

# TEMPLES OF THE GODS: AN INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY



*Allison Murray*  
Long Beach City College

## Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology

Your page has been created!

Remove this content and add your own.

### Edit page

Click the Edit page button in your user bar. You will see a suggested structure for your content. Add your content and hit Save.

### Tips:

#### [Drag and drop](#)

Drag one or more image files from your computer and drop them onto your browser window to add them to your page.

#### [Classifications](#)

Tags are used to link pages to one another along common themes. Tags are also used as markers for the dynamic organization of content in the CXone Expert framework.

#### [Working with templates](#)

CXone Expert [templates](#) help guide and organize your documentation, making it flow easier and more uniformly. Edit existing templates or create your own.

 [Visit for all help topics.](#)

---

This text is disseminated via the Open Education Resource (OER) LibreTexts Project (<https://LibreTexts.org>) and like the thousands of other texts available within this powerful platform, it is freely available for reading, printing, and "consuming."

The LibreTexts mission is to bring together students, faculty, and scholars in a collaborative effort to provide an accessible, and comprehensive platform that empowers our community to develop, curate, adapt, and adopt openly licensed resources and technologies; through these efforts we can reduce the financial burden born from traditional educational resource costs, ensuring education is more accessible for students and communities worldwide.

Most, but not all, pages in the library have licenses that may allow individuals to make changes, save, and print this book. Carefully consult the applicable license(s) before pursuing such effects. Instructors can adopt existing LibreTexts texts or Remix them to quickly build course-specific resources to meet the needs of their students. Unlike traditional textbooks, LibreTexts' web based origins allow powerful integration of advanced features and new technologies to support learning.



LibreTexts is the adaptable, user-friendly non-profit open education resource platform that educators trust for creating, customizing, and sharing accessible, interactive textbooks, adaptive homework, and ancillary materials. We collaborate with individuals and organizations to champion open education initiatives, support institutional publishing programs, drive curriculum development projects, and more.

The LibreTexts libraries are Powered by [NICE CXone Expert](#) and was supported by the Department of Education Open Textbook Pilot Project, the California Education Learning Lab, the UC Davis Office of the Provost, the UC Davis Library, the California State University Affordable Learning Solutions Program, and Merlot. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1246120, 1525057, and 1413739.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation nor the US Department of Education.

Have questions or comments? For information about adoptions or adaptations contact [info@LibreTexts.org](mailto:info@LibreTexts.org) or visit our main website at <https://LibreTexts.org>.

This text was compiled on 03/17/2026

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology

Licensing

About this Project

## 1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction
- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family
- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 1.8: Temples and Churches
- 1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths
- 1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia
- 1.11: Reading Response Prompt
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 1.13: Bibliography

## 2: Literary Criticism for Myths

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths
  - 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories
    - 2.1.1.1: Allegory
    - 2.1.1.2: Etiology
    - 2.1.1.3: Nature
  - 2.1.2: Anthropological Theories
    - 2.1.2.1: Charter
    - 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism
    - 2.1.2.3: Ritual
- 2.2: Internalist Theories
  - 2.2.1: Psychological Theories
    - 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic
    - 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal
      - 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego
      - 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow
      - 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
  - 2.2.2: The Unconscious
  - 2.2.3: Neurological
  - 2.2.4: Lens
  - 2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens
  - 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell
  - 2.2.7: Feminist

- 2.3: Group Activity
- 2.4: Bibliography

### 3: Creation in the Ancient World--The Route to Hesiod's Theogony

- 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos
- 3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia
  - 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
    - 3.2.1.1: Summary
    - 3.2.1.2: Commentary
  - 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth
    - 3.2.2.1: Commentary
- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis
  - 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)
  - 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)
- 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel
  - 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)
- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium
- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony
  - 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod
  - 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision
  - 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses
  - 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
  - 3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)
  - 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus
  - 3.6.7: The First Woman
  - 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans
  - 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
  - 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt
- 3.8: Study Questions
- 3.9: Bibliography

### 4: Separation from the Divine

- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind
- 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology
  - 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)
  - 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)
  - 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)
  - 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)
  - 4.2.5: Odysseus
  - 4.2.6: Zeus
  - 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus
  - 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin
- 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)
- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity
- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
  - 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 4.16: Bibliography

## 5: The Feminine Divine

- 5.1: The Great Goddess
  - 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
  - 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants
  - 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess
  - 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death
  - 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
  - 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess
  - 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided
  - 5.4.1: Hecate
  - 5.4.2: Hera
  - 5.4.3: Hestia
  - 5.4.4: Artemis
  - 5.4.5: Demeter
- 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth
  - 5.5.1: Charter
    - 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus
  - 5.5.2: Psychological
  - 5.5.3: Feminist
  - 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter
- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response
- 5.8: Study Questions
- 5.9: Bibliography

[6: New Page](#)

[7: New Page](#)

[8: New Page](#)

[9: New Page](#)

[10: New Page](#)

[11: New Page](#)

[12: New Page](#)

[Index](#)

[Glossary](#)

[Detailed Licensing](#)

[Detailed Licensing](#)

## Licensing

*A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in [Back Matter/Detailed Licensing](#).*

## About this Project

---

This project was the result of a sabbatical project granted by Long Beach City College. My thanks extend to the LBCC Sabbatical Committee, the Board of Trustees, my students from Mythology and Honors Mythology, and my personal support team, my mom, my daughter, and Scott, who believed.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

Why, exactly, does history matter to the study of Classical Mythology? History shows us where humans as a species have been and how we got to where we are now, as a long chain of causal analysis: *this* led to *that*, and *that* led to some other event, which begat yet another event in the timeline. But this isn't new information to students. History matters because it gives us an insight into what occurred to the people who created these myths, and how they saw the world—including natural and spiritual forces (religion, if you like)--around them. The literary theory of **New Historicism** asserts that interpretations of literature should be framed around the historically significant events the civilization encountered, and it takes all such events as necessary illuminations to understanding the literature (Schape 123). Having an understanding, or at least a general awareness, of the numerous wars that led to the Trojan War is useful in better understanding *The Iliad*, and the stakes for Greeks, their allies, and those previous suitors of Helen who owed loyalty to Menelaus. Likewise, when we see the character of King Minos appear in multiple heroic episodes, it's helpful to place the kingdom of Minos and the Minoan era in context.

External reasons point to the long macro lens of world history and human interaction. Internal reasons cause us to acknowledge that we study literature because it is a window into who we are as a human species, and history is also a micro lens to give us a better perspective into that study.

The origins of Greek mythology begin with the Archaic period (c. 800-480 BCE). A narrative history is provided on the next page to better frame the events and show their effects on the evolving landscape of literature and the means to record it.

- [1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece](#)
- [1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History \(to CE 1453\)](#)
- [1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction](#)
- [1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family](#)
- [1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore](#)
- [1.6: Comparisons \(and Contrasts\) Within Greek and Roman Myths](#)
- [1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece](#)
- [1.8: Temples and Churches](#)
- [1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths](#)
- [1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia](#)
- [1.11: Reading Response Prompt](#)
- [1.12: Study Questions](#)
- [1.13: Bibliography](#)

---

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

All dates are best approximations based on anthropological and historical evidence. Significant authors, person of interest or works are in **bold text**.

### 1.1.1: Bronze Age (3000-1100 BCE)

3000 Birth of the Minoan culture on Crete

2200-1450 Middle Minoan period: building of great palaces, Crete

2100 Likely arrival of Indo-Europeans in Greece

1600-1200 Expansion of Mycenaean palace culture in Greece, born from Cretan models

1450 Mycenaeans overtake Minoan Knossos, Crete

1190 Destruction of Troy VII-A, the probable Trojan War that inspired the *Iliad*

1200-1125 Widespread destruction of Mycenaean sites throughout Greece

1150 Fall of Mycenae

### 1.1.2: Iron Age (1100-800 BCE)

1100-1000 Infiltration of Dorian Greeks (Sons of Herakles, in myth); start of the Dark Age

1050-950 Migration of Greeks from mainland Greece to Aegean Islands and the shores of Asia Minor; creation and use of iron tools; rudimentary geometric pottery (Harris and Platzner 32).

### 1.1.3: Archaic Period (800-480 BCE)

800 Greek colonies established in Southern Italy and Sicily (800-600);

**Hesiod's** *Theogony* recorded

776 Olympic Games established

750 Invention of the Greek alphabet. **Homeric poems** recorded (750-700)

730 First Messenian War. Sparta invades Messenia; Syracuse is founded

650 The Age of Tyrants; **Cyclic poets** are active

640 Second Messenian War

630 **Sappho** born in Lesbos. End of Second Messenian War

600 Cyrus the Great of Persia (600-529)

594 Solon replaces Draconian law in Athens, lays foundation for democracy

570 Xenophanes (570-460)

569 Pythagoras born in Samos (569-475)

546 Pisistratus becomes tyrant of Athens; the written version of the *Iliad* formalizes under the stability of his rule.

527 Pisistratus dies; his sons become tyrants of Athens

525 **Aeschylus** born (525-456)

522 Pindar born (522-443)

510 Alcmaeonid family and Spartans free Athens from tyranny. Birth of democracy in Athens. Possible date of the defeat of the Etruscan dynasty in Rome; founding of the “Roman Republic”

508 Kleisthenes begins reforming Athenian law, establishes democratic Constitution

500 **Bacchylides** born

499 Ionian revolt

494 Ionian revolt defeated by Persians

496 **Sophocles** born (496-406)

497 Persian wars begin with the invasion of Greece

490 Battle of Marathon. Athenians defeat Darius and Persian army

484 **Herodotus** born (484-420); **Euripides** born (484-406)

483 Silver mines discovered near Athens. Athens begins building naval fleet

482 Aristides ostracized

480 Xerxes marches on Greece. Battle of Thermopylae. Persians burn

Acropolis. Athens and allies defeat Persian fleet at Battles of Plataea and Salamis (479), leading to the end of the Persian Wars

#### 1.1.4: Classical Period (480-340 BCE)

469 **Socrates** born (469-399)

465 Earthquake in Lakonia. Helot revolt against Sparta in Messenia

460 Pericles leads Athens into its Golden Era. Thucydides born (460-400)

458 **Aeschylus** produces the **Oresteia trilogy** of plays

454 Delian League treasury moved from Delos to Athens

449 Parthenon (449-432) and other major building projects upon the Acropolis begin in Athens.

446 Thirty Year Peace treaty signed between Athens and Sparta

431 Peloponnesian War (431-404)

430 Plague in Athens

429 Death of Pericles

428 **Plato** born (428-347)

421 Peace of Nicias

420 Construction of Temple of Athene Nike begins

418 Athens resumes hostilities with Sparta. Spartans defeat Athenians at Mantinea

416 Athens razes Melos

415 Athenian expedition to Syracuse. Alcibiades defects to Sparta

413 Syracuse defeats Athens

404 Athens surrenders to Sparta. Thirty tyrants rule Athens

403 Democracy restored in Athens

400 Biblical text **Genesis** is finalized

399 Trial and execution of **Socrates**

390 Gauls conquer city of Rome

384 **Aristotle** born (384-322)

380 **Plato** establishes Athens academy

371 Sparta defeated in Leuctra

362 Thebes defeats Sparta at Mantinea

### 1.1.5: Time of Alexander the Great (340-323 BCE)

338-337 Philip II, father of Alexander the Great, conquers Greece, ending the localized rule

359 Philip II becomes king of Macedonia

338 Macedonian army defeats Athens and its allies at Chaeronea. League of Corinth founded

336 Philip II assassinated. Alexander the Great becomes king, conquers the Persian empire and establishes Greece as the center of world culture

335 **Aristotle** founds the Lyceum in Athens

334 Alexander defeats Persian army at Granicus River near Anatolia

333 Alexander defeats Persians at Issus

332 Tyre capitulates to Alexander

331 Alexander invades Egypt. City of Alexandria founded. Alexander defeats Persians at Gaugamela

329 Alexander's army reaches Bactria (Afghanistan)

327 Alexander marries Roxanne (princess of Bactria)

326 Alexander reaches India

### 1.1.6: Hellenistic Period (323-31 BCE)

323 Death of Alexander the Great

300 **Apollonius of Rhodes** born; Ptolemy I founds museum in Alexandria

284 Achaean League founded

279 Invasion of Greece by Gauls

264 Punic Wars (between Rome and Carthage) begin, ending in 146

238 Gauls defeated by King Attalus I

214 First Macedonian War. Rome defeats Philip of Macedon

200 Second Macedonian War. Punic Wars waged between Carthage and Rome

172 Third Macedonian War. Lucius Aemeilius Paulus of Rome defeats Perseus of Macedon at Pynda. Macedonia divided into four republics

146 Roman invasion of Greece. Mummius Achaicus sacks Corinth and ends Achaean League. Rome rules Greece from this time on

88 Roman Civil Wars (88-31)

86 Rome, led by Sulla, sacks Athens

70 **Virgil** born (70-19)

46 Julius Caesar rules as dictator, 46-44

43 **Ovid** born (43-17)

#### 1.1.7: Roman Period (31 BCE-323 CE)

31 Battle of Actium: Augustus and Octavian defeat Mark Antony and Cleopatra, leading to the annexation of Egypt and the start of the Roman Period (Sorek xi-xiii) (Powell 681-682).

---

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### 1.2.1: The Prehistoric Periods

Literally meaning “the time before history,” or more precisely, before the *written history* of the Greek world, information about the Prehistoric Periods comes to us by way of archaeology, and the mythology and traditions of later periods.

#### 1.2.1.1: Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic Periods:

Dating from 10,000 to 3000 BCE, the old (Paleolithic), middle (Mesolithic), and new stone (Neolithic) ages comprised a period of transformation in the civilizations of the Aegean. At the beginning of the Neolithic period there was a major transition from a nomadic “hunter-gatherer” lifestyle to one of settled village life and basic agriculture. Evidence of domestic stone foundations, stone tools, pottery and graves points to these conclusions. Evidence of stone tablets confirms that Sumerian cuneiform was the first form of writing, c. 3400. In Egypt, hieroglyphic writing evolved alongside Pharaonic civilization around 3100 BCE.



Figure 1.2.1: The Gilgamesh Dream tablet, written in cuneiform script, reflects an episode from The Epic of Gilgamesh, the earliest known epic poem. The writing system of cuneiform was designed to record the Sumerian language and was later adapted to record Akkadian, the language of the Gilgamesh poem. The tablets, discovered in the ruins of an Assyrian royal library in northern Iraq in 1853, collectively tell the story of King Gilgamesh of Uruk (modern southern Iraq). The epic is a mythic account of his exploits with Enkidu and his search for immortality. This tablet relates his dream, relayed to his mother, who interprets it as his impending meeting with Enkidu, the wild man/avatar of nature who will become his companion. The tablet was looted from an Iraqi museum during the Gulf War, but later recovered and returned ([BBC](#)). (District Court for the Eastern District of New York, Public domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

#### 1.2.1.2: The Bronze Age: 3000-1100 BCE

This term comes from the concept of the “Ages of Mankind,” originating with Stone, followed by Bronze, and Iron. The terms “Industrial, Space, Nuclear,” which were not known at the time this system was created, follow in the same spirit. This age takes its name from the introduction of bronze metalworking, both for functional items and for weapons. In archaeological terms, the Bronze Age is divided into three periods, early, middle, and late. High cultures, specifically the Egyptian and Mesopotamian, arose first. From 2800-2340 in Mesopotamia (Iraq), Sumerian citadels grew in power, and were temporarily eclipsed by the Akkadian empire from 2334-2220, and then revived their power from 2200-2000. From 2500-1200 on the island of Crete, the **Minoan** civilization came to power during the early and middle phases, only to be eclipsed by the **Mycenaean** civilization on the mainland of Greece in the Late Bronze Age.

Historians do not regard the earliest inhabitants of the mainland as “Greeks” as their cultural traditions differed greatly from those who would later become known as the Greeks. Little is known about the people including their language or culture, but evidence of stone fertility goddesses indicates a pragmatic need to ensure crop success through worship. This tradition transferred to later cultures and their practices, manifesting as the goddess of Demeter in the Greek pantheon, and Ceres in the Roman pantheon.



Figure 1.2.2: A Minoan double-headed ax, known as a labrys, was a common tool, weapon and symbol of the Minoan culture. Discovered in Arkalochori Cave, Crete, c. 1700-1600 BCE, AM Heraklion. e. (CC BY-SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

More is known about the **Minoans**, a culture named after King Minos, a legendary ruler of Crete. While there are no known records of their language or genetic lineage, from c. 2200 to c. 1450 the wealthy Minoans built impressive palaces, notable for the absence of fortified walls around the structures, indicating that other cultures feared them enough not to attack. Archeological evidence indicates they practiced religious rituals that featured bulls and the double-headed ax as objects of significance. The doubled ax, or *labrys*, may have been the tool by which bulls were sacrificed (Powell 21). The myths of Theseus and of Icarus and Daedalus both feature King Minos, the Minoan culture, bulls (in the form of the Minotaur), sacrifice, and a labyrinth (from *labrys*).



Figure 1.2.3: The Minoans were an agrarian culture that worshiped and subsisted on cattle. A significant number of bull figures exist, including bull frescos on the Palace of Knossos (Cnossos). Bull leaping was a daring acrobatic feat, involving running at a bull, grabbing the horns and leaping onto the creature's back. This depiction, however, suggests a leaper in mid-flip over the bull's horns, a feat that might be impossible to execute. Such rituals may have inspired the myth of the Minotaur, the half-man half-bull hybrid monster that lived in the labyrinth below the palace of King Minos. The Minoan empire ruled the seas, and held a healthy respect for the tempestuous ocean god Poseidon, who controlled earthquakes and tidal waves (the bull of the ocean) (Harris and Platzner 29). "Minoan Bull-leaper," the British Museum. Bronze figure of a bull and acrobat. Minoan, 1600-1450 BC. Said to be from south west Crete.. (Photo by Mike Peel, CC BY-SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

The Middle Bronze age, from 2000-1600, was marked by the migration of **Indo-European** peoples—those who would become “the Greeks”—from central Asia to the Balkan Peninsula, and the introduction of the domestic horse to Greece. While the language of these Indo-Europeans is largely lost, significant fragments including vocabulary and grammatical structure survived and helped to form later European languages, which spread expansively, influencing languages on all continents in the modern world (Powell 22).

Parallel to the Indo-European migration, the Old Babylonian Empire was established in Mesopotamia between 2000-1550.

The Late Bronze Age, also referred to as the **Mycenaean Age**, dated between 1600-1200, gained its name for the impressive “stone citadel of Mycenae in the Peloponnese” (Powell 22), and was further distinguished by the rule of the Hittite empire in Anatolia, the emergence of Phoenician syllabic writing in 1500, and the Trojan War, which may have occurred c.1250. Throughout this age, powerful warrior kings, like those seen in *The Iliad*, ruled across Greece and unlike the Minoans, they built heavily fortified strongholds. Those fortresses existed in areas that also hold places of significance in Greek mythology: Mycenae (Agamemnon, *Iliad*), Thebes (*Oedipus* and *Antigone*), Athens (various myths), Pylos (Apollo), and Sparta (Helen, *Iliad*). In *The Iliad*, the term **Achaean** is frequently used to describe a Greek tribe which may have substituted for the Mycenaeans (22-23).

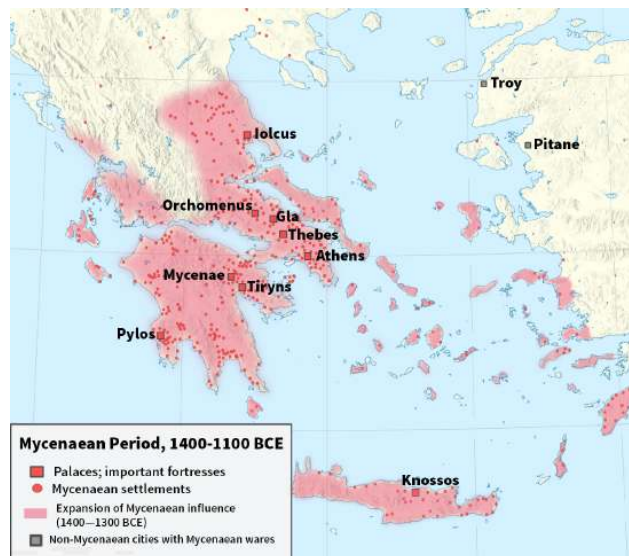


Figure 1.2.4: Map of Mycenaean Greece 1400-1200 BC: Palaces, main cities and other settlements. (CC BY-SA 3.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

From among the works affiliated with these fortresses, the epic poems of **Homer** echo in the awareness of readers, even those who haven't yet read these epics. Walter Burket explains the lasting impressions and influence of Homer and the flag he plants in our historical reference:

In the perspective of the western world, 'Homer' had long been the solitary beginning of the literature, nay, the origin of poetry, concentrated in one person, 'the original genius of Homer.' With the development of scholarship, a more historical approach had to take over, owing to at least three discoveries: (1) The analysis of Homeric languages proves that there have been generations of singers, of oral performance underlying the texts we have . . . (2) The archeological exploration of Greece and Crete have brought to light Bronze Age civilizations vaguely remembered in 'Homer,' the Mycenaean Age . . . (3) And, remnants of Near Eastern literature written during this age offer a wider appreciation "to Greek epic in what constitutes a Near Easter-Aegean cultural community (*koinê*)" (Burket 291).

