

Natalia Kapatsoulia , Filippos Mandilaras

## Poseidon. The sea god [Ποσειδῶνας. Ο Θεός της θάλασσας (Poseidṓnas. O theós tis thálassas)]

Greece (2012)

TAGS: [Amphitrite](#) [Chronos](#) [Demeter](#) [Giants](#) [Hades](#) [Hera](#) [Hestia](#) [Nereid\(s\)](#) [Olympus](#) [Rhea](#) [Titans](#) [Troy](#)



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| General information                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Title of the work</i>               | Poseidon. The sea god [Ποσειδῶνας. Ο Θεός της θάλασσας (Poseidṓnas. O theós tis thálassas)]                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Country of the First Edition</i>    | Greece                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Country/countries of popularity</i> | Greece                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Original Language</i>               | Greek                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>First Edition Date</i>              | 2012                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <i>First Edition Details</i>           | Filippos Mandilaras, <i>Ποσειδῶνας. Ο Θεός της θάλασσας</i> [Poseidṓnas. O theós tis thálassas], <i>My First Mythology</i> [Η Πρώτη μου Μυθολογία (Ī prōtī mou Mythología)]. Athens: Papadopoulos Publishing, 2012, 36 pp. |
| <i>ISBN</i>                            | 9789604842971                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Available Onlne</i>                 | Demo of <a href="#">7 pages</a> available at <a href="http://epbooks.gr">epbooks.gr</a> (accessed: October 13, 2021).                                                                                                      |
| <i>Genre</i>                           | Illustrated works                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Target Audience</i>                 | Children (4+)                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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## Creators



### Natalia Kapatsoulia (Illustrator)

Natalia Kapatsoulia studied French Literature in Athens, and she worked as a language tutor before embarking on a career as a full-time illustrator of children's books. Kapatsoulia has authored one picture book *Η Μαμά πετάει* [Mom Wants to Fly], which has been translated into Spanish *Mamá quiere volar*. Kapatsoulia, who now lives on the island of Kefalonia, Greece, has collaborated with Filippos Mandilaras on multiple book projects.

Sources:

Official [website](#) (accessed: July 2, 2018).

[Profile](#) at the [epbooks.gr](#) (accessed: July 2, 2018).

Bio prepared by Katerina Volioti, University of Roehampton,  
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### Filippos Mandilaras , b. 1965 (Author)

Filippos Mandilaras is a prolific and well-known writer of children's illustrated books and of young adults' novels. Mandilaras studied French Literature in Sorbonne, Paris. His latest novel, which was published in May 2016, is entitled *Υπέροχος Κόσμος* [Wonderful World], and it recounts the story of teenage life in a deprived Athenian district. With his illustrated books, Mandilaras aims to encourage parents and teachers to improvise by adding words when reading stories to children. Mandilaras is interested in the anthropology of

extraordinary creatures and his forthcoming work is about Modern Greek Mythologies.

Sources:

In Greek:

[Profile](#) on EP Books' website (accessed: June 27, 2018).

[i-read.i-teen.gr](#) (accessed: June 27, 2018).

[Public Blog](#), published 15 September 2015 (accessed: June 27, 2018).

[Press Publica](#), published 28 January 2017 (accessed: June 27, 2018).

[Linkedin.com](#), published published 6 May 2016 (accessed: February 6, 2019).

In English:

[Amazon.com](#) (accessed: June 27, 2018).

On Mandoulides' [website](#), published 7 March 2017 (accessed: June 27, 2018).

In German:

[literaturfestival.com](#) (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Bio prepared by Katerina Volioti, University of Roehampton,  
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### Additional information

#### Summary

Poseidon, we are told, lives in the depths of the sea and always carries a trident. When he gets angry, he can upset the sea and cause earthquakes. We turn the page, and we are offered biographical information. Poseidon was Cronus' and Rhea's son. Cronus swallowed five of his children, so that they could not challenge his leadership of the Titans. Sorrowful Rhea, when she had a sixth baby, she gave a stone to Cronus to devour. So, we are told, Zeus grew up and became strong and overthrew his father. The Titans, however, fought the gods, Zeus and his five siblings (Demeter, Poseidon, Hades, Hera, and Hestia). The gods won. The male gods drew lots for dividing the world "into vast kingdoms" [my translation]. Poseidon did not like being god of the seas. He intended to tie up Zeus in chains and fill Zeus' mouth with celery. Having learned these intentions, Zeus punished Poseidon to build the walls of Troy for a year. As the year ended, the Giants fought the Olympians. Poseidon rushed to assist the gods, cutting mountains in half with his trident. When everything calmed down, Poseidon returned to the bottom of the seas, to his palace there. One day, Poseidon fell in love with Amphitrite, a beautiful Nereid. Amphitrite ran away from him, and Poseidon was heartbroken. A small dolphin promised Poseidon to find Amphitrite for him. The dolphin found her, and Poseidon and Amphitrite lived together happily in their palace.

