyright: © DGPC Photography: Henrique Ruas, 1987. Copyright: © DGPC (General Direction of **Cultural** Heritage).

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Image 75: Triumphal Car that was part of the Embassy sent by D. João V to Pope Clement XI, in 1716. Photography: Pedro Beltrão. National Museum of Coaches.

Fame is also a recurring representation in Palaces and even in coaches. As the bearer of good news, she is iconographically represented under the figure of a beautiful woman playing the trumpet. As a propagator of lies, she identifies herself with Slander.

Fame, or "Rumor," as it is called in Ovid, was the messenger of Jupiter. The Romans described it as a monster with wings and many eyes and ears, which echoed through the world all the news, true or false. He resided in a palace at the ends of the earth, sea and sky from where everything that happens in any place, even the most distant, can be seen, and all the voices reach his hollow ears.



Image 76: Fame, National Palace of Ajuda. Photography: Alice Costa.

There is a place in the middle of the world, 'twixt
land and sea and sky, the meeting-point of the three-
fold universe. From this place, whatever is, however far
away, is seen, and every word penetrates to
these hollow ears. Rumour dwells here, having chosen
her house upon a high mountain-top ; and she gave
the house countless entrances, a thousand apertures,
but with no doors to close them. Night and day
the house stands open.

It is built all of echoing brass.

The whole place is full of noises, repeats
all words and doubles what it hears. There is
no quiet, no silence anywhere within. And yet
there is no loud clamour, but only the subdued
murmur of voices, like the murmur of the waves of
the sea if you listen afar off, or like the last rum-
blings of thunder when Jove has made the dark
clouds crash together. Crowds fill the hall, shifting
throngs come and go, and everywhere wander thou-
sands of rumours, falsehoods mingled with the truth,
and confused reports flit about. Some of these fill
their idle ears with talk, and others go and tell

elsewhere what they have heard; while the story
grows
in size, and each new teller makes contribu-
tion to what he has heard. Here is
here is heedless Error, unfounded Joy and panic
Fear; here sudden Sedition and unauthentic Whis-
perings. Rumour herself beholds all that is done in
heaven, on sea and land, and searches throughout the
world for news.

Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, Book XII.

We could tell you about many other deities, as they are a constant presence in the countless spaces we visited, but this was our first approach to this Cyclopean theme, which we hope to continue.

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