Yet, Homer's works weren't transcribed into written form during this time. In fact, they were recorded several hundred years later, which leads to the natural question: why weren't they written at the time of the events? The answer is pragmatic. Two writing systems existed during this time, **Linear A**, of which there are no known records left, and **Linear B**, a non-alphabetic script inscribed on clay tablets, which was used exclusively for keeping economic accounts, was difficult to master, and likely only known to scribes of the palace who "employed writing only for recording the flow of goods into the palaces and then out again for redistribution. When the redistributive economy of Mycenaean Greece was destroyed [possibly by sea invaders], there was no longer a place for scribes or a need for writing." Literature, especially mythology, survived this decline in writing due to the oral transmission of these traditions, permitting Greek culture to persist via sagas, myths and legends as a valuable inheritance passed to ensuing generations (Martin).

### 1.2.1.3: The Early Iron Age: 1100-900 BCE.

Following the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization at the end of the Bronze Age, most of the palatial centers disappeared, accompanied by depopulation of the surrounding areas. This signaled the start of the **Dark Age**, or the **Early Iron Age**, so named due to the low level of cultural achievements—such as the loss of the art of writing—that naturally accompanies times of war, persecution, famine and scarcity. When people struggle to survive, cultural achievement understandably declines. The general scarcity of information from this period darkens our understanding of the changes that occurred at this time. Though the events cannot be concretely confirmed by historians, the decline of the great kingdoms is attributed to Dorian invaders—men who find their place in literature as the "Sons of Herakles"—who sacked the area, driving out the last of the Mycenaeans in a phase known as the "Dorian Invasion." Of the great cities, only Athens survived the invaders, leaving the other Greek-speaking peoples to migrate and settle in Asia Minor (supposedly led by the descendants of Ion of Athens) where they settled along the coast and in the Aegean Isles during the "Ionian Migration," c. 1000; this led to Asia Minor being renamed Ionia. The Aeolians, another group of

refugees, moved from northern Thessaly to the isle of Lesbos, finally settling in the northernmost coast of Asia Minor close to Troy and renaming that area as Aeolis. The massive migration effort completely changed the landscape and the map of Greece (Powell 23-24).

Despite, or perhaps due to, this radical remapping, the Dark Age concluded with communal stability and a rebirth of culture in the Archaic Age. During the Archaic Period, c. 825, the Greek alphabet was born, allowing scribes to record the significant works by Homer, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, which were penned between c. 825-800. Not only did the Greek alphabet allow for transcribing important works of literature, but it also offered “an approximation of the actual sound of the human voice, hence a script potentially applicable to any human language.” In historical scope, this had a seismic effect, allowing for the evolution of languages across the planet as well as the foundations of Western Civilization. Save for a few advancements and modifications, it is the same form of written alphabet we use today for English, as well as other Western European languages (Powell 24).

## 1.2.2: The Historical Periods

### 1.2.2.1: The Geometric Period: 900-700 BCE

During this period the Greek *polis* (pl. = *poleis*) or “city-state” developed, including Athens, Corinth, and Sparta, in addition to Greek colonies in Southern Italy and Sicily, c. 800-600. Archaeologically there was significant artistic output in the form of painted geometric pottery—from which the age takes its name—and the rise of trade with other areas of the Mediterranean. The aforementioned invention of the Greek alphabet allowed scribes to record the significant works by Homer, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, transcribed between c. 825-800, followed by **Hesiod’s** first major work, the *Theogony*, written between c. 800-750.

### 1.2.2.2: The Archaic Period: 700-480 BCE

Individual city-states and their colonies prospered, largely due to the introduction of coinage and the widely accepted means to measure, weigh and certify the currency, allowing for the evolution of new social classes, specifically the *kakoi* (the bad men), so named by the *aristoi* (the best men) (Powell 26). Such social stratifications gave rise to centers of political, religious, philosophical, athletic and artistic development. The Olympic Games were founded in 776, offering soldiers an opportunity to prove their prowess without risking death. Literature continued to flourish with the creation of the **Homeric Hymns**, a body of poems written by various poets in the style of Homer, c. 750-500, and the works of the **Cyclic poets**, c. 650-500.

Between 650-500 many of the Greek cities in the mainland, Aegean islands, and the Ionian coast were ruled by “tyrants”, strong-willed men who ruled, not by constitutional authority, but by popular support. They prioritized the political and economic interests of traders and merchants and opposed the aristocracy. The term “tyrant” originally may have meant “ruler” but by 500 BCE, it had come to define a ruler who had seized power by nontraditional or unlawful means. While the aristocracy viewed the tyrants as a threat to “legal” authority, these leaders did much to improve the economy and military prowess of the cities they ruled. Monumental sculpture, stone temple architecture, and civic building programs are among the achievements of this period. Greek cities in the eastern Aegean and Asia Minor came under the domination of the Persian Empire at the end of the sixth century. An unsuccessful revolt by the Greeks living on the Ionian coast led to the invasion of mainland Greece by the Persians in 490 B.C. and again in 480 B.C. The Archaic period “officially” came to an end (at least for modern historians) with the defeat of the home of several important philosophical schools.

### 1.2.2.3: The Classical Period/The Golden Age of Greece: 480-323 BCE

The term “Classical” upon a culture implies the apex of civilization, the high point when military conquests have contributed to wealth and stability, and cultures can enjoy the development of arts, education and literature. Such was the case with Greece, which produced prolific examples of architecture, art, philosophy, history, and drama. Adding to and perhaps eclipsing these achievements was the development of the first democracy, a term that means “rule by *demos* (people).” However, “by the people” at this time meant only adult male citizens, neither women, nor adolescents, nor enslaved people, nor noncitizen residents. The achievement settled the ongoing, long-term disputes between *kakoi* and *aristoi*, offering citizens the belief that they had an opportunity to positively influence their political and social future (Powell 26).

The period also included ongoing conflict between Athens and Sparta, known as the Peloponnesian Wars, which spanned the period of 431-404 and despite several Athenian victories, ultimately concluded with the defeat of Athens due to the Persian support the

Spartans received. However, this defeat did little to dampen the artistic efforts of Athens, whose fountain of achievements set a standard of excellence that continues to be referenced throughout history and to this day.

Contributors to the Golden Age included the early physician Hippocrates, philosophers **Protagoras**, **Plato** and his student **Aristotle** who “challenged mythic accounts of the origin and nature of the universe, and the historian Thucydides [who] rejected the conviction, heretofore universal, that gods determine the outcome of human events” (Powell 28-29).

Despite the deaths of playwrights **Euripides** and **Sophocles** in 406, and the dual conquests of Athens and Thebes by Philip II of Macedonia, the literary achievements of the Ancient Greeks are recorded in the mythology we study, both within this text and throughout the Western literary canon by writers who used Ancient Greek source material as their muse.

The Classical Age closed with the ascension of Alexander the Great, son of Philip II, who inherited his father’s throne at age twenty, following his father’s death by homicide. Influenced by the tales of the Trojan War, Alexander fashioned himself as his era’s Achilles, and his significant and brilliant conquests fit, if not surpassed, his role model. Alexander avenged the Persian invasions from the previous era, conquering and occupying the vast Persian empire before expanding his empire to India. His achievements, especially his tactical intelligence, continue unparalleled, but his ambition was snuffed by his early death at age thirty-two when he either succumbed to a fever or to intentional poisoning.

#### 1.2.2.4: The Hellenistic Period: 323-30 BCE

The Hellenistic Period, (which takes its name from Hellên, legendary founder of the Greek race, and not from Helen of Troy) began *after* the conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander’s conquests helped spread Greek culture across the eastern Mediterranean regions and the Asian continent. Of his lasting achievements, the city of Alexandria (331 BCE) along the western delta in Egypt was to be most pivotal for Greek culture and the persistence of its myths. It was in Alexandria that the first academic library was established: the **Mouseion**, or “Hall of the Muses.” Within the hall, the first librarians, scholars versed in sciences, mathematics, and other areas of learning, worked to gather and edit the classical works into standardized versions. These early scholars established measures of originality to maintain the most authentic versions of the oft-copied and oft-adulterated texts. The measure of their work is beyond value, as all surviving Greek myths that we read today were salvaged by the librarians at Alexandria.



Figure 1.2.5: The laurel tree was a symbol of Apollo, god of wisdom and learning. Following his failed pursuit of the nymph Daphne, he adopted the wearing of the laurel wreath. Gold wreaths were worn for ceremonial purposes, placed upon tombs, and dedicated at temples. Getty Villa, c. 300-100 BCE. (CC-BY; Photo by A. Murray 2023)

Performance of literature also continued to evolve at this time, as for the first time poems and plays were likely recorded and read from papyrus scrolls. The intellectual and psychological impact of this evolution was massive as literature transformed from purely performance-based into written forms intended for personal use: reading for pleasure. As an effect, literature became more complicated, often more abstract, and more sophisticated.

Hellenistic Greeks, likely inspired by Zeno of Citium (a village in Cyprus) the founder of the school of Stoicism, demonstrated a specific interest in the crucial authenticity of myth, and the insights it offered into the human condition. Mythographers—writers of myth—began to collect and organize traditional oral tales of the gods and heroes as early as the 5th century BCE, and during the Hellenistic Period these efforts escalated and expanded. The most valuable surviving work of these early mythographers is the *Library of Apollodorus* (c. CE 120), which is not a creative text, but a linear report of mythical events beginning with the creation of the world and concluding with the death of Odysseus. Of the surviving mythic texts, it represents the apex of information we have, particularly about the Cyclic Poems.

Two other great sources of mythic material come from “the great geological survey of Greece by Pausanias [c. CE 150], and a Latin handbook compiled from Greek sources by Hyginus [c. CE 100]” (Powell 66).

While literature saw great advances during this period, the conquests of Alexander didn’t fare as well. In c. 323, Alexander’s successors broke his massive empire into smaller, hostile kingdoms across the eastern Mediterranean area and the Near East. Following a period of relative stability, Rome rose to greatness and destroyed Corinth, bringing Macedonia into Roman rule and effectively conquering all of Greece.

#### 1.2.2.5: The Roman Period in Greece: 31 BCE-CE 323

The term “Greek” actually comes from the Romans, who called them “*Graioi*” and may have taken the term from a tribe in Epirus, along the northwest border of Greece and Italy. The growing power of Rome eventually surpassed and engulfed the Hellenistic Kingdoms. With the defeat and subsequent deaths of Antony and Cleopatra—the last of the Ptolemaic rulers—in 31 BCE, Octavian (Augustus) incorporated much of what had been Greece into the Roman province of Achaia. Centers of learning and the arts such as Athens and Rhodes, as well as the sanctuaries of Delos and Delphi, continued to flourish in the Roman period, particularly under the patronage of such philhellenic emperors as Hadrian (CE 117-38). Ephesos, Pergamon, and Aphrodisias were major Roman cities in Asia Minor.

#### 1.2.2.6: The Byzantine Period in Greece: CE 323-1453

Constantine the Great created a new capital in the eastern half of the Roman Empire, renaming the ancient Greek city of Byzantium “Nova Roma,” the New Rome, more commonly known as the city of Constantine or “Constantinopolis” (modern Istanbul). His religious conversion and political recognition of the Christian faith paved the way for the continuation, in Christian form, of the Roman Empire. Henceforth, the “Eastern Roman Christian Empire” known in modern times as the Byzantine Empire, carried on the traditions of Greek culture. Following the sack of Constantinople in 1204 at the hands of Latin Crusaders, much of Greece came under Frankish or Venetian ownership. The Byzantine Empire finally came to an end with the capture of Constantinopolis by the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

---

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Adapted from The Ancient City of Athens, by Kevin T. Glowacki. All content on this website (including text and photographs), unless otherwise noted, is licensed under a Creative Commons License..

## 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

### 1.3.1: What is "Topography"?

When archaeologists use the term "topography" in their work, they usually mean a combination of several different subjects, including

- **the geography & natural resources of a country**
- **the architectural form of a city as it develops over several centuries or even millennia**
- **the study of different functional areas within a city or its countryside, such as sanctuaries, civic centers, marketplaces, workshops, private houses, & cemeteries.**

A student of "topography" must be prepared to delve into subjects such as architecture, art, literature, history, epigraphy, numismatics, religion, politics, physical anthropology, and geology, as well as having an understanding of the methodologies of archaeological excavation and regional survey. Hence, "topography" can be a truly interdisciplinary adventure, full of all the aspects that make archaeology and history such fascinating fields to study.

### 1.3.2: Why Study the Topography and Monuments of Athens?

Just as there are many different ways of looking at artifacts, there are many different ways to study archaeological sites. For example, archaeologists may focus upon

- **regional analysis and how a site fits into larger social, political, and economic systems**
- **individual settlements, shrines, or cemeteries and the human communities who used them**
- **specific types of buildings, such as houses or temples, and their function within the community**
- **specific features (e.g., wells, hearths, graves) and artifacts (e.g., tools, jewelry, pottery, art)**
- **issues of typology, technology, chronology, ideology, social stratification, trade, artistic achievement**
- **and much more.**

In studying the topography and monuments of Athens, we are looking at the development of an ancient city-state that played a very important role in the formation of European civilization. Athenian accomplishments in art, architecture, politics, philosophy, literature, and drama are well known. But have you ever wondered where Greek drama was actually performed? Where did the Athenian democratic assembly hold its meetings? What was the "visual message" of the Parthenon and how did it relate to other buildings and dedications on the Acropolis? Studying the topography and monuments of Athens helps us to understand the context of these achievements and institutions more completely.

Moreover, ancient Athens was a complex society that passed through numerous stages of social and cultural development, with several "high" points as well as several "low" points in its long history. So, by exploring the monuments of Athens and the development of the city, we can study both cultural history (e.g., the influence of Athenian artistic and architectural forms in our own "modern" world) and social archaeology (e.g., how the archaeological record reflects the rise of state and the organization of society through time).

### 1.3.3: The Main Sources of Information for the Topography and Monuments of Athens

The main sources for our study are, obviously, the monuments themselves, as preserved from antiquity and as revealed by the archaeological excavations begun shortly after Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and continuing to the present day. Also, much new information has been discovered during recent programs of cleaning, restoration and partial reconstruction--interventions necessary to help preserve the monuments for future generations.

In addition to the actual monuments and archaeological remains, we are fortunate to have a wide variety of ancient texts which help bring to life more fully the peoples and cultures we study. In the case of ancient Athens, we have the preserved writings of numerous Athenian poets, playwrights, politicians, philosophers and historians. **Euripides, Thucydides, Plato**, and others give us key insights into the form and development of their native city. Sometimes the clues they provide are merely allusions (such as the references to cults and shrines on the North Slope of the Acropolis mentioned by Euripides in the tragedy *Ion*--but, the Athenian audience would have understood exactly what he meant even if modern audiences don't). Sometimes the sites and monuments are

mentioned as the setting for important philosophical dialogue (such as Plato's various accounts of Socrates in the Agora ). Sometimes the written sources, or *literary testimonia*, focus on the intangible human elements that are often missing from the imperfect archaeological record (such as Thucydides' vivid account of the plague which struck the severely overcrowded city during the Peloponnesian War). Moreover, since the ancient

Athenians tended to record important public decrees on stone slabs displayed for all to see, we also have some of the actual records of the working of the Athenian state, including, for example, the building accounts of the Parthenon. These inscribed sources, or *epigraphical testimonia*, not only provide us with very precise absolute dates for the construction of the building and its cult statue (447-432 BC), but they also allow us to begin a more informed exploration of such issues as technology (How did they actually build a temple?), economy (How much did it cost? How did they pay for it?), society (Who paid for it? Who worked on it? Did they have slaves?). That is, the combination of archaeological, architectural, & artistic remains, along with textual sources, allows classical archaeologists to understand the cultural context more completely and to develop more sophisticated interpretations of the past.

One of the most important sources for the topography of Athens (in particular) and Greek archaeology (in general) is an eye-witness account written by the traveler Pausanias in the 2nd century A.D. Pausanias spent several years traveling throughout Greece and he recorded many fascinating details about the famous cities, temples, and monuments--which were already considered ancient even in his own day. Athens was one of the first places he visited on his journey and his description of the city provides us with some invaluable clues about the location, form, decoration, function, and historical significance of many prominent monuments. It provides us with some problems too, since the evidence from modern archaeological excavation does not always readily agree with what Pausanias records. Is it a matter of physical preservation? Or a problem with our methods of archaeological interpretation? Or could it be that sometimes Pausanias and/or his tour guides got a few of the "facts" mixed up--a phenomenon all too familiar to any modern traveler who has tried to absorb all of the sights, sounds, and history of one of the great cities of the world.

---

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 1.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Kevin T. Glowacki. "The Topography & Monuments of Athens, A Brief Introduction." The Ancient City of Athens, [www.stoa.org/athens/essays/topography.html](http://www.stoa.org/athens/essays/topography.html). CC BY NC-SA 1.0..

## 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

What does it mean to be a family in the world of Ancient Greece? How did their concepts of marriage differ from modern 21st Century Western concepts? How do these constructs of domesticity form a foundation for mythology and the familial structures witnessed herein? Understanding the structure of mortal families provides context for the interactions and roles of the Olympian family in the chapters ahead.

Similar to many modern cultures, Classical Greeks practiced monogamy, inferring that children from a single wife at a time were considered a man's legal heirs. The emphasis on "*a man's* legal heirs" comes from the political and social rights that came with being a male citizen over eighteen. Conversely, a Greek proverb states, a woman will know two significant moments in life: her wedding and her death (Powell 35).

Young girls, known as *korê* ("maiden") after Persephone, in this society were nursed on the virtues of humility, amenability, dutifulness, submission and restraint. Some evidence suggests that girls were instructed through oral stories that reinforced these values, but beyond this, their education was often limited to textile crafts, such as spinning and weaving, craftwork they learned in the *gynaikeion*, "women's quarters," an area in the upper floor or back of the house. Reading and writing were rarely taught, but social circles within the *gynaikeion* encouraged conversation and storytelling, likely to instill social expectations. While many myths suggest adventurous young women, such as Atalanta whose athletic prowess outpaces the young men who seek to woo her, these characters are quickly punished and subdued, turned into obedient wives who recede into the tapestry, relegated to bearing children, tending to their families, and the dead. As maternal mortality rates were quite high, those who survived childbirth would often attend to their peers and sisters upon their death (34).



Figure 1.4.1: Scene from a *gynaikeion*, women's quarters. Attic red-figure lebes gamikos after the manner of the Ariadne Painter, ca. 430 BC. National Archaeological Museum in Athens, 1250.Marsyas. (CC BY-SA 2.5, via [Wikimedia](#))

Marriage arrangements were decided by families and based upon advantageous political and economic goals, and often the teenage, virginal, or *parthenos* bride never saw her groom until her wedding day. Girls were often married at age fourteen to men who were usually twenty years their senior and whose sexual experience generally encompassed other women, men, boys and orgies. However, a young woman suspected of sexual experience prior to marriage, even in the case of rape, would likely be sold into slavery by her own father. Thus, girls were often rushed into marriage shortly after they entered puberty to avoid the possibility of sexual exploitation and embarrassment (36).

Financial arrangements included a dowry gifted by the bride's family, which granted her parents a measure of social control over the marriage. In the event of a divorce, the dowry was returned. From this, we can extract that divorce was rare, and often unnecessary, given the likelihood of death in childbirth.