The book closes with background information about the Titanomachy, the Gigantomachy, and Amphitrite and the Nereids. In the final two pages, children can colour a sketch drawing of Poseidon's palace, which, to some extent, looks like a Greek temple.

#### Analysis

It is evident from the start of the book that Poseidon is fearsome because he can get angry and cause havoc. By the end of the book, nonetheless, Poseidon emerges as an amiable kind-hearted figure in need of a female companion. Having Amphitrite with him in the palace has a calming effect on him. A few times only, we read, does the god now get angry, shaking the seawaters with his trident. Ostensibly, the powerful god has been overcome by love and affection. Such strong emotions seem to foreground the god's anthropomorphism, so that he can fit in nicely with other Olympians. The illustrations reinforce the message that mythical creatures are human-like. Amphitrite is a

young girl in a short white tunic playing with a ball at the seaside. Textual references, moreover, have implications for modern gender stereotyping, and this again strengthens the gods' anthropomorphism. In casting lots, Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon are described as "the lads" [*ta agoria* in Greek], with connotations of modern youth culture.

By contrast to the book about Hermes by the same author and illustrator,\* where Hermes' childhood drives the narrative, Poseidon is presented as a mature bearded character. Poseidon's aged and serious looks are known from ancient art, where he is customarily conflated with Zeus. A famous Classical statue from ca. 470-460 BCE, for example, which is called 'The Artemision Bronze' in art-historical scholarship, may represent either Poseidon or Zeus.\*\* The statue shows a massive bearded god preparing to strike his victim with either a trident or a thunderbolt. Of course, in a book for young children, Poseidon's propensity to punish is played down. An illustration shows, funnily, a red ribbon tied around Poseidon's trident. The mighty three-pronged implement resembles a gift with elaborate wrapping. With his blond hair, long white gown, and octopus, Poseidon's depiction is similar to that in another book in the series 'The twelve Gods of Olympus'.\*\*\* There are obvious overlaps in the narrative between the two books, with the Titans, the Giants, and the Olympians featuring in both books. Children and adult readers may benefit from reading the two books in tandem.

In both books there is an emphasis on competition, and the fight for supremacy and power. Here, however, Poseidon's power seems to be strongly associated with the natural world, mainly with water. Only on the last page do we see Poseidon riding a white horse, which stands for a mere visual marker of Poseidon having also the surname 'god of horses', as recorded by Pausanias (7.21.7). When Poseidon breaks up the mountains with his trident, water flows violently. Text and image here may remind readers of Biblical episodes, such as Moses' striking of the rock. Readers may also think of the Ionian philosophers' sixth-century BCE emphasis on the elements and natural phenomena. It may become questionable then whether water, rather than Poseidon's shaking of the trident, causes earthquakes. Greek myth here offers an excellent opportunity to teach children about the physical environment.

In the background information we read that Poseidon formed a strong friendship with a dolphin. As god of the seas, which is emphasized also in the Homeric epics, Poseidon does not relate well to a civic context.

It makes sense, therefore, not to have any mention in this book of Poseidon's and Athena's contest for the patronage of Athens.

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\* [epbooks.gr/product/100529/hermes](http://epbooks.gr/product/100529/hermes) (accessed January 29, 2019).

\*\*[See](#) (accessed January 29, 2019).

\*\*\* [epbooks.gr/product/101410/the-twelve-gods-of-olympus](http://epbooks.gr/product/101410/the-twelve-gods-of-olympus) (accessed January 29, 2019).

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Classical, Mythological,  
Traditional Motifs,  
Characters, and  
Concepts

[Amphitrite](#) [Chronos](#) [Demeter](#) [Giants](#) [Hades](#) [Hera](#) [Hestia](#) [Nereid\(s\)](#)  
[Olympus](#) [Rhea](#) [Titans](#) [Troy](#)

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Other Motifs, Figures,  
and Concepts Relevant  
for Children and Youth  
Culture

[Desires](#) [Femininity](#) [Isolation/loneliness](#) [Love](#) [Magic powers](#) [Nature](#)  
[Punishment](#)

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Further Reading

Information about the book:

[epbooks.gr/product/100536/poseidon,-the-sea-god](http://epbooks.gr/product/100536/poseidon,-the-sea-god) (accessed February 12, 2019).

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Addenda

Published in Greek, 28 May 2012. Hardbound.

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