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### *Greek fire: Tracing the uses of 'fire' throughout the Greek literary history*

This thesis examines the use of fire in ancient Greek narratives from the Archaic era to the Hellenistic age. It seeks to address a set of research questions, including:

1. What are the defining features of fire as a narrative motif in Greek culture from the Archaic era to the Hellenistic age?
2. How does fire change in narratives?
3. Is the use of fire in classical texts a signifier of cultural identity?

This paper begins with a short introduction to some of the modern theoretical work that informs the research, including Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (which guides the treatment and consideration of the language used within antiquity), and Richard Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene* (in reference to the concept of memes). It then addresses the theme of fire in myth and folklore, considering fire as a key identifier of Hellenistic individuality, noting how concepts of fire changed throughout Hellas, and how unique or similar concepts are to comparable cultures. The paper then focuses on research findings to-date, which suggest that the use of fire as an entity not only changed in Greek literary sources over generations (as the trend of styles and themes changed), but the use of the words related to fire also changed.

#### **References:**

Dawkins, Richard. *The Selfish Gene*. 4th Edition. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Ong, Walter. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge, 2002 (1982).