Weddings were held at night, with the groom traveling by cart to the bride's home, where he took her by the wrist, a symbolic gesture, perhaps reflecting the abduction of Kore (Persephone) by Hades. From there, she was moved to her mother-in-law's home, where she learned the skill of *sophrosynê*, "self-control," or restraint. Following the wedding night and the bride's initiation into marriage sexual rites, she transferred from a *parthenos*, or virgin, to a *nymphê*, or bride, and then to a *gynê*, "woman," after she had born children and obtained dominion over the *oikos*, family (36-38).

For Classical Athenians, the family could mean a variety of things. According to author Janet Morgan, the typical Athenian family was very similar to what we in North America call a "nuclear family." A "nuclear family" is considered a family with parents and children. Whereas the most common type of family in Athens consisted of the husband, wife, and children, it also included the

possibility of enslaved workers, whose numbers depended on the wealth and status of the household. Although the most common type of family, this was not the only type of family household that we encounter in that era. Trials in the Athenian courts reveal that a variety of family arrangements were possible. In [Lysias](#) 3.6, for example, the speaker lives with his sister and his nieces. They are still a family but do not fit this “nuclear family” model that we have in our minds. An example of another type of family is in [Demosthenes](#) 57.40 where we are introduced to the idea of stepparents, remarriage, and half-siblings. Families even included adopted members, but whereas adopting newborns is common in North America today, these adoptees were young adults (often a nephew) who could keep the *oikos* reproducing and its wealth intact.

As diverse as the families could be in classical Athens, they each had a very similar family dynamic. Different members within the household were responsible for different duties and jobs both within and outside of the *oikos*. These duties were typically distributed based on gender and status. In [Xenophon's Oeconomicus](#) 9.2-10, we see the husband and wife in a discussion of how their household would be run, both inside and out, with the assistance of enslaved workers. First, we have the husband or the eldest male within the household. This individual was considered the “manager” of the household and he would not typically partake in performing household duties himself, unless from a lower-class family. He would, instead, dictate to his wife, and enslaved workers what tasks within the household they were responsible for. He would also train his wife to fill his role as supervisor of enslaved workers within the house. In doing so, he expected his wife to act towards these workers the same way he would and to reward and punish them as appropriate. Next, the text details the wife's role within the household. The wife typically performed household duties such as cooking, cleaning, and weaving, often working alongside the enslaved workers. As previously mentioned, she was also responsible for managing the enslaved people working inside the household while her husband was absent. In this text, she had important responsibilities, but was more of an assistant to her husband and was expected to defer to him on any issue. Her subservient role was even more pronounced when guests were present, as wives were not permitted to eat with the men on couches, like their Roman counterparts were allowed to do. In less wealthy families, such strict gender roles were not likely possible in the running of the household, but a wife's obedience to her husband would have still been expected.

Next, we have the children. Children are not often talked about in written sources, and it is difficult to find material evidence of their presence within the household. While young children in North America often live a carefree life with a variety of toys, Athenian children did not. Athenian children often spent the majority of their time accompanying their parents, learning the duties that they would have to perform as adults, both at home and when they were married and had started their own families. According to [Plato](#) (*Laws* 1.643c) children were encouraged to develop skills for their future working lives by playing with miniature versions of these tools.



Figure 1.4.2: Child's toy horse on wheels, from a tomb, c. 950-900 BCE. (CC BY 2.0, [Wikimedia Commons](#))

In contrast to modern-day North America, children were not immediately considered a member of the family once they were born, regardless of their parents' status. When a child was born, the head of the household was responsible for inspecting the child and validating the child as a member of the *oikos*. After this took place, on the fifth or seventh day after birth, the *Amphidromia* was held. The *Amphidromia* was a religious event where the family would make a sacrifice to the gods and the father would walk around holding the child up in the air to indicate his acceptance of the child into the household. Afterward, they would have a small feast where only the family or anyone who was present for the birth attended. On the tenth day after the birth, depending on the

wealth of the family, they might also hold a *dekate*, which was more of a festive event where they held a feast, with entertainment for family and friends, in the celebration of the birth.

Children were also seen as a representation of their family's thoughts, ideals, or beliefs. Athenians would often have their child's personal name be representative of something important to the family. Mark Golden discusses how a common name for young boys was Hegesistratus or Hegesias for short. This was indicative of a militaristic family as it meant "army leader". He goes on to explain how these speaking names allowed parents an opportunity to express opinions on political matters, as well as to mold their children's sense of self. This would also indicate the values of the family and the broader community that they lived in.

Pets, including dogs, cats, and birds, were also important members of the *oikos*. In Classical Athenian art, we see two types of dogs depicted. One breed is considered "hounds". These dogs would often accompany the men on hunting activities where they would help attack and take down the animals. The other breed was Maltese dogs. The Maltese were what we might consider lap dogs and household family pets. They were normally depicted accompanying and playing with young children and women. Archaeological evidence also reveals that families sometimes honored dogs with burials, suggesting a close bond between families and their pets as well as grief at their loss. Pets appear to have been as important a family member to Classical Athenians as they are to us in North America today.

The concept of family, what defines a family, and who was considered a family member was very diverse in Classical Athens. Although a family was more commonly classified as our modern-day "nuclear family", there exist many examples in the sources showing that a family was also much more than that. Overall, though, the family dynamic and roles within the household were affected by gender and status, and these bonds inform our understanding of the Olympic Family as well.

---

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Danielle Szymezko-Singer, "Looking for Family."

## 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

---

Introductions to mythology texts commonly start with the etymology of “myth” to provide a foundational understanding. Myth, in the Classical sense, can be defined as “story,” “word,” “speech,” or “utterance,” which, while interesting, doesn’t provide a differentiation between a myth and a legend, or a saga, or folklore.

Commonly, **myths** involve stories or epics that feature gods and goddesses, supernatural beings that control the cosmos, the elements, and more precisely the impact such agencies have upon humans. The myths that persist in the human literary canon tend to be instructional, providing lessons either for day-to-day survival, or to justify rites and communal practices, or to explain natural processes or phenomena. Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days* both reflect this definition, as they illustrate the creation of the earth through the separation of Sky (Ouranos) and Earth (Gaea), and the birth of their children who would later give birth to the Olympians and Titans, who will later master and manipulate the natural elements.

**Legends** and **sagas**, which may include gods and goddesses though often not in featured roles, are rooted in historical fact. They tend to weave in creative expression of those events, making them more entertaining and engaging, but they have some element of factual truth at the core of the story. Homer’s epic the *Iliad* fits into this category as the action is (likely) based on the destruction of Troy VII-A. Yes, the gods and goddesses command a significant portion of the plot and their conduct seems to influence the events, but the spotlight remains fixed upon the mortal tragedy and their inevitably doomed efforts.

**Folklore**, as the word implies, finds roots in oral tales of the common folk, or peasants. Often featuring comforting formulaic language, such as “once upon a time,” and “they lived happily ever after,” folktales, or fairy tales, are also comprised of familiar motifs. These motifs might include an abused, abandoned or orphaned child, a malevolent step parent, a protective adult (such as a fairy godmother or woodsman), magical objects, or rules that must be adhered to or consequences will follow. Supernatural beings may be featured, such as faerie, elves, gnomes, spirits, ghosts, witches or animistic creatures, and their interactions with mortals often impart morals or warnings. Such tales often feature magic or wish fulfillment as themes, and clear, if not simplistic, demarcations between the “good” and the “evil” characters. Many view these tales as little more than entertainment, but they often contain important socio-cultural cues and are used to instruct children into the norms of their culture. Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, in his work *The Uses of Enchantment*, argued that folkloric tales were embedded with significant psychological lessons, which, while not apparent to children who hear the stories, still provides them with valuable tools for addressing complex issues such as sibling rivalry, abandonment, and sexual maturation.

---

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

Greek myths, especially those that focused upon heroes, usually underscored the hero's **individualism** and his desire to achieve greatness and renown, which was a mortal's only hope for lasting immortality. Except for the rare occasion when a hero accompanied another on an escapade, such as Herakles' and Theseus' visit to Hades, most heroes acted independently in order to capture the most fame and fix themselves as the central figure in their narrative. The most memorable heroes are born semi-divine, more often the child of Zeus from one of his numerous liaisons with comely mortal women. Of his heroic children, Herakles was a favorite, which positioned him in great peril from Hera's jealousy. Zeus' attentions to the child served to spotlight his special status, which further rankled Hera who, understandably, resented this living reminder of her husband's brazen adultery and his callousness at naming the child after her. Herakles means "glory of Hera." This tension provided brilliant opportunities for the infant to demonstrate his future greatness; hence, when Hera placed two venomous serpents in his cradle, the baby strangled each in his already mighty grip, playing with them as if they were inanimate toys. The outsized strength of Herakles served as a model of male superiority, both in physical might and in epic achievements. But even such brut and blunt power carried a human weakness, the need for sleep, and in this state, Hera had her final revenge in the form of a nightmare that caused the hero to unknowingly slaughter his wife and children while in the spell of sleep.



Figure 1.6.1: Herakles fighting the Nemean Lion, artwork upon a wine cup. Greek, from Athens, c. 550 BCE, terracotta. Black-figure kylix attributed to the Workshop of the Phrynos Painter. Getty Villa. (CC BY. photo by A. Murray 2023)

The Twelve Labors that followed his crime were his means of cosmic atonement, a way of earning his way back into the title of semi-divine hero, even further polishing his reputation. Though the hero occasionally uses the resources of others, such as temporarily taking Atlas' burden of holding up the planet, to gain his help in gathering the apples of Hesperides, he later regains control of the narrative by tricking the Titan into shouldering the Earth again. Thus, it is his independent, muscular spirit that readers remember, and not the aid of others in helping him achieve his goals.

The epics of **Homer** accentuate not only the individualism of heroes, mortal and semi-divine alike, but also the **competitive spirit** the Greeks admired. Odysseus, a favorite of Athene for his tactical intelligence in the Trojan War, exhibits a high level of hubris at the start of the *Odyssey*, and is quickly humbled by the regular culling of his men at each episode. Yet, his ego, which should be off-putting, is what gains the loyalty of the audience. His willingness to engage a colossal, man-eating cyclopes, or a vengeful sea god, or deadly sirens in a series of challenges reflects the Greek appreciation for competition. The fact that his character evolves and matures with each engagement is an attractive feature for modern audiences, but would have been only of secondary interest for the ancient Greek audience.

The Romans, who were longtime admirers of Greek mythology and in the spirit of trans-Mediterranean trade, adopted the Greek myths, adding their own textures and flavors to establish a mythic foundation in Rome. Roman mythic tradition was both elastic and appropriative. The Roman poet **Ovid**, who lived during the time of Emperor Augustus (27 BCE-CE 14), penned the master text

of Greco-Roman myths, *Metamorphoses*. Aptly titled, the work features both mortal and immortal characters undergoing physical change, perhaps a comment on the evolving place of Rome as it rose in power, eclipsing the waning power of Greece. The title of the work also refers to the way the Romans interpreted Greek myths, imbuing them with traditionally Roman values: “*gravitas*, or seriousness of purpose and devotion to duty (especially to the state); *pietas*, or duty to one’s parents, the state, and the gods of Rome; and *frugalitas*, or the idealizing of the simple life, free from the distractions of vanity and self-indulgence” (Harris and Platzner 837), values reflected in plot points such as the posthumous veneration of Emperor Julius Caesar. The work both played to and influenced the changing tastes of literate Romans, who craved Greek stories and who longed for a mythic tradition of their own to further legitimize the empire. Written in a sharp-witted voice, the myths appealed to his sophisticated audience of Roman peers. The epic starts in the early days of mythic lore, retelling the tale of creation, of gods, of heroes and their accomplishments, before ultimately resting upon the deification of Caesar.

Further binding Rome’s mythic connections to Ancient Greece, **Virgil’s** (alternately spelled Vergil) epic, the *Aeneid* [ee-NEE-id], follows the sole survivor from the house of Troy, Aeneas [ee-NEE-as], from the burning city on an epic journey towards Rome. As the semi-divine son of Aphrodite and the Trojan prince Anchises, Aeneas heroically carries his crippled father while simultaneously leading his young son and wife from the burning city, while his kinsmen fall to Achean (Greek) and Spartan arrows. When his wife falls behind, he valiantly returns to the conflagration and massacre only to find her fallen, another victim of the unrelenting Greek slaughter, but the action confirms his devotion to his wife, likewise his noble character. The hero finds his way across the sea and into a doomed affair with Carthaginian Queen Dido [DYE-doh], into the underworld, and ultimately to the shores of Italy where his descendants become the founders of Rome and the progenitors of Julius Caesar. The epic maintains strong roots in Homer’s *Iliad*, recounting the war, the sacrifices of its heroes and the inscrutable indifference of the gods who control their fate. The story also contains several parallels to the *Odyssey*, especially in Aeneas’ visit to the underworld to confront the shades of those he left behind in Troy and of the bereft Dido. Like Homer before him, Virgil seeks to maintain the themes of sacrifice, duty, and honor as the core qualities that signify a Roman hero, while lingering upon the very human loss that such choices inevitably lead to. Though readers may note that Aeneas is a survivor of the Trojan empire, and not a Greek by birth or blood, the Romans would have seen him as Greek by affiliation or proximity, much like the rest of the world sees Canadians and Americans as “North Americans.”

In crafting their own mythological heritage, the Romans transferred the names of the Greek gods into Roman names, many of which overcame the Greek original in popular use. Far more people use the Roman “Hercules” than the Greek “Herakles,” so students of mythology will benefit from being versed in all epitaphs of the gods. The chart below lists the gods in order of primacy.

| Greek Name (transliterated) | Roman(Latin) Name  | Anglicized Name   | Purview                                                 |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Gaia                        | Terra Mater        | Gaea              | The Primal Earth                                        |
| Eros*                       | Cupid              | Eros              | Cosmic, romantic love                                   |
| Ouranos                     | Caeum              | Uranus            | The Sky, the Heavens                                    |
| Rheia, Kybele               | Ops                | Rhea              | Mother of the Olympians                                 |
| Kronos                      | Saturn             | Cronus            | Father of the Olympians                                 |
| Helios                      | Sol, Phoebus       | Helios            | The (late afternoon, setting) Sun                       |
| Selene                      | Luna               | Selene            | The Moon                                                |
| Hestia                      | Vesta              | Hestia            | The Hearth                                              |
| Hades, Plouton, Aidoneus    | Pluto, Dis         | Hades, Pluto      | The Underworld                                          |
| Poseidon                    | Neptune            | Poseidon          | Oceans, tidal waves, earthquakes                        |
| Demeter                     | Ceres              | Demeter           | The Harvest, agrarian fertility                         |
| Here                        | Juno, Iuno         | Hera              | Women, marriage, childbearing                           |
| Zeus                        | Jupiter, Iovis     | Zeus              | The Sky, Olympus, justice, weather (lightning)          |
| Aphrodite                   | Venus              | Aphrodite         | Passionate love, lust, beauty                           |
| Athene                      | Minerva            | Athena, Athene    | Wisdom, Victory in War (Military intelligence), Weaving |
| Hermes                      | Mercury, Mercurius | Hermes            | Messenger of the gods                                   |
| Phoibos Apollon             | Phoebus Apollo     | Phoebus Apollo    | The (rising or moving) Sun                              |
| Artemis                     | Diana              | Artemis           | The Moon, hunting, virginity                            |
| Hephaistos                  | Vulcan, Vulcanus   | Hephaestus        | Smithy to the gods and heroes, (industrial) fire        |
| Ares                        | Mars               | Ares              | War, rageful mania                                      |
| Dionysos, Bakchos, Bromios  | Bacchus, Liber     | Dionysus, Bacchus | Wine, vines, liberation, music (song)                   |
| Eileithyie                  | Lucina             | Eileithyia        | Childbirth, Midwifery                                   |
| Hebe                        | Juventas           | Hebe              | Youthful bloom, cupbearer in Olympus                    |
| Persephone, Kore            | Proserpina         | Persephone, Cora  | The Underworld, (alternately) spring                    |
| Pan                         | Faunus             | Pan               | Flocks and shepherds                                    |

\*In the earliest cosmologies, Eros is a divine force born from Chaos as a unifying element for the universe.

From the chart above, we can see the names of several planets taken from Roman gods, as well as root words that formed many of our modern words: liberation, prosperity, fawn, vulcanized, and cereal. From this we might deduce that the Romans sought to colonize, capture and revise all Greek gods and their myths in the ultimate act of literary imperialism. However, far from erasing

the “Greekness” of the original myths, the Roman authors helped to fix Greek myths and their universal appeal into the Western consciousness and as foundational pillars of Western literature. We are reminded of this collaborative history each time we look to the heavens and see not only the Roman-named planets, but also the moons and constellations named for Greek deities and semi-divines.

---

[1.6: Comparisons \(and Contrasts\) Within Greek and Roman Myths](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

When students first study myths in depth, they inevitably seek a social categorization, asking, whether these myths were considered *stories* for entertainment or education, or were they considered *religion* as a basis for worship? On a basic level, yes and yes. But any subject worthy of study, and myths most certainly are, often serve much more complex roles in their native culture.

The Greeks had no sacred text like the Judeo-Christian Bible, Indian Veda, or Islamic Quran (Koran) which provided guidelines for worship, or an ultimate truth, or even a doctrine explaining their relationship to their gods. They were informed of their relationship with their gods through rituals, public festivals, private home ceremonies, sacrifices, and through their myths and artwork which also served important political and social functions. They learned to respect their gods based upon the individual god's aspects, such as the fearsome lightning bolt of Zeus which could strike the earth—and people—when the god was displeased. They appreciated the life-giving rays of the early morning sun which was driven by the youthful sun deity, Apollo. Likewise, the gentle morning light that lit the earth was the gift of Eos, the dawn goddess. Fertility goddesses were abundant not only in Ancient Greece, but across the Ancient World, and the Greeks were known for grafting new gods into their pantheon when they encountered a helpful god through trade or travel. This accounts for the plethora of solar and lunar gods (including Apollo and Helios, Artemis and Selene) and fertility gods, all of whom might influence survival. Concerned for a newly planted crop, a Greek farmer might offer prayers and sacrifice of grain to Demeter or wine for Dionysis. And should an army need support in a military effort, they might appeal to Nike, Ares or, better, Athene, who amongst her many roles represented tactical intelligence in warfare. In this world, rites, sacrifices, and rituals were carefully woven throughout the personal and public aspects of the nation and served to bind the people together and to prop up civic institutions.

Appealing to the beneficial aspects of each of the gods worked both for insurance and for building political stability. Based on Homer's *Iliad*, these gods chose favorites not only in specific mortals, but also in cities and worked to protect their favorites so long as said favorites honored the gods first, Athene more so than any other Olympian.

Athene's miraculous birth is recorded both in art and in references within many other myths, reminding readers of its significance. Zeus' first wife was Metis [MEE-tis], the goddess of wise counsel; however, a prophecy had warned him that a male child by Metis would cause his downfall. To avoid falling victim to his long family tradition of patricide, Zeus swallowed the already pregnant Metis, and in doing so consumed her female intelligence: wisdom. Some time later, he complained to Hephaestus of a terrible headache, to which the blunt god of weaponry offered assistance, via an ax. In what must have been a cruel, but necessary stroke, he opened a birth passage on Zeus' forehead, through which the goddess sprang fully grown and fully armored. Titanic birthing pains aside, Zeus and those who attended the birth were awed both by the shining goddess who embodied wisdom, military intelligence, weaving arts, and whom—best of all—was instantly her father's best ally and newest favorite child.



Figure 1.7.1: A recreation in modern materials of the lost colossal statue by Pheidias, Athena Parthenos by [Alan LeQuire](#) (1990) is housed in a full-scale replica of the Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park. At forty-two feet tall, she is the largest indoor sculpture in the western world [originally crafted from ivory and gold, which stood thirty-seven feet high]. In her hand she holds Niké, goddess of victory, across her chest is the aegis of Medusa, and to her side are a shield and helmet, and a coiled serpent representative of Erichthonius. ([Free Art License](#), by [Wikimedia](#). Photo by Dean Dixon, sculpture by Alan LeQuire)

The goddess Athene, whose strange birth foreshadows her formidable role, is a manifestation of complexities that wise mortals would've learned to navigate. Born fully formed from the forehead of her father, she entered the world as a virgin goddess, wearing armor representative of her military aspects. Yet, she also serves as patron to the weaving arts, an odd contradiction to the destructive nature of war, or less odd if we consider that textiles were often used to record military conquests. Her introduction to the pantheon was a seismic moment for the other deities, captured in the Parthenon (Elgin) Marbles on display at the British Museum. In what remains of the sculptures, the moment of Athene's birth is viewed by the Olympians with varying degrees of surprise, wonder and even alarm. One goddess, possibly Hebe [HEE-bee], is depicted running away. As the youthful cupbearer to the gods, her reaction to such a traumatic event is understandable.



Figure 1.7.1: Parthenon Marbles, from the east pediment, British Museum, London. A goddess, described by the Acropolis Museum as Artemis, or possibly Hebe or Hekate (far right), flees from the birth of Athene. (CC BY SA, [Wikimedia](#))

The foundational myth of Athens begins with a contest. The citizens of this powerful new citadel sought a patron god to protect their city, and given their proximity to the Mediterranean sea, Poseidon was a natural candidate. Athene was another possibility, perhaps due to her multiple jurisdictions or her proximity to Zeus as his favorite child. Both gods offered a token gift to the city, a saltwater spring from Poseidon and an olive tree from Athene. The saltwater spring seemed an unusual and unusable choice, saltwater being undrinkable, and again, considering the closeness to the shore, salt and fish could be obtained easily. Athene's gift, however, was intriguing. Olive trees provided a beneficial fruit that could be pressed for oil or cured for later consumption. Additionally, the tree would offer invaluable shade during the hot Greek summers. Given the quality of the gift and the impressive attributes of the goddess, Athene was their natural choice. But Poseidon was a tempestuous god, one who embodied the uncontrollable forces of nature, and one who didn't take this social slight well. The god raged against the city, sending his "bull from the ocean" to demolish the city and its inhabitants. The citizens ran in terror, heading away from the tidal wave and toward the highest point in the city, the Acropolis, which literally means "high place." Once they'd climbed the hill, they were protected by the goddess. In thanks for her early act of protection, the people built a temple to honor her, the Parthenon.

---

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.8: Temples and Churches

While differentiating between our modern conception of religion and that of the Ancient world, it is helpful to understand how they addressed and housed their deities. The Parthenon marbles' depiction of Athene's birth originally framed the upper pediment of the Parthenon, demonstrating the goddess's significance to the city named in her honor.



Figure 1.8.1: [This full-scale recreation of the Parthenon resides in Nashville, Tennessee, and it shows the Olympic family and the birth of Athene on the pediment. CC SA 4.0, [Wikimedia](#)]

Below the pediment are metopes, finely detailed architectural panels featuring bas-reliefs. The metopes feature images of young Athenian women carrying the pelops, a ceremonial length of intricately decorated cloth that would be wrapped around Phidias' statue of Athene. This scene captures a key moment from the Panatheneaea [pan-athee-NEE-a], a festival of rituals, athletic, poetic and artistic competitions that honored the goddess. Other panels of the metope reflect the Olympians, and Apollo, who turns to his uncle Poseidon, while his twin, Artemis, sits to their right. The scene memorializes the two Athenian defeats of the Persian invaders, which occurred c. 490 BCE and again in 480 BCE (Harris and Platzner 17-18, 1022).

The Temple of Athene, the Parthenon, sits in the center of what was once a complex of smaller temples upon the Acropolis, including the Erichtheum [e-RIK-thee-um], one of the few surviving structures, which was constructed to house Poseidon's salty spring in addition to Athene's original gifted olive tree and the first wooden statue of the goddess. The Erichtheum takes its name from Erechtheus [e-REK-thee-uhs], a prehistoric ruler who may have founded the Panatheneaea and may have been a direct descendant to Erichthonius [erik-THON-e-us], the mythic son of Athene.



Figure 1.8.2: The Acropolis, meaning “high place” is the highest hill in Athens, and consists of a complex of temples (built and rebuilt after numerous destructive battles), including the largest temple—the Parthenon—and the smaller temple of Erichtheum, to the left of the Parthenon. CC BY SA 4.0, [Wikimedia](#).

Modern churches are places of worship, where congregants might experience community, edification and the spirit of a monotheistic religion, but they do not profess to house a deity in a physical sense. Greek temples, conversely, were places where the gods could visit their worshippers, find physical respite from the obligations of Olympus, and receive the sacrifices of the

offerants all in physical form. The myths we study occasionally explain the construction of temples as the edicts of the gods, such as the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, or the *Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo*. Differing from other modern houses of worship, ancient temples weren't built to seat a congregation nor to hold sermons. The interior was the sacred space of the god, where prized offerings were housed, while sacrificial offerings were made on the exterior of the sanctuary. Those who officiated at such sacrificial rituals tended to be from the premier families in the communities, and in a rare nod to equality, a majority of Greek cities sanctioned both female and male priests, each presiding at their respective gender deities' rites.



Figure 1.8.3: “The Building of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus” by Hendrick van Cleve III. One of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World, the Temple of Artemis was designed to awe visitors as the earthy home of celestial beings. Philo of Byzantium remarked that the goddess’s stunning temple anchored “the heavenly world of immortality . . . [down to] the earth” (11). Public Domain [Wikimedia](#).

---

1.8: Temples and Churches is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths

The selection of the powerful goddess Athene as their patron, and the subsequent naming of their city (Athens) after her was not so much an acknowledgement of her feminine power, but more likely an awareness of her proximity to Zeus and her masculine aspects. Being born from a man, rather than a woman, instilled a male-centric intelligence and allegiance within the goddess who regularly favored heroes and mortal men who aligned with her traits, specifically Odysseus. In no small irony, the election for her patronage was secured by a small margin of one vote, that of a woman (reportedly confirmed by Christian Theologian Augustine in the 5th century). However, this loyalty of the female citizens did them no favors, as the city persisted in denying all voting rights to women when it became the first democracy. The male leaders of the city, in an attempt to assuage the volatile anger of Poesidon, blamed the female voters and promised to stifle their agency. The myth of the contest, captured by Pheidias on the Parthenon's west pediment, and the resulting tidal wave create a foundational myth for the people of Athens, securing the male rule of the city by inculcating the women for the ensuing wrath of a tempestuous god.

A secondary foundational myth further roots Athene as mythical mother patron to Athens. As a virginal goddess, she isn't linked with any male partner, save for an awkward incident with Hephaestus. On this occasion, the goddess visits the god in his forge within Mount Olympus to inquire about new weapons. Taken by her aloof, untouchable beauty, he makes a clumsy attempt at seduction. The "attempt" misses its mark and lands, unpleasantly, on her thigh. The goddess, seemingly unaffected by the act, wipes the semen from her leg with a wool cloth, tossing it aside where it falls to the earth. In a universal truism, the gods' seed always bearing fruit, the cloth grows into a child, Erichthonius. Perhaps unprepared for single-parenthood, Athene gives the infant to the daughters of Cecrops (the mythical first king of Athens), Pandrosos, Auglauros, and Herse. Versions of the myth describe the baby in the basket as either being blanketed by two serpents, or as having the lower half of a serpent. Regardless, the goddess's admonition to the daughters not to look into the basket is ignored and the sight of the serpent-baby drives them to fling themselves off the Acropolis. The references to snakes are consistent with children of the earth. As **chthonic** [THON-ik] beings, snakes have the ability to travel between the Underworld—Hades—and the terrestrial world; thus a child born of the earth might display kinship qualities. Even his name connects with this particular quality "EriCHTHONius."

Athene, who also identifies with the serpent symbol (see photo of her statue), takes the child into her protective care within her temple high above the city where, under her guidance, he is credited for inventing the first quad-horse chariot, founding the Panathenaea, and later becoming a king of Athens. Other sources ascribe these accomplishments to Erechtheus (Harris and Platzner 9-10), who is said to be grandson of Erichthonius. The conflation of the two individuals is understandable, as both names are forms of Poesidon. Perhaps in a conciliatory offering to her uncle, Athene prophesies a cult of worship for Erechtheus following his death, and predicts a temple "ringed around with stones," where "Poesidon-Erechtheus . . . will be offered sacrifices of bulls" (Morford and Lenardon 593). Regardless of the version, each establishes the paramount mythic foundation that substantiates the power of Athens, signifying its greatness to competing kingdoms.



Figure 1.9.1: Temple of Erechtheum, Acropolis, Athens. CC BY, [Wikimedia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_of_Erechtheion.jpg).

Erechtheus was significant in the mythic history of the *polis*, though his achievements were marked by gruesome sacrifices. In successfully defending Athens from the attack of the Eleusinians led by the Thracian Eumolpus, a son of Poseidon and ancestor of the hereditary priests of Eleusis, he secured the victory by first sacrificing his three daughters. This terrible price allowed him to kill Eumolpus in the battle, but his victory was brief, for he was subsequently killed by Poseidon, who, with his trident, drove him into the earth, from which his grandfather had sprung (595).

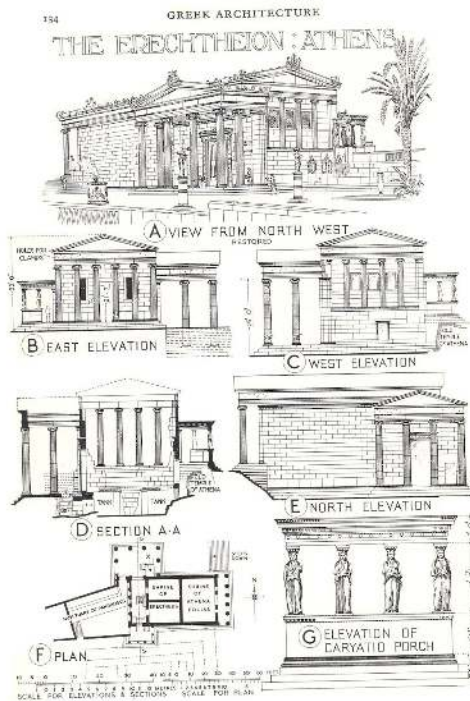


Figure 1.9.2: Plan and layout of the Erechtheum. Ohio State, [CC BY NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

At the core of celebratory festivals in ancient Greece and Rome were the religious components, "in the root sense of *religio*, Latin for the 'tie' that binds people and places to the gods." The citizenry of the ancient world held a consistent perception of their gods and goddesses as human-like in their affect and dispositions, yet more imperious, more rash, and more mysterious than their mortal counterparts. Befitting their grandiosity, the immortals likely fed from acts of devotion, and "they required [from] their worshippers specific actions (rituals). These usually involved blood sacrifice or other offerings, performed in particular places and times as the means to please or placate them. Festivals provided important public occasions for such ritual worship" (Rehm).

Inside the initial marble columns of the Parthenon is a secondary set of columns, topped by an Ionic frieze that runs around the exterior. The frieze, sculpted by Pheidias, offers a pictorial narrative of the festival of the **Panathenaea**, held each July in celebration of their patron goddess complete with parades and competitions of poetry, drama and athleticism. In the frieze, citizens of Athens are depicted as various ceremonial roles in the veneration of their patron goddess, including the sacrificial cattle and goats. The depictions lead toward the apex "of the procession, on the east side (i.e., over the entrance of the cella housing the statue) the ceremonial robe (*pelops*) was presented to the priestess of Athene, and nearby sat the Olympian immortals, enthroned, taking part in the joyous celebration of civic piety" (Morford and Lenardon 168-69).

Akin to our Olympics, every fourth year the Great Panathenaea was held, as an even grander version of the annual event, featuring musical contests, athletic contests, horse races, and extended recitations of Homer's epics the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, two works which represented the interconnections between the Athenian's anthropomorphic vision of their gods, their personal traits that define their character, and the gods' influence upon city life. The impact of these two epics cannot be underscored enough. The Greeks—not just Athenians—felt the works belonged to all *Hellas*. Even though Homer finds more empathy for the Trojans, and much less for the Greek armies, the *Iliad* was still a work of proud literature for the nation, as it reflects values of the people. Knowing the influence of Homer's works, Phidias used the poet's descriptions of the gods in his friezes. The gods, in various states of repose, appear to enjoy the attentions of the Panathenaea, especially Athene, whose eminence among the Olympians and her celebrity value to the *polis* "are consciously exploited to affirm the Athenian's identity as a divinely favored people and to validate both their distinctive customs and their right militarily to dominate less powerful Greek city-states" (Harris and Platzner 20).

Another festival, the **City Dionysia**, honors another child of Zeus. Like Athene, Dionysis [thee-ON-y-sus] was also born from his father, but from his loin or thigh rather than his head. Perhaps because of this unique location of birth, Dionysis represents the sensual pleasures, such as inebriation, libations, ecstatic dance and liberation from social constraints. As such, it is natural that his patronage includes vines, wine and theater. His festival honors his cult name: Eleutherios Dionysis, which connects his roots to Eleutherai, a border town set between Thebes and Attica. Suitably, *eleutheria* translates to "freedom," a meaningful and necessary contrast to his sister, Athene, who is distinguished by her controlled, tactical intelligence. The Ancient Greeks practiced polytheism—many gods, with multiple aspects each to cover the vast needs of surviving an ancient world—and the differences in the Panathenaea and the City Dionysia demonstrate these distinctions.

Where theatrical productions at the Panathenaea leaned toward the epic drama, lauding heroes and their reverence of their patron gods, (i.e. Hector and Apollo, and Odysseus and Athene), those dedicated to Dionysus favored comedies, satyr plays, in addition to tragedies, and narrative poems and dithyrambs (a wildly passionate choral hymn sung and danced by fifty men or fifty boys). These were performed at a special theater built for the god on the side of the Acropolis, nestled next to his sacred temple. Those who make the arduous climb up the steep hill to visit the Parthenon will first see the temple and theater of Dionysus where the plays of Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone* were first performed.



Figure 1.10.1: Theater of Dionysus. (Photo by Carole Raddato, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia)

Like the Panathenaea, the City Dionysia also began with a procession leading to the god's sanctuary for ritual sacrifices of animals and offerings (such as phalli) to the statue of the god. The blood sacrifices worked to invoke a tone of celebration prior to the festivities, and to stoke the appetites for the feast that would follow. The energy elicited from the procession of lavishly adorned citizens, officials and visitors, the many animals and the cult images of Dionysus united the religious, the social and the political experiences of the polis, serving to both mark the god's influence upon the city and to "offer apotropaic protection for the community" (Rehm).

The role of these festivals, like the myths that structurally support their artistic output, remind the ancient and modern audiences that these myths were a facet of religious practices and a means to standardize social behavior, but perhaps more importantly, they offered a vital link to their history, furnishing their ancestral memories with meaningful traditions. For the ancient Greeks, as with many ancient cultures, "the mythic past was indistinguishable from the historical past and included everything from the world's beginnings to the aftermath of the Trojan War" (Harris and Platzner 25).

---

1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.11: Reading Response Prompt

---

This chapter introduces the many historical and cultural influences that contributed to the myths we still enjoy today. Consider which events, individuals, or cultures had the greatest impact upon Classical mythology and show evidence from the chapter to support this position. In the response, consider focusing on one or two major influences, and any secondary or related events that may still resonate within the myths.

The response should be developed over several paragraphs that use MLA citation to reference sources for quotes, paraphrases and summaries.

---

1.11: Reading Response Prompt is shared under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.12: Study Questions

---

1. What key events highlight each of the following ages: Bronze age, Iron age, Geometric age, Archaic period, Classical period, Hellenistic period, and Roman period? Briefly explain a contribution each era made to the Greek myths we study today.
  2. Define “topography.” How does knowledge of topography enhance the study of mythology?
  3. What rights or freedoms did ancient Greek women have? Conversely, what rights or freedoms did men enjoy? Explore the implications of how Greek myths might treat female mortals or male mortals. Describe the family ritual of Amphidromia. In what ways did this event reinforce socio-religious values?
  4. What key features differentiate myth from saga/legend, or folklore?
  5. In what ways did Greek myths influence Roman myths? In what ways is Roman mythology uniquely Roman?
  6. Consider the full-scale recreations of the Parthenon and the statue of Athene in Nashville. What does this say about the influence of ancient Greek myths upon the world?
  7. Consider the miraculous births of Athene and Dionysus. What does Zeus, or the pantheon of Olympus, gain from such divergent gods? Why do the myths of ancient cultures ask their audiences to believe such unbelievable events?
  8. In selecting a patron for their city, what did the citizens of Athens risk? And what was their reward? How do the Panathenaea and City Dionysia reinforce the citizen’s relationship with the gods?
- 

1.12: Study Questions is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 1.13: Bibliography

---

Acropolis Museum. "Parthenon. East Pediment. Artemis."

[www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en/parthenon-east-pediment-artemis-replica](http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en/parthenon-east-pediment-artemis-replica).

Bettleheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. Vintage, 1989.

Burket, Walter. "Near Eastern Connections." *A Companion to Ancient Epic*, ed. by John Miles Foley, John Wiley & Sons, 2005, pp. 291-301. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, [ebookcentral-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.lbcc.edu/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=243563](http://ebookcentral-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.lbcc.edu/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=243563).

Glazebrook, Allison. [Houses and Households in Ancient Greece](#). [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 International License](#).

Glowacki, Kevin T. "The Topography & Monuments of Athens, A Brief Introduction." *The Ancient City of Athens*,

[www.stoa.org/athens/essays/topography.html](http://www.stoa.org/athens/essays/topography.html). CC BY NC-SA 1.0.

—. "A Very Brief Outline of Greek History (to AD 1453)." *The Ancient City of Athens*, [www.stoa.org/athens/essays/history.html](http://www.stoa.org/athens/essays/history.html). CC BY NC-SA 1.0.

Harris, Stephen L, and Gloria Platzner. *Classical Mythology: Insights and Images*. 6th ed, McGraw Hill, 2012.

James, Vanessa. *The Genealogy of Greek Mythology: An Illustrated Family Tree of Greek Myth from the First Gods to the Founders of Rome*. Gotham, 2003.

Martin, Thomas A. "The Loss of Writing." *An Overview of Classical Greek History from*

*Mycenae to Alexander*. Perseus Digital Library, Gregory R. Crane editor-in-chief, Tufts,

[www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0009%3Achapter%3D3%3Asection%3D1](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0009%3Achapter%3D3%3Asection%3D1).

Powell, Barry P. *Classical Myth*, 9th ed, Oxford UP, 2021.

Rehm, Rush. "Festivals and Audiences in Athens and Rome." *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre*, Cambridge. Edited by Marianne McDonald, and J. M. Walton. Cambridge UP, 2007. *ProQuest*, DOI:org/10.1017/CCOL9780521834568.011.

Schaps, David M. *Handbook for Classical Research*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, [ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=574647](http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=574647).

Sorek, Susan. *Ancient Historians: A Student Handbook*, Bloomsbury, 2012. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, [ebookcentral-proquest-com](http://ebookcentral-proquest-com).

Szymezko-Singer, Danielle. "Looking for Family." *Houses and Households in Ancient Greece*. Allison Glazebrook, Pressbooks, Open Library, [ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/housesandhouseholdsancientgreece/front-matter/cover-image/](http://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/housesandhouseholdsancientgreece/front-matter/cover-image/). CC BY NC-SA 4.0.

---

1.13: Bibliography is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 2: Literary Criticism for Myths

Many teachers hope that their courses, especially Mythology, will inspire students to explore the lands and cultures they study, ideally to become students of the world. Reading the myths is the entry point to this investment. Yet, as a student, you may ask, “Am I not in this class to learn what I need to know about this literature?” If that were the case, you could open a book and do that on your own. But being *in* a class with an informed and experienced teacher is a transformative experience, one that teaches you how to ask inquiry questions that unfold great riches within the text. Critical analysis is the ability to receive information (in this case, the text of the myth) and filter it through a series of inquiries that transform your understanding of the text.

Schools of literary criticism offer us different filters for inquiry, allowing us to access and appreciate the literature in a new and interesting way. While there are many different schools of literary criticism that could apply to a study of mythology, a few work especially well.

#### 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

##### 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

###### 2.1.1.1: Allegory

###### 2.1.1.2: Etiology

###### 2.1.1.3: Nature

##### 2.1.2: Anthropological Theories

###### 2.1.2.1: Charter

###### 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism

###### 2.1.2.3: Ritual

#### 2.2: Internalist Theories

##### 2.2.1: Psychological Theories

###### 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

###### 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

###### 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego

###### 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

###### 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

##### 2.2.2: The Unconscious

##### 2.2.3: Neurological

##### 2.2.4: Lens

##### 2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

##### 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

##### 2.2.7: Feminist

#### 2.3: Group Activity

#### 2.4: Bibliography

---

2: Literary Criticism for Myths is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

### 2.1.1: Your page has been created!

Remove this content and add your own.

#### Edit page

Click the Edit page button in your user bar. You will see a suggested structure for your content. Add your content and hit Save.

#### 2.1.1.0.1: Tips:

##### [Drag and drop](#)

Drag one or more image files from your computer and drop them onto your browser window to add them to your page.

##### [Classifications](#)

Tags are used to link pages to one another along common themes. Tags are also used as markers for the dynamic organization of content in the CXone Expert framework.

##### [Working with templates](#)

CXone Expert [templates](#) help guide and organize your documentation, making it flow easier and more uniformly. Edit existing templates or create your own.

 [Visit for all help topics.](#)

---

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

The earliest interpretations of Greek myths stem from the reasoning of early Greeks themselves, most of whom recognized within the stories common fictional elements, and thus saw them as allegorical tools meant to teach social lessons. Thanks to their alphabet, and the subsequent ability to write and form rational opinions, they were the first culture to demonstrate evidence of self-criticism, especially in regard to their own stories and traditions. 6th century BCE philosopher, Xenophanes [ksen-OF-a-neeZ] of Colophon identified the moral and ethical flaws of the Olympians, asserting that the commonly believed inferences about the deities was inaccurate:

In my opinion mortals have created their gods with the dress and voice and appearance of mortals. If cattle and horses had hands and wanted to draw or carve as men do, the cattle would show their gods in the form of cattle and horses would show them as horses, with the same form and appearance as their own. The Ethiopians say that their gods have snub noses and black skins, while the Thracians say theirs have blue eyes and red hair. (Xenophanes, *fragment 21 B* 14-16, qtd. In Powell 655-56)

His logic reflects the reasonable observation that ancient people constructed gods in their own **anthropomorphic** image, inclusive of their cultural ideals and foibles. Writing a good two hundred years after Homer, he had a long lens through which to form such an opinion. Another two hundred years after him, Plato offered an even more critical view of ancient myths, arguing that the tales possessed a dangerous influence to unschooled minds who would see them as historical “truths” rather than “tales.” However, his use of the mythic format to write his own morality lessons conveys his appreciation for the form, if not the function. His works include “The Myth of Er,” and “The Myth of Atlantis.” It’s important to note that early philosophers, like Plato and Xenophanes were primarily invested in “truth” in its highest, purest form; thus the vehicle of the story—the impossibility that giant titans hurled boulders at one another to establish supremacy, or that a father (Kronus) would ingest his own children to keep them from toppling his rule—became the object of their ridicule.

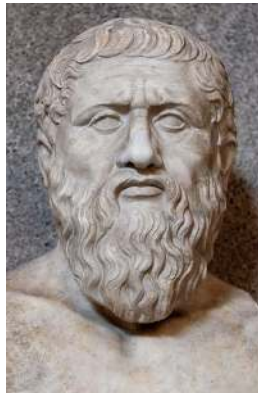


Figure 2.1.1.1: Plato. Marble, Roman copy after a Greek original from the last quarter of the 4th century. Vatican Museums. (Public domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

However, despite the criticism or surface dismissal of Classical myths from noted voices, other Greeks of the time saw the moral lessons embedded in the stories and recognized that the surface meaning wasn’t the ultimate reward.

---

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.1.1: Allegory

**Allegory**, the symbolic treatment of a subject under the facade of another subject or story, became the earliest form of theoretical analysis for myths. And to underscore the credibility of allegory, etymology (the root source or basis of a term) was used to reveal the aspects of characters: Helios the first sun god—or Sol (Roman)--shares the same root word for “sun,” Gaea translates to “Earth,”--as in the planet, not soil--and Eros translates to “physical love,” while his spouse’s name, Psyche, means “soul.”

2.1.1.1: Allegory is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.1.2: Etiology

**Etiology** theory sees myths as attempts to explain the cause or origin of things. In the most broad sense, [etiology](#) is “the study of causation” and stems from the Greek word for “cause” (*aition* or *aitia*). The first layer of the theory views myth as primitive science, the product of naive minds trying to give believable explanations for the organization and operation of the natural world. In this version, the myth’s author is seen as a nascent scientist, using the story to explain that which doesn’t yet have a discernible explanation. In trying to establish a Greek cosmology, Hesiod uses the introduction of the *Theogony* to explain the origins of the earth, the heavens, day and night, oceans, mountains, and various other physical features. The Pleiades are another example of etiological myths. The seven daughters of Atlas are represented in the heavenly constellation as stars, six of which can be seen plainly, while the seventh is nearly invisible as she, unlike her sisters, married a mortal.



Figure 2.1.1.2.1: “The Pleiades” by Elihu Vedder, Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Public Domain. [Wikimedia Commons](#))

If we draw our lens back a bit more broadly to the secondary layer, focusing on the adjectival use of the term, *explanatory*, we find the theory that applies to even more myths, especially those that attempt to explain the human experience with matters spiritual, physical or even metaphysical. Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days* explain why Prometheus’ gift of fire to humans—a gift stolen from the gods—offended Zeus, who wished to retain fire exclusively for the gods. More significantly, it led to a tragic but essential separation between the mortals and the divine. In establishing a cosmic balance, Hesiod connects the theft of fire to the generation of the first woman, Pandora, whose name ironically translates to “many gifts” and who releases all the evils in the world. As Hesiod’s poems demonstrate, etiological myths illuminate human experience with ambition, love, sin, goodness, beauty, trust, authority, and even misogyny (a topic also covered under Feminist/Gender theory).

---

2.1.1.2: Etiology is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.1.3: Nature

**Nature** theory, related to etiology, asserts that myths are basically a response to the wondrous processes of nature, specifically the phenomena that most clearly affect human existence: the ongoing movements of the sun and moon, planting and harvesting seasons, the industriousness of spiders and their web weaving, or why certain flowers turn to the sun or to their own reflection. The myth of Echo and Narcissus reflects this theory in both the literal and figurative sense, as Narcissus, son of a river nymph and river god, who is blessed and cursed with beauty, became so enamored with his own image that he drowned, or dissolved, because he was unable to detach from his semblance. In fixating on himself, he rejected the love of others, including Echo, as such he rejected the natural order of the universe. As a memory of his curse, an equally beautiful flower grew in his place—the narcissus—which also turned its face to the pond.

Echo, a nymph with a habit for chatter, was engaged by Jove (Zeus) to distract Juno (Hera) while he chased other nymphs for sport. Juno became enraged at the deceit and punished Echo, “In that she could not start a conversation . . . [She] had no power of speech except the power/To answer in the words she last had heard” (Ovid 23-38.998). Her inability to engage in real conversation was maddening to Narcissus, which contributes to his rejection of her. This painful scorn caused her body to wither and fade away until she was nothing but a disembodied voice that haunted valleys and dells. Applying Nature theory offers immediate access to the myth's overt and underlying meanings, that the vanity of the young man created an untenable chasm between his desire to nurture human bonds, those necessary to society and the progress of the human race, and his self-infatuation. Nature's answer, a reflection of the gods' mandates for human behavior, appears fitting to the sin. While Echo's punishment enforces the gods' prerogative to transcend the moral laws of mortals--those laws that govern who can and cannot pursue romantic affairs--and direct the punishment at the nymph by silencing her most notable talent. The tragically memorable consequence for the nymph is reinforced every time a person calls across a valley or canyon. The physical presence of the echo serves as reminder of the distance between mortals and gods, both physically and morally.



Figure 2.1.1.3.1: Carravagio’s “Narcissus.” (CC BY [Wikimedia Commons](#))

2.1.1.3: Nature is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.1.2: Anthropological Theories

---

2.1.2: Anthropological Theories is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.2.1: Charter

---

**Charter** theory holds that myths are used “to validate existing communal institutions, beliefs, and practices,” in addition to rituals and customs (Harris and Platzner 44). Myths that result in established practices and traditions can be readily identified as Charter myths. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* shares Charter theory and Nature theory traits, as it explains the establishment of the cult of Demeter, in addition to the seasonal shifts that result from Persephone’s annual descent into Hades where she resides as Queen until her spring awakening.

Bronislaw Malinowski, anthropologist and ethnographer, is credited with establishing awareness of Charter myths, but as with any threshold concept of myth, his approach carries limitations and problems:

His great discovery was the close connection between myths and social institutions, which led him to explain myths not in cosmic or mysterious terms but as ‘charters’ of social customs and beliefs. To him myths were related to practical life, and explained existing facts and institutions by reference to tradition: the myth confirms (i.e. is the ‘charter’ for) the institution, custom, or belief. Clearly such a theory will be valid only for certain myths (e.g., those involving the establishment of a ritual), but any theory that excludes the speculative element in myth is bound to be too limited. (Morford and Lenardon 12)

---

2.1.2.1: Charter is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism

**Euhemerism** [YOU-he-mer-izm], also called historical theory, is one of the oldest theories, which takes its name from the 4th century BCE mythographer, Euhemerus. The theory argues that certain myths are the retelling of historical events which have metamorphosed into grander versions of the original, adopting the elements we associate with myths, such as gods and goddesses who control the fates of mortals to explain the historically-based events. The *Iliad*, written by Homer long after the events it depicted, is an example of literature that lends itself to euhemeristic theory. While Troy was once thought to be a mythical citadel, archeological excavations in modern Turkey revealed the foundations of a city ringed by a fortified wall—very like the one Homer describes throughout the epic—which could have withstood a prolonged siege.



Figure 2.1.2.2.1: The walls of the acropolis belong to Troy VII, which is identified as the site of the Trojan War (c.1200 BC). (Photo by CherryX, CC BY-SA 3.0 by [Wikimedia](#))

Robert Graves offers detailed euhemeristic analysis of many mythological characters, including Hera, whose “forced marriage to Zeus commemorates conquests of Crete and Mycenaean—that is to say Cretanized—Greece, and the overthrow of her supremacy in both countries” (26).

2.1.2.2: Euhemerism is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.1.2.3: Ritual

**Ritual** theory asserts that myths that focus on the foundation of rituals do so to prescribe traditional ceremonies, even quasi-religious festivals meant to honor the gods and their acts. The ritual of carrying a bride across the threshold is based upon a more brutal legendary act: the rape of the Sabine women. Shortly after its violent foundation, the city of warrior-filled Rome lacked sufficient marriageable women. To remedy this problem, they invited their neighbors, the Sabines, to a festival. When they arrived, the Romans, lead by Romulus, abducted and raped all the daughters of their visitors. Though the initial act of violence ultimately led to formal marriages, the empire was founded on several layers of violence, abduction, and subjugation of women. Years of wars followed until the “wives” pleaded for a cessation, telling their families that they were content to be Roman wives. Their act led to the forging of political alliances and the prosperity that allowed Rome to grow in power. The story led to the ritual of carrying the bride over the threshold to symbolize the bride’s willingness to participate in her own abduction.

While this is one example of violence, other quasi-religious festivals were even more gruesome, such as that of Xipe Totec, a Mayan deity whose ceremony required an offerant (a captured slave) to offer up his skin for the Xipe Totec priest/impersonator to wear for the duration of the Tlacaxipehualiztli festival (about two weeks) until the rotten skin molted off, after which time the young man emerged again. Xipe statues frequently reflect the molting state, with tufted skin carved into the torso, arms and legs. The ceremony was thought to inspire agricultural fertility, as it took place in early spring (Miller and Taube 188).



Figure 2.1.2.3.1: Xipe Toltec, the Flayed Lord, was a particularly gruesome deity by Western standards, but he reflected the Mayan regard for blood sacrifice in a world where human existence was so fraught that ritual sacrifice of a few was believed to secure the safety and survival of the many. To be chosen as the offerant was considered a great honor. (Mina Marciano, CC BY-SA 4.0 via [Wikimedia](#))

This school of thought is largely attributed to Sir James G. Frazer, author of *The Golden Bough*, a multi-volume collection of world myths that seeks and often finds complimentary links between myths of early tribal cultures and Ancient Greek myths (Moreford and Lenardon 11). It should be noted that some find complications with Frazer’s conclusions and other researchers who align with his views, including Jane Harrison and Robert Graves, noting that the analogies are often flawed or forced-fit. Again, it’s wise to remember that there are a number of literary theories that work for mythology (and other genres) and shifting our literary theory lens is not only good for our brains, but also necessary for an honest and original interpretation of literature.

2.1.2.3: Ritual is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2: Internalist Theories

Internalist theories focus on the relationship myths form with the human emotional or mental expression. This broad approach separates the external influences, such as historic, geographic, or external religious factors, from those that generate from the human psyche and the very complex brain that houses it.

[2.2: Internalist Theories](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.1: Psychological Theories

---

**Psychoanalytic** theory encompasses a broad collection of researchers who apply theories of psychology and psychoanalysis to the characters, plots and thematic elements of myth. Of those who have contributed to the theory, Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung form the foundations of the theory.

---

2.2.1: Psychological Theories is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

Freud, the father of modern psychiatry and psychoanalysis, was the first to render an opinion about literature and the value of using a psychological lens upon character and plot. His particular interest was in dreams and what they might reveal about characters' suppressed desires, such as Oedipal fantasies. Readings of *Oedipus Rex* are often done under the Freudian influence: Upon his birth, an oracle of Apollo tells King Liaus and Queen Iocasta that their newborn son will eventually murder his father and marry his mother. Believing that they can out maneuver the oracle, the royal father pierces and binds the infant's feet (lest he somehow crawl away), and leaves him exposed on a hillside where the child is meant to die of neglect and exposure. But even casual readers of mythology know that divine oracles cannot be avoided; enter the shepherd who rescues the baby and presents him to the local king and queen, who happen to be childless. Oedipus grows into an adult and is told of an oracle that predicted he would murder his own father and marry his mother, and rightfully horrified by this news, he flees his homeland. On the road he meets with an older rider and his retinue, and an argument ensues which results in Oedipus rendering vigilante justice upon the older man's head, via a blunt strike.

As the audience, we already know that the man he has killed is, in fact, his birth father, the same who had attempted to murder him in a dramatic reenactment of Ouranos', Kronos' and Zeus' murderous family dynamic. We also realize that without knowing it, he will fulfill all other predictions, as repellent as they are to the audience *and* the character, once he finally recognizes them.

Freudian literary analysis (psychoanalysis theory) explores why this theme is so fascinating to viewers. The theory argues that humans are subjected to taboo desires that are often played out in our dreams and in our myths, such as the **Oedipal Conflict**: the desire of a young boy to attain and hold his mother's affections all to himself, and to exclude his father (his rival) from that relationship. Freudian analysis expresses that young boys often outgrow the desire as they wrestle with the guilt they feel for wishing their fathers away. However, when circumstances such as separation trauma or abuse intervene, the Oedipal Conflict may transfer into the **Oedipus Complex**, in which the boy or young man acts out the taboo fantasies, either by an inappropriate sexual relationship with his mother or a mother-substitute, or by engaging in violence toward his father or father-substitute. We see this dynamic played out in *Hamlet* as the young prince is wretched between his anger at his mother—who has chosen an inappropriate replacement for the recently deceased King Hamlet—his guilt at his own murderous feelings toward his uncle/step-father who is also a stand-in for his absent father, and his desire to return to his previously emotionally intimate relationship with his mother, who was closer in age to her son than to her first husband.

Freud's theories maintain a focus on a male-centric world, especially within his problematic theory of "penis envy," a theory he ascribed to women whom, Freud assumed, coveted or desired to appropriate the organ. A quick trip through the Classical art and statuary of a museum might confirm such an idealization, but it's also weakly founded at best, and false at worst. While the focus on the male-centric worldview finds some footing with Classical mythology and the male-centered pantheon, the theories of Freud are clearly limited due to his own self-acknowledged limited insight into literature and the minds of storytellers, or mythmakers. Freud's fixation with the phallus eventually returned to the source when someone questioned his ever-present cigar, prompting him to finally qualify his theory that, "sometimes a cigar is *just* a cigar," a quote which is nearly as famous as he is.

A few years later, German psychoanalyst and neo-Freudian, Karen Horney, responded to Freud's assertion that women often secretly wished for a phallus of their own, by arguing that it isn't the phallus they desire, but the male power privilege they covet, and proposed that men actually experience envy of the female womb and it's live-creating capacity. She argued that men experienced this "womb envy" more often than women experienced any version of "penis envy" since, "men need to disparage women more than women need to disparage men" (Horney).

#### Advice to Student Writers

Freud's interest in unconscious desires and the vehicle that conveys them—dreams—stems from his assertion that dreams are "the guardians of sleep" where they become "disguised fulfillments of repressed wishes" (Freud). To Freud, dreams are the "royal road" to the personal unconscious of the dreamer and have a direct relation to literature, which often has the structure of a dream (Eagleton 136). Yet Freud was also open about a fairly significant blind spot in his knowledge: he knew little about literature nor the creative process that generated it. He viewed the process of writing with an extension of fantasies and daydreams, which he equated to children's play (Freud "Creative" 652). Such a simplistic equation misses the intellectual rigor required for composing complex narratives such as mythology. Of myths and folklore, he wrote: "it is extremely probable that myths, for instance, are

distorted vestiges of the wishful fantasies of whole nations, the *secular dreams* of youthful humanity” (655). The challenge of applying a purely Freudian literary analysis to a work of literature is the risk of losing the art of it. Freud viewed the creative process as an extension of a neurosis, essentially classifying it as a psychological “problem,” a word he uses frequently to discuss the act of creative writing.

Applying a Freudian analysis to a work of literature works effectively if there are clear psycho-social or psycho-sexual issues or character behaviors present, but it should be used to open and extend an analysis, rather than run it into a blind alley, as much of Freud’s own analysis does.

---

2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

**Jungian Archetypal** theory posits that literary characters follow archetypal patterns which are embedded in the human brain from birth, and people unconsciously seek these archetypes within literary plots and in characters.

Where Freud's limited knowledge about literature led to limited applications of his theories, Jung's sensitivity to the creative process of writing and the power of storytelling are reflected in his insights about literature. Although Jung was friendly with Freud early in his career, having met him in 1906, Jung intellectually parted with Freud on the basis of Freud's sexual-centric analysis techniques and Freud's belief "that sexual trauma was the cause of all repression" (Ellwood 42). He and Alfred Adler resigned from The International Psycho-Analytical Association "in protest against Freud's insistence on the primacy of infant sexuality" (Richter 651), infant sexuality referring to oral, anal, and phallic stages or sexual development which take place between ages 0-3 years old (638).

Where Freud saw the creative writing process as a form of neurosis, Jung saw the need for separation of medical classification from creativity, writing, "Whatever the psychologist has to say about art will be confined to the process of artistic creation and has *nothing to do* with its innermost essence" [emphasis added] (Jung "Relation" 657). Additionally, he responded to Freud's Oedipus Complex with the Electra Complex, which argued that daughters crave the entirety of their father's affections at the cost of alienating their mothers. Though many modern psychologists find both theories unproven, they continue to serve as helpful constructs for character analysis. Electra, the daughter of King Agamemnon (the brother of Menelaus) and Queen Clytemnestra (the mortal sister of Helen of Troy), becomes enraged at the murder of her father by the hand of her mother and her lover. She convinces her brother, Orestes, to plot revenge by killing their mother and her lover. In carrying out the revenge, Electra has objectified her father as her idealized male.



Figure 2.2.1.2.1: Orestes and Electra by Menelaos, student of Stephanos. Palazzo Altemps, Rome. The statue captures a moment of mourning for their father, evidenced by the siblings' sheared hair. (CC BY SA 4.0 [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Orestes_and_Electra.jpg))

What her idolatry ignores is her father's sacrifice of her younger sister, Iphigenia [IF-ih-GEE-nia], to the goddess Artemis so he could gain her favor to set sail for the Trojan War. At the war's conclusion, having been absent from his family for the ten-years-long war, he returns with a slave—a surrogate wife—the Trojan princess Cassandra. While she outwardly welcomes her husband and his "prize," Cassandra, Clytemnestra, who has for many years mourned her youngest daughter harbors deep resentment. Having ruled the kingdom alone, she takes revenge on Agamemnon and Cassandra—an innocent victim, like her own daughter—and plots their dual murder. The causal events leading to the cycle of murder and revenge are often ignored or minimized in simple psychoanalytical analysis of Electra, but to gain a full view of the character's motivation, it serves to do a full family history, as any good psychoanalyst would do.

Finding more value in influences like Nietzsche, Jung departed from psycho-sexual theories and instead developed theories about

the subconscious and its influence upon the conscious mind. Where Freud compartmentalized the human psyche into the Id, Ego, and Superego, Jung desired to know the “ultimate nature of the sovereign psyche . . . on occasion veering toward the margins of madness,” and in 1921 he published his research in *Psychological Types*. The book introduced key psychological terms, including extravert and introvert and the core archetypes, “the Wise Old Man, the Great Mother, the Hero, the Maiden, the Shadow, [the Anima and the Animus], the Marvelous Child who is the hoped for individuated self—[who] are all really facets of the self, fragments one can become or repress, or better configure harmoniously into a mandala, or balanced pattern, out of the center of which the new self arises victorious” (Ellwood 44). Jung argued that the psyche’s “goal, individuation, meant becoming who the person really is inwardly, not the persona fabricated by convention and expectation. The pilgrimage to the real self is long and winding, but may be enlivened by encounters with denizens of the well populated intermediate ranges” (44). Examining religious and folkloric cultural influences, Jung found evidence of the archetypes and their formative capacity in the psyche’s conscious and unconscious (dream state) evolution. His proposal of a “**collective unconscious**,” a set of memories either culturally exclusive or universal to all humankind, was likely his most challenging to existing psychological theories. The theory saw the mind as empowered with “mental energies” that ignited pre-imprinted, suppressed knowledge of ancestral roots, culture, even species that are awakened through literature and stories, and Jung used myths and their cosmic themes to validate these assertions (Ellwood 44).

---

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego

---

**The Ego**, in Jungian terms, is an important central component of the *self*, which is also known as “the total personality.” In “The Principal Archetypes,” Jung states, “the ego is the subject of all personal acts of consciousness” (Jung 666), but it is also heavily influenced by influences of the unconscious. Jung differentiates between the two types of “unknowns” in the universe, including those that are outside of the individual’s mind and can be experienced by the senses, such as the mysteries of nature or the cosmos; and those which are internal, within the individual’s mind and which are experienced immediately through emotions. This secondary set of unknowns is the *unconscious* (Jung 666-67). Jung is careful to state that the ego, the self, and the conscious and unconscious are not the same entity, but separate elements. It may help to think of them as tiers in a pyramid, with the unconscious as the base layer, the conscious as the secondary layer, the ego resting upon those two layers, and the self, or the total personality, as the apex.

---

2.2.1.2.1: The Ego is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

**The Shadow** is the darker aspect of the personality, and has the most threatening influence upon the ego (669). The shadow is a representation of the dangerous or powerful drivers of the unconscious mind, what Stephen King identified as “gators in the sewer” of our mind. Joseph Conrad explored the shadow self in his novel *The Heart of Darkness*, which argues that all humans, given the right circumstances, would choose evil expressions of their unconscious if there were no consequences. Jung argues that with sufficient psychoanalysis a person can reconcile the shadow and incorporate it effectively and acceptably into the conscious mind and then the self. As a literary concept, the shadow is exceedingly interesting and useful. Mythology uses projections of the shadow in characters like the Norse Loki, the Native American Coyote, or the Greek goddess Eris, goddess of discord. Eris, perhaps, is the most effective manifestation as she is the shadow of “the good strife,” the goddess who inspires humans to improve, to challenge themselves and to achieve more. In contrast to her sister, Eris exists to create chaos and disharmony. It is her intrusion into the wedding of the goddess Thetis and mortal King Peleus and her “gift” of the golden apple that ultimately leads to the Trojan War. Being able to view the shadow in objective character form is far easier, Jung tells us, than to look inwardly and see it within the self.



Figure 2.2.1.2.2.1: “The Apple of Discord,” by Jacob Jordaens, after Peter Paul Reubens. The painting captures the moment when Discord (Eris) drops the Golden Apple, which reads “to the fairest.” Both Diana (Athene) and Juno (Hera) reach for the tempting apple, while Venus (Aphrodite) gathers her argument. Thetis and her mortal husband Peleus look on, pensively. Prado Museum. (Public Domain [Wikimedia](#))

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

**The Anima and Animus** represent the feminine and masculine aspects of the unconscious. In some manifestations the anima is articulated as a cosmic mother figure, “a symbol of everything that functions as a mother” (670). She is a projection-making machine, appearing in fantasies, dreams, and visions, especially for male characters. Often the anima serves to keep a person infantilized, incapable of growing into a fully responsible adult, or she may be seen as the earth mother that gives life and that receives it again as the grave. In mythology, this mother manifests in her young and mature form as Persephone and Demeter. Male characters manifest this struggle with the anima by confronting powerful female visions, such as Medusa, who must be slayed by Perseus, so he can reconcile with the life-giving projections of the anima, represented by his mother and the princess Andromeda.

Just as the anima is a potent unconscious influence for the male, the animus serves a similar function for the female. The animus—meaning “mind or spirit”—is the universal father, and is equally capable of making projections that excel at logical and aggressive argument, which Jung sees as a masculine quality (672). Where the anima is aligned with the maternal Eros, the animus is aligned with the paternal Logos, which Jung uses as “conceptual aids to describe the fact that woman’s consciousness is characterized more by the connective quality of Eros than by the discrimination and cognition associated with Logos” (672). In the myth of Theseus, Ariadne’s animus is represented by the Minotaur, the monstrous half-man, half-bull being, who is reputed to be her half-brother and a result of her mother’s rape by a bull. The beast is kept in a labyrinth beneath the kingdom of Minos and must be fed human victims. Only Ariadne can communicate with the beast, and it is this kinship that Theseus capitalizes upon to achieve his quest.



Figure 2.2.1.2.3.1: The Minotaur existed in a dark and twisted subterranean maze, symbolic of the unconscious mind. It fed on sacrificial youths offered to sate the beast, until Theseus promised to slay the creature and restore civility to the kingdom, and, consequently, burnish his own image as a hero. Storage jar with Theseus slaying the Minotaur, Greek, Athens c. 550 BCE. Getty Villa. (Photo by A. Murray 2023, CC BY)

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.2: The Unconscious

Careful to differentiate between the individual's personal unconsciousness—the experiences exclusive to the individual—and the collective unconsciousness—the memories shared by everyone, Jung also noted that dreams might be personally influenced, or collectively influenced. How many of us have had a dream of flying, or of being terribly late to a final exam for which we were unprepared? While the latter is clearly a culturally influenced dream, a simple survey of classmates may yield shared dream templates.

Greek myths commonly use dream motifs either for divination or for direct intervention from the gods, as in *The Iliad*, Book Two, when Zeus commands a dream sent to Agamémnon in the voice of Nestor:

"Sleeping, son of Atreus, tamer of horses?  
You should not sleep all night, not as a captain  
responsible for his men, with many duties,  
a great voice in the conferences of war.  
Follow me closely: I am a messenger  
from Zeus, who is far away but holds you dear.  
'Prepare the troops,' he said, 'to take the field  
without delay: now may you take by storm  
the spacious town of Troy. The Olympian gods  
are of two minds no longer: Hêra's pleading  
swayed them all, and bitter days from Zeus  
await the Trojans.' Hold on to this message  
against forgetfulness in tides of day  
when blissful sleep is gone." (Homer 2. 27-40)

Framing this message is further intelligence known to the gods, and therefore also to the audience, that Zeus seeks to honor a promise to the mother of Achilles by sending the Greek armies into a ruinous fight, one that will prove that they cannot win without the aid of Prince Achilles and his army. In listening to and repeating the dream, Agamémnon again reveals his weakness: his inability to critically assess a situation or properly interpret a dream. Instead, he leverages the situation to test his men's resolve by adding his own evaluation of the dream, that Zeus seeks to send the armies back to their homelands in defeat. The speech does not have the intended effect and further highlights his failure to lead well.

In *Oedipus Rex*, Queen Iocasta, desperate to stop the relentless inquiry of Oedipus, says:

Be not afraid of marriage with your mother;  
Already many mortals in their dreams  
Have shared their mother's bed. But he who counts  
This dream as nothing, easiest bears his life. (Sophocles 938-941 qtd. in Harris and Platzner 696).

The weight of the Unconscious offers readers a chance to not only see the inner struggle of characters as they negotiate impulses which they often don't understand, but to also participate with the very human experience of unearthing buried rationale that spur our actions. For characters in myths, these dreams often come directly from the gods. Greek myths personified this with the god Morpheus, the god of dreams. Morpheus commonly appears when the gods need an agent to influence the actions of heroes, spurring them into action for the sake of the plot.

The heroic archetype so carefully detailed by Joseph Campbell, was first recognized by Jung. Central to the adventures of Perseus, Theseus, Jason, and Herakles are patterns that distinguish "heroic" qualities and social lessons that teach members of the society

how to behave, though some of those lessons and social morés are drastically different from modern tastes and ethics.

---

2.2.2: The Unconscious is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 2.2.3: Neurological

**Neurological Theory** holds that the miraculous organ of human fancy, the brain, also creates the structure and patterns of myth as one of its primary functions: the need to make order of sets of information. The theory finds its roots in the evolving awareness of the brain's functions brought to us by neurological science. Scientists Eugene D'Aquili and Andrew Newberg in their research into the meditative state and its effects on the human brain found that the organs seek to create structures of meaning from observations: "and to attribute cause-effect relationships to perceptions from immediate to the cosmic, an attribute D'Aquili termed the "cognitive imperative." We have, it seems, a biologically conditioned need to construct stories to explain the nature of our world and our place in it. The fact that myths worldwide share preoccupations with the mysteries of creation, life and death, and the nature of the cosmos, these theorists argue, is biologically driven" (Harris and Platzner 54-55).

Literary researchers Elizabeth and Paul Barber further develop this theory in their book, *When They Severed Earth From Sky*, finding that the human brain, given a set of informational facts, will rationalize a cause to justify the visual effect: a massive tree falling within a forest is the result, not of billions of microscopic lifeforms that undermine the root systems, but of an angry giant or a god who *willed* the tree to fall. Their theory, subdivided as principles, also explores the compression needed within foundational knowledge—information needed for survival in pre-literate cultures—and the necessity of an apparatus like a story or myth to convey that information in transmittable format. Hence, the essential information of a volcanic explosion that drove ancestors from living in the shadow of said volcano is more likely to survive if it's carried in a compelling narrative about a beautiful maiden who denied the marriage proposal of a fiery spirit who lived within the mountain.

More local to Greek mythology, the king of Olympus, Zeus, being forewarned of a prophecy that a son of his and Metis' would be greater than him, thus a likely threat to overthrow his rule, conceives of a way to avert this catastrophe. He consumes Metis, his first wife, assuming her intelligence along with the baby she carries. *He* then gives birth to his perfect child, the goddess Athene, who is born fully formed and armored, like an idea from his head. Being female, she cannot fulfill such a prophecy, and better still, will be her father's champion by supporting his (male) favorites *in situ*. She is literally the "brain child" of Zeus.

The spontaneous spark of genius in birthing a child who both averts the prophecy and aligns with him in all ways also parallels the neurological process of synapse firing, when new knowledge is born from a spark in the brain. Or, what we call "the light bulb moment."

---

2.2.3: Neurological is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.4: Lens

**Lens** theory is one of the newest, and perhaps most intriguing approaches to understanding myth. The theory posits that to understand the myth from the perspective of the culture that authored it, we must first adjust our lens, ignoring our own cultural biases, codes and mores, and instead see the myths from the angle of the original speakers. This theory, like several of the others we've identified, is born from comparative analysis of myths, but this isn't the final destination of the approach.

Wendy Doniger, Professor of the History of Religions at University of Chicago, applies the theory in her work, *The Implied Spider*, where she describes the technique as akin to using microscopes and telescopes to interpret myths: "Through the microscope end of a myth, we can see the thousands of details that each culture, indeed each version, uses to bring the story to life—what the people in the story are eating and speaking, and all the rest. . . . But through the telescope end, we can see the unifying themes." She further explains by identifying "three levels of lenses in methods for the analysis of myth: the big view (the telescope) is the universalist view sought by Freud, Jung, Mircea Eliade; the middle view (the naked eye) is the view of contextualized cultural studies; and the small view (the microscope) is the focus on the individual insight." The scholarly view, that best for lens theory analysis, comes from combining the first and third views.

Elizabeth Wayland Barber and Paul Barber, authors of *When They Severed Earth From Sky: How the Human Mind Shapes Myth*, offer detailed principles for applying both lens and neurological theory to myths. With expertise in Old World archeology and linguistics, and in comparative literature and folklore, their research originally focused on textiles, cloth and their relationship to women's work over 20,000 years of human society. Through that work they recognized neurological patterns in the development and practice of mythological transmission. They separated those observations into forty original principles, and then into four overarching principles: **Silence**, **Analogy**, **Compression** and **Restructuring**.

Under "Silence" they illustrate lens application with the story of Moses and the Golden Calf. Having returned from his edifying communion with God in the desert, Moses finds his people, again, worshiping a Golden Calf. Apart from sharing his consternation, we may ask, why that creature? Why not an alligator, or a cat, or a sheaf of wheat? The Barbers explain, "if we refocus our lens on the culture and the context, and remember that we're 'not told, *because everyone originally knew*' . . . (18) we realize, Moses' people were living as slaves in Egypt and would've likely absorbed the key parts of their captors' culture, like their faith, and the Egyptians, like many other cultures, worshiped that which was essential to life, pictured the sky as a giant swath of white, much like milk. Further focusing the lens reminds readers that the ancient Egyptians were an agrarian society, which depended upon cattle, the source of life-giving milk. They viewed the night sky as the underbelly (the origin of the milky night sky) of a giant cow goddess, whose four legs supported the heavens, and who each morning gave birth to a Golden Calf (Barber and Barber 18-20).

### Advice for Student Writers

The research of Wayland Barber and Barber reflects the layering of two complementary theories, neurological and lens. At this point students may ask, "should I combine two or more schools of theory? Will that improve my grade?" The answer will depend upon the situation (the assignment) and the student. Some assignments may work best with a single theoretical focus, and those include a literary analysis of a single text, such as an epic poem, or a character analysis. Other assignments may yield rich results from a layered approach, such as an Honors analysis of attitudes toward women in the masculine economy of *The Iliad*. A conversation with the professor is often wise before engaging in a complex approach involving more than one literary theory.

---

2.2.4: Lens is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

---

The research of Wayland Barber and Barber reflects the layering of two complementary theories, neurological and lens. At this point students may ask, “should I combine two or more schools of theory? Will that improve my grade?” The answer will depend upon the situation (the assignment) and the student. Some assignments may work best with a single theoretical focus, and those include a literary analysis of a single text, such as an epic poem, or a character analysis. Other assignments may yield rich results from a layered approach, such as an Honors analysis of attitudes toward women in the masculine economy of *The Iliad*. A conversation with the professor is often wise before engaging in a complex approach involving more than one literary theory.

---

2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

**Heroic Journey** theory describes the universal pattern present in many heroic world myths: the call to adventure, the refusal of the call, supernatural aid, the crossing of the first threshold, the belly of the whale, the road of trials, the meeting with the goddess, the woman as temptress, the atonement with the father, apotheosis, the capture of the boon/knowledge, the refusal of the return, the magic flight, the rescue from without, the crossing of the return threshold, master of two worlds and the freedom to live.

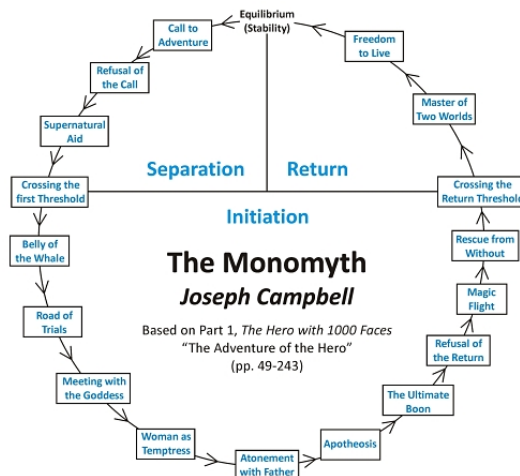


Figure 2.2.6.1: The Hero's Journey, by Joseph Campbell, traces the steps most commonly observed throughout world myth involving a heroic trial. While every step might not be reflected in an individual tale, Campbell notes that the ones recognized are a catalog of invitations that may occur. (CC BY, [Wikimedia](#))

Perhaps more than any other mythographer, students are sincerely drawn to mythology after being introduced to the work of Joseph Campbell, for which teachers of mythology are grateful, and a bit cautious. These students are often dismayed that the school of thought has limited applications in the study of myth. Like many of the theories we've examined, this one works well for specific types of myths, particularly heroic epics.

Campbell's popularity is largely due to the resonance of the pattern in Classical Myths, such as the adventures of Perseus, Theseus, and Heracles, in addition to the sole heroine, Psyche. It's further seen in modern myths such as *The Lord of the Rings* series, *Star Trek*, the *Star Wars* series, *The Princess Bride* and the *Harry Potter* series. Readers may identify a commonality in these examples, for they are pop-culture comfort food, as evidenced by our ability to recall and recite lines of dialogue from each that return us to a magical moment in our individual experience. Campbell believes the persistence of the pattern, and our desire to fall in love with it anew with each new encounter is that the plots awaken templates embedded within our subconscious, what Jung called the "collective unconscious," or sets of stories we are all born with. Robert Ellwood writes, "For [Campbell] a myth seemed to be a rather disembodied, timeless story of eternal human significance. It might happen to come from here or there, but in the final analysis all myths are equal and interchangeable" (130).

Campbell's research is undeniably impressive; drawn from credible sources, such as Carl Jung who provided the psychological source for Campbell's use of archetypes, and James Joyce who coined the term "monomyth" (Campbell 30n), it builds upon the theories of narratology and comparative mythology to establish the stages of the heroic journey.

While many of the recognizable heroic journey myths will reflect some of the seventeen recognized stages, it's rare to find all in one story. Even George Lucas, who used *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* as the template for his *Star Wars* saga, selectively culled stages from his scripts to create the plot structure and character development needed for the narrative arc.

### Advice for Student Writers

The limitations of this theory fall into two clear categories: not all myths reflect a heroic journey; and students who apply the theory in their analyses often only identify the stages of the journey as reflected in their chosen myth without providing *meaningful* analysis. Even Campbell offered numerous examples of the stages based upon his wealth of research into world myths and to demonstrate the evolution of the hero's character through the vehicle of the journey. The best student essays will consult

Campbell's original works, including *Creative Mythology: the Masks of God* and *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, rather than shortcuts. The latter of the two seminal works is particularly engaging.

---

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.2.7: Feminist

**Feminist** theory examines the share of the cultural literary landscape that women can claim. Keeping the focus on the social and psychological state of women, Feminist critics often draw conclusions based on the comparison of male characters, their goals, ambitions, privileges, conquests, and the effects of their conduct on female characters. Their analysis may also include the use of feminine language in description to contrast or balance masculine language. In *The Iliad*, Homer opens each book with long descriptions of “Rosy fingered Dawn,” and the quiet calm of the morning to contrast the brutality of the cutting, bloody, and relentlessly cruel descriptions of the battles, which are only interrupted for dialogues of vicious insults between the male leads.

Religious researcher Karen Armstrong in her book, *A History of God*, describes the precursor of the male Judeo/Christian God as the Great Goddess. Her evidence pulls from written history of pre-Christian goddesses including those from Ancient Sumerian epics *Gilgamesh* and *The Epic of Creation* which feature Inanna and Ishtar as potent arbiters of generative life as well as death. Ancient Egyptian epics identify Isis as the primordial mother, and other Indo-European cultures have their own Great Goddess: Aphrodite, who, like Athene may also have been a grafted deity. The Ancient Greeks identified Gaea as their Mother Goddess. Each of these manifestations is a variation of the Great Goddess, a figure who is both creative, destructive, and restorative as needed to provide cosmic balance.

Theologian Carol Christ writes of archeological evidence of a Great Goddess found abundantly, especially for Aphrodite, who though often trivialized as the goddess of love or lust, had temples built to her near marshlands and coastal areas, where the land merged with sea, or high up on cliffs that hovered over rocky shores where sea mist surrounded the temples (Christ 60). The proximity to the sea reminds adherents of her sea foam birth, and Feminists and anthropologists would also recognize the alignment with primordial life, which also sprang from the oceans and found footing on land.

Further physical evidence dates back to the Upper Paleolithic and “Venus” artifacts, such as the “Venus of Willendorf,” a curvaceous female stone figurine who appears pregnant with life.



Figure 2.2.7.1: The Venus of Willendorf is a Paleolithic fertility figure, perhaps a depiction of the Mother Goddess, and is so valued as an artifact that when it travels for exhibition, it is protected by a motorcade of tanks (Tedlock). (CC BY, [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Venus_of_Willendorf.jpg))

G. Rachel Levy argues “that the caves where Paleolithic worship was performed were understood to be the womb of the Creatrix,” and others have asserted that during the Neolithic era (from 7,000-3,500 B.C.E.) in both Asia and Old Europe, “the prominence of Goddess symbolism in religion coincided with enhanced social and religious roles of women who were the inventors of agriculture, pottery and weaving, (Christ 63) (Barstow 12), technologies that allowed cultures to survive as well as document their achievements.

The decline of the Great Goddess coincided with the emergence of the male-dominated Greek Pantheon of gods, and was finalized with the evolution of the Judeo God, who later merged into the Christian God. During this process, the role of the Great Goddess was reduced, minimized Feminists might say, into the role of the holy vessel, the Virgin Mary in the Western world, who, while important, is hardly the key figure in either religions’ view. A Feminist interpretation of this transition might identify the subjugation of the Great Goddess as evidence of the patriarchal fear of her authority, or more plainly, a female CEO is bad business sense for a masculine economy.

Feminist theory has a wider application due to its diversity of positions, which allow us to examine aberrant characters, such as Medusa, as sympathetic, a victim of a vindictive set of Olympians. A priestess of Athene, Medusa is approached by Poseidon (some

versions say she is a lover of Poseidon, while others say she is raped by the god) during the execution of her temple duties. Here we find a question about consent, as some Feminists would argue that a mortal woman couldn't render consent to a god, nor deny him, thus all human/mortal relations were a version of rape. As a consequence of the act, the goddess Athene directs her ire at the priestess, turning her previously ravishing face into a monstrosity that would repel any who look upon her. We moderns would call this "blaming the victim" or "re-victimizing the victim," but we must be cautious of faulting the past for being the past. Instead, a Feminist might argue that Medusa comes *into* her power after the superficial outward appearance of beauty was stolen from her. As a supernatural being, she is able to control her own space and those who might trespass upon her. She is also given a significant role within the Graeae, her sister Gorgons, as the mother of a race of monstrous and wonderful guardians and aides, including Pegasus and Chrysaor (bearer of the Golden Sword) (Mortford and Lenardon 162).

Feminist theory also offers the opportunity to further previously mentioned theories, such as the Freudian concept of penis envy. Zeus, by swallowing the female intelligence represented by his first wife, Metis, achieves a measure of balance in his previously aggressively male thinking, and by giving birth from his head, with the aid of midwife Hephaestus who cut a birth canal into Zeus' head, he has demonstrated his own version of "womb envy," and his desire to appropriate the lifegiving aspects of women. Ultimately, he lacks the compassion and nurturing that is traditionally aligned with women, and spends the rest of his reign chasing after female archetypes to the ongoing insult to his wife. Hera, in no small irony, is the goddess of marriage.

---

2.2.7: [Feminist](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 2.3: Group Activity

Read the following passage from Hesiod's *Works and Days*, then, within your group, consider which two or three literary theories serve best to analyze the passage. Be prepared to explain your decision by connecting points of insight to examples from the text. If time allows, consider which literary theory *doesn't* work well for analyzing the text, and explain why.

### 2.3.1: From Hesiod's [Works and Days](#)

(ll. 109-120) First of all the deathless gods who dwell on Olympus made a golden race of mortal men who lived in the time of Kronos when he was reigning in heaven. And they lived like gods without sorrow of heart, remote and free from toil and grief: miserable age rested not on them; but with legs and arms never failing they made merry with feasting beyond the reach of all evils. When they died, it was as though they were overcome with sleep, and they had all good things; for the fruitful earth unforced bare them fruit abundantly and without stint. They dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things, rich in flocks and loved by the blessed gods.

(ll. 121-139) But after earth had covered this generation—they are called pure spirits dwelling on the earth, and are kindly, delivering from harm, and guardians of mortal men; for they roam everywhere over the earth, clothed in mist and keep watch on judgements and cruel deeds, givers of wealth; for this royal right also they received;—then they who dwell on Olympus made a second generation which was of silver and less noble by far. It was like the golden race neither in body nor in spirit. A child was brought up at his good mother's side an hundred years, an utter simpleton, playing childishly in his own home. But when they were full grown and were come to the full measure of their prime, they lived only a little time in sorrow because of their foolishness, for they could not keep from sinning and from wronging one another, nor would they serve the immortals, nor sacrifice on the holy altars of the blessed ones as it is right for men to do wherever they dwell. Then Zeus the son of Kronos was angry and put them away, because they would not give honor to the blessed gods who live on Olympus.

(ll. 140-155) But when earth had covered this generation also—they are called blessed spirits of the underworld by men, and, though they are of second order, yet honor attends them also—Zeus the Father made a third generation of mortal men, a brazen race, sprung from ash-trees; and it was in no way equal to the silver age, but was terrible and strong. They loved the lamentable works of Ares and deeds of violence; they ate no bread, but were hard of heart like adamant, fearful men. Great was their strength and unconquerable the arms which grew from their shoulders on their strong limbs. Their armor was of bronze, and their houses of bronze, and of bronze were their implements: there was no black iron. These were destroyed by their own hands and passed to the dank house of chill Hades, and left no name: terrible though they were, black Death seized them, and they left the bright light of the sun.

(ll. 156-169b) But when earth had covered this generation also, Zeus the son of Kronos made yet another, the fourth, upon the fruitful earth, which was nobler and more righteous, a god-like race of hero-men who are called demi-gods, the race before our own, throughout the boundless earth. Grim war and dread battle destroyed a part of them, some in the land of Cadmus at seven-gated Thebe when they fought for the flocks of Oedipus, and some, when it had brought them in ships over the great sea gulf to Troy for rich-haired Helen's sake: there death's end enshrouded a part of them. But to the others father Zeus the son of Kronos gave a living and an abode apart from men, and made them dwell at the ends of earth. And they live untouched by sorrow in the islands of the blessed along the shore of deep swirling Ocean, happy heroes for whom the grain-giving earth bears honey-sweet fruit flourishing thrice a year, far from the deathless gods, and Kronos rules over them; for the father of men and gods released him from his bonds. And these last equally have honor and glory.

(ll. 169c-169d) And again far-seeing Zeus made yet another generation, the fifth, of men who are upon the bounteous earth.

(ll. 170-201) Thereafter, would that I were not among the men of the fifth generation, but either had died before or been born afterwards. For now truly is a race of iron, and men never rest from labor and sorrow by day, and from perishing by night; and the gods shall lay sore trouble upon them. But, notwithstanding, even these shall have some good mingled with their evils. And Zeus will destroy this race of mortal men also when they come to have gray hair on the temples at their birth. The father will not agree with his children, nor the children with their father, nor guest with his host, nor comrade with comrade; nor will brother be dear to brother as aforetime. Men will dishonor their parents as they grow quickly old, and will carp at them, chiding them with bitter words, hard-hearted they, not knowing the fear of the gods. They will not repay their aged parents the cost their nurture, for might shall be their right: and one man will sack another's city. There will be no favor for the man who keeps his oath or for the just or for

the good; but rather men will praise the evil-doer and his violent dealing. Strength will be right and reverence will cease to be; and the wicked will hurt the worthy man, speaking false words against him, and will swear an oath upon them. Envy, foul-mouthed, delighting in evil, with scowling face, will go along with wretched men one and all. And then Aidos and Nemesis, with their sweet forms wrapped in white robes, will go from the wide-pathed earth and forsake mankind to join the company of the deathless gods: and bitter sorrows will be left for mortal men, and there will be no help against evil.

---

2.3: Group Activity is shared under a [CC BY](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

## 2.4: Bibliography

- Armstrong, Karen. *A History of God: the 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Ballantine Books, 1994.
- Barber, Elizabeth Wayland, and Paul Barber. *When They Severed Earth From Sky: How the Human Mind Shapes Myth*. Princeton UP, 2004.
- Barstow, Anne. "The Uses of Archeology for Women's History: James Mellaart's Work on the Neolithic Goddess at Çatal Hüyük." *Feminist Studies*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1978, pp. 7–18. JSTOR, [www.doi.org/10.2307/3177535](http://www.doi.org/10.2307/3177535). Accessed 6 Oct. 2022.
- Bulfinch, Thomas. *Bulfinch's Mythology*. Kessinger, 2004.
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. MFJ Books, 1949.
- . *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology*. Penguin, 1976.
- Christ, Carol P. "Reflections on the Initiation of an American Woman Scholar into the Symbols and Rituals of the Ancient Goddesses." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1987, pp. 57–66. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/25002056](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25002056). Accessed 6 Oct. 2022.
- Cohen, Percy S. "Theories of Myth." *Man*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1969, pp. 337–53. JSTOR, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2798111>. Accessed 22 Sep. 2022.
- Doniger, Wendy. *The Implied Spider, Updated with a New Preface: Politics and Theology in Myth*. Columbia University Press, 2011. JSTOR, DOI: [www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/doni15641](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/doni15641). Accessed 19 Sep. 2022.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed, U of Minnesota P, 1996.
- Ellwood, Robert S. *The Politics of Myth: a Study of C.G. Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell*. State U. of New York P., 1999. Permalink: [caccl-lbcc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CACCL\\_LBCC/16uhovf/alMa991001267134905267](http://caccl-lbcc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CACCL_LBCC/16uhovf/alMa991001267134905267).
- Freud, Sigmund. "Creative Writers and Daydreaming." Richter, pp. 650–56.
- . *The Interpretation of Dreams* in *The Freud Reader*, Ed. Peter Gay, Norton, 1989.
- Graves, Robert. "Discoveries in Greek Mythology." *The Hudson Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1954, pp. 167–81. JSTOR, DOI: [doi.org/10.2307/3847166](http://doi.org/10.2307/3847166). Accessed 19 Sep. 2022.
- . *The Greek Myths*. Penguin Classics, 2012.
- Harris, Stephen L, and Gloria Platzner. *Classical Mythology: Insights and Images*. 6th ed, McGraw Hill, 2012.
- Hesiod. "Works and Days." *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homeric*. Trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/files/348/348-h/348-h.htm#chap08](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/348/348-h/348-h.htm#chap08). Accessed Oct. 11, 2022.
- Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2004.
- Horney, Karen. *The collected works of Karen Horney (volume II)*. W.W. Norton Company, 1942.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry." Ed. David Richter, pp. 656–66.
- Miller, Mary and Karl Taube. *An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya*. Thames and Hudson, 1993.
- Moreford, Mark P.O., and Robert J. Lenardon. *Classical Mythology*. 8th ed, Oxford UP, 2007.
- Powell, Barry P. *Classical Myth*, 9th ed, Oxford UP, 2021.
- Richter, David H, Ed. *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*. Bedford St. Martins, 1989.

Tedlock, Barbara. *The Woman in the Shaman's Body*. Bantam, 2005.

---

2.4: Bibliography is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 3: Creation in the Ancient World--The Route to Hesiod's Theogony

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia

3.2.1: Enūma eliš

3.2.1.1: Summary

3.2.1.2: Commentary

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

3.2.2.1: Commentary

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel

3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)

3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod

3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)

3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

3.6.7: The First Woman

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

3.8: Study Questions

3.9: Bibliography

---

3: Creation in the Ancient World--The Route to Hesiod's Theogony is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

Archeology shows that the ancient Greeks had a complex understanding of advanced math, including geometry and calculus, which allowed them to construct consecutively larger temples to their patron, Athene, atop the footprints of the previous temples. One of the most impressive details of the construction resides in the east, or front facing pediment (the pediment sculptures currently reside in the British Museum), which held the sculpture of the Birth of Athene. From any perspective, the lines of the pediment look perfectly linear, yet, this is an optical illusion. The ancient architects, Ictinus and Callicrates, understood that if they made all the lines linear on such a large scale the center lines would appear to sag when viewed from a distance. To counter this effect, they gently bowed the structure from the foundation upward, including the steps, the colonnade and the famous pediment. To achieve the arc, they beveled the marble blocks within the foundation and angled the columns slightly inward, and even constructed the anchoring corner columns moderately thicker to balance the effect. Understanding that even the individual columns would look concave if constructed straight, they used entasis, a slight convex curve along the middle of the column to correct for the visual illusion (Pruitt).

Adorning the temple are sculptures created by Pheidais that tell the story of Athene's birth. Revealing the miraculous event from several angles, the sculptures are remarkable for several reasons, firstly for being complete on all sides, including the back which was not fully visible from the original placement. The artist's awareness of complex human movement and the colossal importance of that moment inspired him to craft immortals that were not only striking to look upon, but who also seemed to come alive within the moment of this cosmic birth. In their original form, the sculptures would have fulfilled the polis' image of the Olympians, both in stature and beauty. Their position just under the roof of the Parthenon is symbolic of their prominence in the ancient Greek world view, where the gods lived in the layer between the firmament of the clouds and the roof of the heavens.

Reconstructions of the sadly damaged pediment further reveal the attentive skills of the sculptor who balanced the architectural design of Ictinus and Callicrates, by creating a scene that starts in the far left corner, panning right over twenty Olympian figures. Echoing the dawn birth, the scene starts with the heads of the horses of Helios' [HEE-lee-os] chariot as he pulls the sun to light the scene. The heads of the charging steeds wake the reclining figure of Dionysus [thEE-oh-nee-sus], who lifts his head just in time to attend the birth (and to avoid being trampled). To his right elbow are the figures commonly thought to be Persephone [per-SEF-oo-nee] and Demeter [de-MEET-er] (albeit anachronistically, as Zeus is also *later* the father of Persephone). These two figures, carved from the same piece of marble, touch each other with a maternal familiarity. To their immediate right, a goddess, likely Artemis or perhaps Hebe [Hee-BEE], is shown fleeing from the spectacle, her shawl caught in a gust of wind indicating her rapid flight, while her sibling, Ares, with his spear and shield ready to defend, appears both awed and tense. Eros [AIR-ros], pictured as a diminutive, childlike god, appears to mimic the stance of his warlike uncle, but in diametrical contrast is ready to respond with love's arrows. Both of their stances are mirrored in the gods who balance the pediment on the right side. Apollo, holding his lyre, represents music, since Helios (in this scene) represents the sun, and Hephaestus [he-FAS-tus] who retreats in surprise, his ax still recoiling from the stroke that birthed Athene, looks on with the same tense amazement. Hera and Poseidon sit upon cushioned benches signifying their importance to the scene and frame Zeus. Hera's consternation foreshadows her long life of frustration at her husband's lack of fidelity and at his appropriation of the female birthing function, while Poseidon's confused expression foreshadows his later conflict with Athene over the patronage of Athens. All eyes in the sculpture are faced toward the portentous birth, as Nikê [NI-kee], who was born simultaneously, crowns Athene with the laurels of knowledge. At the opposite end, the goddess Selene drives the moon to end the day and the scene.



Figure 3.1.1: Serving as the most complete family portrait of the Olympian family, the sculpture captures many stories of this complex family, including Zeus' mastery and reversal of his own fatal destiny. Parthenon east pediment reconstruction, Acropolis Museum. (CC BY NC, via [Piqsels](#))

An entire myth is captured in this scene, and from it historians and researchers have extrapolated the context, the emotions and the impact of the event. More significantly, they've extracted the appearance, reaction, and assignment of the gods based upon the fragments of the originals which were greatly damaged throughout ongoing wars, and deliberate demolition from the invading armies who sought to redesign the temple of Athene into reflections of their own religions, including a Christian church and later, a mosque. Of the surviving fragments, many are held in the British Museum in London and in the Acropolis Museum in Athens. Other fragments are housed in museums around the world as Greece makes ongoing efforts to repatriate them. Knowing this fraught history, it's indeed impressive that the bones of the Parthenon still stand. Its fortitude is a reflection of the integrity of the original design and construction.

The achievements of the ancient Greeks speak to their awareness and knowledge of the physical world, and even without the ability to see the earth from a cosmic perspective, they were cognizant that the land curved in a sphere. References to Atlas, the Titan doomed to carry the earth upon his shoulders, speak of the earth as a globe that rests under the heavens.



Figure 3.1.1: The Titan Atlas lifts up the earth which the ancient Greeks perceived to be sphere-shaped. (CC BY Public Domain [Max Pixel](#))

Hesiod's descriptions of the universe and the earth's place within it infer both a **cosmogony** (an account of the universe's creation and arrangement) as well as a **cosmology** (an explanation or theory about the universe's design, function and nature). The *Theogony* is primarily an attempt to explain the origin of the gods, their function within Olympus and upon earth, but it was only one vision of ancient Greece's cosmogony and cosmology. Other versions existed and informed Hesiod's view; however, only fragments of many still exist, and other versions are much more condensed than the detailed and character-rich version of Hesiod's.

Hesiod's version is one of the best surviving due to the exciting pacing of the narrative and the vivid imagery of the gods' births, and largely, it's completeness.

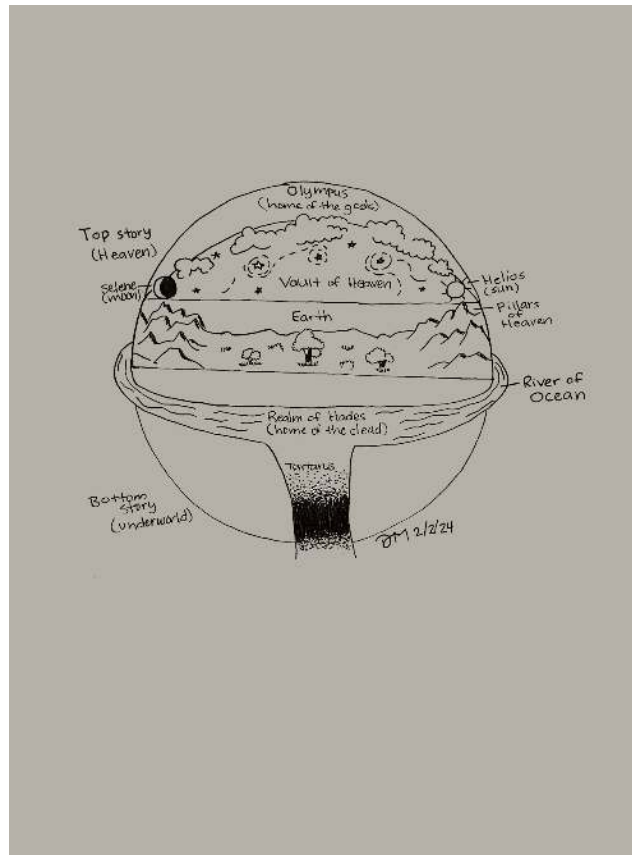


Figure 3.1.1: Hesiod's description of the three-storied universe emphasizes the supremacy of the gods above the vault of Heaven and the sphere of the mortals, while the realm of Hades and the dreaded pit of Tartarus resides deep within Earth. (CC BY, image by D. Murray 2024)

To best appreciate Hesiod's version of creation, it's useful to understand creation stories of influential cultures who lived prior to, alongside, or just after the Ancient Greeks.

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia

The earliest literary epics come from the Near Eastern kingdoms of Egypt and Babylonia, and much of that literature served as foundational materials for later mythologies, like those of Ancient Greece.

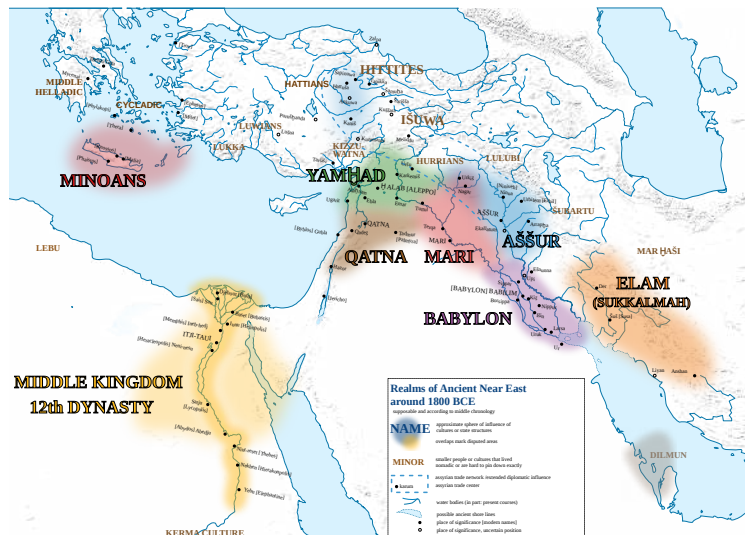


Figure 3.2.1: Ancient Orient around 1800 BCE. (Enyavar, CC BY-SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.2.1: Enūma eliš

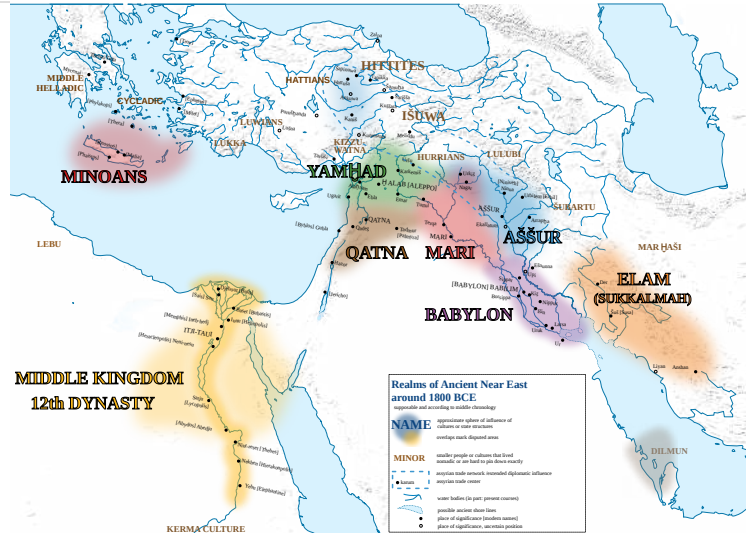


Figure 3.2.1.1: The proximity of Egyptian and other Near Eastern cultures demonstrates the influence of their stories and practices upon Greek myths. (Enyavar, CC BY-SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

The Assyrian creation epic, *enūma eliš* (often spelled phonetically as “Enuma elish”), literally translates to “When above,” but it is more often translated as “The Epic of Creation.” The literal name is cryptic to many as it doesn’t immediately imply a cosmogony or creation connection, and the translated name is also problematic, since it doesn’t follow the traditions of epics, as modern readers of ancient texts expect. There is no national hero figure who delivers or saves the culture nor does it follow established norms of epics. However, as one of the earliest creation stories, and the foundational element of the later Sumerian epics, its significance is indisputable.

Discovered on seven cuneiform tablets, which date as early as 1800 BCE, the epic was performed or recited at the annual Babylonian New Year (the Akitu) celebration to reinforce fertility practices and teach the cosmology of the culture.



Figure 3.2.1.1: Fragment of a tablet from the Babylonian myth *Enuma Elish*, or *Epic of Creation*. Unearthed in Nineveh (near modern-day Mosul, Iraq), in the "Library of Assurbanipal" by the excavation team of Sir Austin Henry Layard, Hormuzd Rassam, and George Smith, between 1840-1855. Seven tablets have been discovered, dating c. 7th century BCE, but more could exist which could complete the epic or connect it to other epics, such as *Gilgamesh*. (J.-C. K.3473. Zunkir, CC BY-SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

3.2.1: *Enūma eliš* is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.2.1.1: Summary

---

The story concerns the birth of the gods and the creation of the universe and human beings.

In the beginning, there was only undifferentiated water swirling in chaos. Out of this swirl, the waters divided into sweet, fresh water, known as the god **Apsu**, and salty bitter water, the goddess **Tiamat** (Ti'amat). Once differentiated, the union of these two entities gave birth to the younger gods.

These young gods, however, were extremely loud, troubling the sleep of at night and distracting him from his work by day. Upon the advice of his Vizier, Mummu, Apsu decided to kill the younger gods. Tiamat, hearing of their plan, warned her eldest son, **Enki** (in some versions, Ea is credited with this role) who caused Apsu to sleep and then killed him. From Apsu's remains, Enki created his home.

Tiamat, once the supporter of the younger gods, became enraged at the murder of her mate. She consulted with the god Quingu who advised her to make war on the younger gods. Tiamat rewarded Quingu with the Tablets of Destiny, which legitimize the rule of a god and control the fates, and he wore them proudly as a breastplate. With Quingu as her champion, Tiamat summoned the forces of chaos and created eleven horrible monsters to destroy her children.

Ea, Enki and the younger gods fought against Tiamat futilely until, from among them, emerged the champion **Marduk** (born as a second-generation god, from Ea and Damkina) who swore he would defeat Tiamat. Marduk, as a cosmic entity, bore four enormous ears and four equally magnificent eyes, representing his omniscience, as well as his dominion over the four cardinal directions. Marduk defeated Quingu and slayed Tiamat by shooting her with an arrow which split her in two, and from her eyes flowed the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Out of Tiamat's corpse, Marduk created the heavens and the earth, appointing gods to various duties and binding Tiamat's eleven creatures to his feet as trophies (to much adulation from the other gods) before setting their images in his new home. He also took the Tablets of Destiny from Quingu, thus legitimizing his reign.

After the gods finished praising him for his great victory and the art of his creation, Marduk consulted with the god Ea (the god of wisdom) and decided to create human beings from the remains of the gods who had encouraged Tiamat to make war. Quingu was charged as guilty and executed and, from his blood, Ea created Lullu, the first man, to be a helper to the gods in their eternal task of maintaining order and keeping chaos at bay.

As the poem phrases it, "Ea created mankind/On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free" (Tablet VI.33-34). Following this, Marduk "arranged the organization of the netherworld" and distributed the gods to their appointed stations (Tablet VI.43-46). The poem ends in Tablet VII with long praise of Marduk for his accomplishments (Mark).

---

3.2.1.1: Summary is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.2.1.2: Commentary

As an annual performance, the story reinforces the cooperative agreement between human and natural fertility, and the value of worshipping cosmic forces that allow for both forms of life to endure. The ethic of work is also clearly delineated for mankind to survive, and their place in the cosmos is also clearly stated: to serve the gods.

The productive relationship between Apsu and Tiamat establishes water as the source of life, but also its tempestual nature. As a natural element, water can just as easily take life in the form of floods and tidal waves, a common theme in creation stories. The biblical epic of Noah and his ark, and Zeus' flood in Ovid's *Metamorphosis* both contain generational-ending floods and the re-establishment of a more humble human race.

The children's violent response to their father's threats, and their mother's passivity to the threats might reflect the challenges of dynastic political rule of the age, where parents often feared being overthrown by their ambitious children. Zeus fulfills this ancient fear by killing his own father, Kronos, who had killed his father, Ouranos. Much like the Greek gods, the final conflict between Tiamat and Marduk seems unavoidable.

The defeat and division of Tiamat establishes two important cultural points: that the female generative spirit (Mother Goddess) is the source of life on earth, but that same creative power must be tamed or conquered by male spirits, heralding the oncoming replacement of the Mother Goddess in favor of the patriarchal structure of gods

Other interpretations focus on the astronomical connections between key characters. Marduk, who as the patron deity of Babylon is affiliated with the bull as his totem. His name might translate into "bull-calf of the sun." To concretize his solar qualities, his crown is described as "Five fearsome rays," very like the points of a star (Davis, et al 47). Additionally, the army of beasts that Tiamat raises to fight the other gods is composed of creatures we might recognize in the celestial bodies: giant snakes, dragons, a (rabid) dog, a fish-man or goat-fish, a scorpion-man, and a bull-man or minotaur. Rationale for the astronomical analogy aligns with the culture's need to chart the seasons by the night sky to track planting and harvest seasons. The ability to calculate and track heavenly movements also offered kingdoms invaluable knowledge for warcraft, specifically, when to plan invasions, wars and potential conquests.

---

3.2.1.2: Commentary is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

The Egyptian's Creation story is narrated by the god Neb-er-tcher, "Lord to the uttermost limit," an epitaph that references his omniscient power, reach and knowledge. When he sought to create the world, he adopted the persona of Khepera, a god everafter known as the Creator, and held in regard above the subsequent gods of the Egyptian pantheon. At the time of this transition, the earth and heavens did not yet exist, but a world ocean—Nu—did exist, and it was from this primordial element that life evolved, starting with Khepera who birthed himself from the inert liquid, speaking his name and in doing so, sparking the energy of life. He spoke the land into being, providing solid ground for him to stand upon. Needing offspring, he then united with his own shadow and begat Shu and Tefnut, the personifications of air and dryness, and water, respectively. These two gods provided the celestial construction materials for the heavens and earth, and their first creative act was the generation of two more essential offspring, Keb (or Geb), the god of Earth, and Nut [nOOt], the goddess of Sky. This creative energy heralded the sun to rise out of Nu, providing the first day and securing the placement of Shu, Tefnut and Nut.

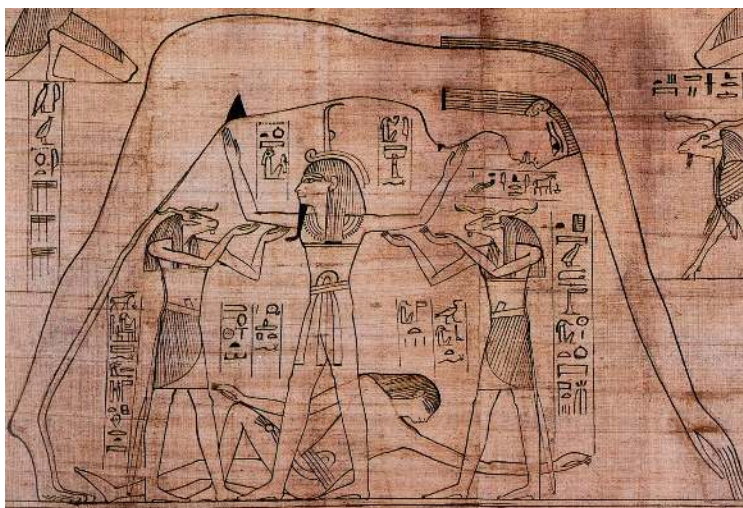


Figure 3.2.2.1: Detail from the Greenfield Papyrus (the Book of the Dead of Nesitanebtashru), depicting the air god Shu, assisted by the ram-headed Heh deities, supporting the sky goddess Nut as the earth god Keb/Geb reclines beneath. (Photographed by the British Museum; original artist unknown. Public domain. [Wikimedia](#))

Throughout the daylight hours, Nut (the Sky-goddess) dwelt over the earth, being supported by Shu, her partner. When the sun set, she floated down to earth, where she reposed upon the body of Keb/Geb, the Earth-god.

The union of Keb and Shu issued the third generation of gods, Osiris, [Horus], Set, Isis, and Nephthys. Prior to their birth, Osiris and Isis married and gave birth to their son Horus, while Set and Nephthys followed suit and produced their son Anpu/Anubis, though he isn't explicitly mentioned in this portion of the myth. Osiris is of significant importance, and Neb-er-tcher the narrator speaks his name as Ausares, or "he who is formed of the same elemental matter as Neb-er-tcher", and as such is the reincarnation of the aforementioned. Thus, the two are aligned as kindred benefactors and champions of humans. Osiris serves in a dual capacity as protector of humanity whilst he resided on earth, and protector of souls when in heaven.

Having secured the primary pantheon, the sun, now known as the Eye of Khepera (for it sees all), experiences some catastrophe which blunts its light. The catastrophic event may have been an eclipse, or simply the emergence of night. This then led the god to create another Eye, the moon, which the god gifted some of the luminance of the sun, and secured it to the earth where it ruled along with the sun. The moon was given special provinces—the production of trees, plants, and vegetative life—forever linking it with the life-giving fertility of earth.

In his final significant act of creation, Khepera crafted humans from his own body, and gifted life upon them with his own tears.

Such is the story of Creation as it is found in the Papyrus of Nes-Menu (Wallis).



Figure 3.2.2.1: The Rosetta Stone, housed in the British Museum, contains a single decree written in Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic and Demotic scripts, in addition to Ancient Greek, allowing linguists the necessary key to decipher hieroglyphics (Lockyer 13). (Public Domain; Project Gutenberg)

---

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.2.2.1: Commentary

Given the importance of agriculture as the basis of survival, the worship of sun gods is an obvious focal point. Rain rarely ever fell from the sky in the Egyptian deserts, so the successful cultivation of crops depended upon the dual factors of the Nile's annual flood and the ever present sun.

The sun which shines upon the Fertile Crescent was seen by ancient Egyptians as an all-seeing eye, depicted in their hieroglyphs as a magnificent orb often accompanied by a scarab, which was believed to roll the sun across the sky. It's also seen mounted upon Ra's head, to reinforce his ability to perceive all. The belief may have been enforced by the reflective qualities seen in animal eyes when the light of a fire was shined toward them at night. These ancients believed sight resulted from light shining *out* of the eye, rather than into it as we now understand. Lens theory helps us extrapolate that if light comes *from* the eye, and the most powerful light of all is the sun, therefore the sun is the most powerful eye of all. Hence, it must belong to the most mighty of deities, a personage worthy of respect and worship. So valuable was the relationship to the sun, that the people acknowledge it in the form of multiple gods, each persona representing a different aspect of the sun (Barber and Barber 54): **Amun (Amun-Ra)**--god of the sun and air; **Atum (Ra)**--the sun god, supreme lord of the gods, first god of the Ennead (tribunal of nine gods), creator of the universe and human beings; **Menhit (Menhyt)**--a solar deity who represented the brow of the sun god Ra, depicted as a reclining lioness; **Mnevis (Mer-Wer or Nem-Wer)**--the sacred bull of Heliopolis considered an aspect of the sun god Ra; and **Raettawy (Raet or Raet-Tawy)**--the female aspect of Ra. Likewise, protection and conveyance of the dead were equally as important and represented by a lengthy list of gods.

The moon, by its provenance to the sun, is equally worthy of worship as it shares aspects of radiance and fertility.



Figure 3.2.2.1.1: Ushabi of Neferibresaneith, Getty Villa. These funerary figures served as avatars of the dead. Representing one figure of 336, it came from the tomb of Neferibresaneith (Neferibre, son of Neith), an official, and carries an inscription with the Book of the Dead spell 6, intended to activate the figure to do agricultural work in the afterlife's "Field of Reeds." In his hands are the tools needed for labor, a hoe, a pick, and a sack of seeds. (CC BY, Photo by A. Murray 2023)

Observance and understanding of the overlapping dominions of the gods are concepts introduced in the Creation story, and we see that as gods unite and procreate, their offspring inherit their own domains, and some of the aspects of their parents. Foundational knowledge of these familial links undoubtedly helped ancient Egyptians (and other parallel cultures) track and correctly praise the

right god for the desired outcome, whether that was a bountiful grain harvest, or the safe passage of a loved one to the realm of the dead.

---

3.2.2.1: [Commentary](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

---

Biblical tradition offers two accounts of creation, contained in the first and second chapters of Genesis (1:1-2:4) and (2:5-25). In some respects the two accounts align, while in others they contradict. However, such contradictions aren't unusual for ancient cultures. In the Hesiod's *Theogony*, Eros, the personification of cosmic love, is born amongst the first elements. Later, he is seemingly demoted to the adopted son of Aphrodite, making his importance secondary to erotic lust. Lens and neurological theories offer reasonable explanations that in the oral tradition, stories taking place over centuries were often compressed, minor and sometimes major details compiled into a singular memorable event, making them more "transportable" and transmissible before the time of literacy (Barber and Barber 10, 117). Like Hesiod, the biblical scribes and editors would've had numerous sources and versions, including the *Enuma Elish*. The first account in the Bible is accredited to a sacerdotal author from Mesopotamia during the sixth century BCE, a time when many literate Israelites were imprisoned in Babylon. The narrative, which uses the honorific *Elohim* ("divine being") for God, begins similarly to the *Enuma Elish*, with a chaotic void and undifferentiated waters. However, the chief difference from the Babylonian story is the use of a single deity, God, as chief manager of creation. This also removes the chaotic, violent conflict that stemmed from the polytheistic *Enuma Elish*. The Biblical God orders the world in a series of six commands—spoken words, as seen in the Egyptian *Creation*—which clearly articulate his supreme generative powers.

After the separation and ordering of the elements, God turns to the decorative phase, establishing dry land, creating plants and animals in a thoughtful process which appears to allow for evolution science, rather than exclude it from the grand creation, and which serve as precursors to his final act, the birth of humans. Another distinctive feature of the first account is the simultaneous creation of man and woman, each mirroring "the image of God," and representing the ultimate artistic expression of His creative abilities. Biblical scholarship offers a specific interpretation for the oft-quoted phrase "in God's image," as "compatible with or consistent with God," or a being who God can have discourse with and can educate. Humans feeling frail and awed in the presence of God might find dignity in their "likeness" to Him.

In many translations of the second account, God is often referred to as Yahweh, the presumed personal name of God. However, the name of God was sacred, and it was likely that Ancient Israelites would've only written or spoken the consonants (YHWH), but not the vowels. Yahweh is an approximation, an educated guess as to the true name of God (Barber and Barber 19).

The second account's creation takes an entirely different route, setting the scene in an arid desert in need of rain. Next come the rivers that offer an ongoing cycle of water, the necessary agent for life. Then God sculpts the first human, Adam, and then the animals. Next, like Hesiod's recognition of Eros as essential for procreative love, He creates Woman from Adam's rib, Eve.

Rabbinical texts offer an explanation of the contradiction between the creation of woman as the erasure of Lillith, who is referenced as the first wife of Adam, later demonized after she left Eden.

---

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

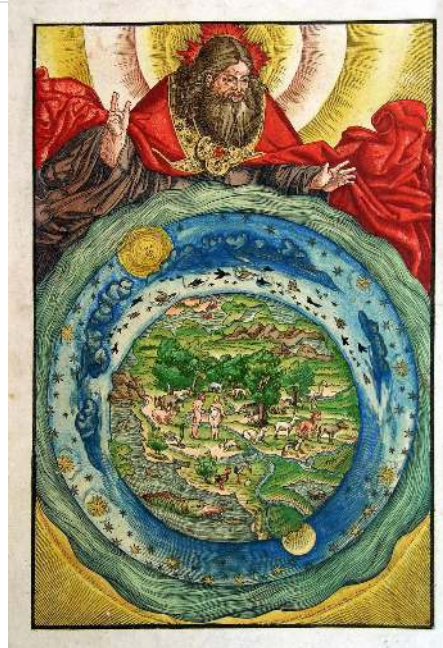


Figure 3.3.1.1: The Lutheran Creation. In this depiction, God takes the place of the archetypal Sky God and Mother Goddess, as chief architect of the earth and its two human inhabitants and their animal companions. (From The Workshop of Lucas Cranach, Public domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

#### The First Book of Moses: Called Genesis (1:1-2:3)

(The King James Version of the Bible)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light "Day," and the darkness he called "Night." And the evening and the morning were the first day.

And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so. And God called the firmament "Heaven." And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, "Let the waters under Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear," and it was so.

And God called the dry land "Earth," and the gathering together of the waters called the "Seas," and God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth," and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind, and God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the third day. And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth," and it was so. And God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them,

saying, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.” And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind,” and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and God saw that it was good.

And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God said, “Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat,” and it was so.

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

---

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3) is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

### 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

---

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord [Yahweh] God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him [a] help meet. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found [a] help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said,

"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

---

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224) is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

### 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel

One of the more famous antediluvian structures, the Tower of Babel, finds its roots in the *Etemenanki* ziggurat built to honor the god Marduk. Ziggurats were pyramidal temples fashioned like man-made mountains and intended to provide a house for the gods and elevate priests in proximity to the gods they venerated. They featured stepped design and flat roofs, and served a different intention from the pyramids constructed by the Egyptians, which commemorated deceased pharaohs, rather than living gods. Built from mud-bricks, the structures were particularly sensitive to the elements. While several footprints of these structures remain, no fully-intact ziggurats exist currently.

Constructed between the 14th and 9th centuries BCE, the great ziggurat of Babylon would later become associated with the Biblical Tower of Babel, found in Genesis. This connection is thought to have been made owing to a misinterpretation of the Akkadian *bav-il* (Gate of the Gods) for the Hebrew *bavel* (confusion).



Figure 3.4.1: Diorama of the Tower of Babel. (CC BY Public Domain on [Wikimedia](#))

In the Genesis story, the people hope to make a name for themselves to be remembered after death, and to gain access to God, and so begin to build a great tower to reach the heavens. God is angered by this hubris, feeling that if the people are allowed to reach their goal, they will then be empowered to attempt other goals and so disrupt the natural order. He therefore decrees they shall no longer speak the same language, confuses their tongues, and causes them to abandon their ziggurat as they can no longer understand each other.

3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)

---

“Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

They said to each other, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, ‘Come, let’s build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.’

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’

So the Lord scattered them over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.” (*Holy* 11:1)

---

3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by The Project Gutenberg eBook of The King James Version of the Bible.

### 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

The theme of early humanity's overweening arrogance and the divine need to temper it is a concept again explored in Plato's *Symposium*, which follows a fictional retelling of discourse between Aristophanes, the physician Eryximachus, Socrates, the host Agathon, Pausanias and Phaedrus.

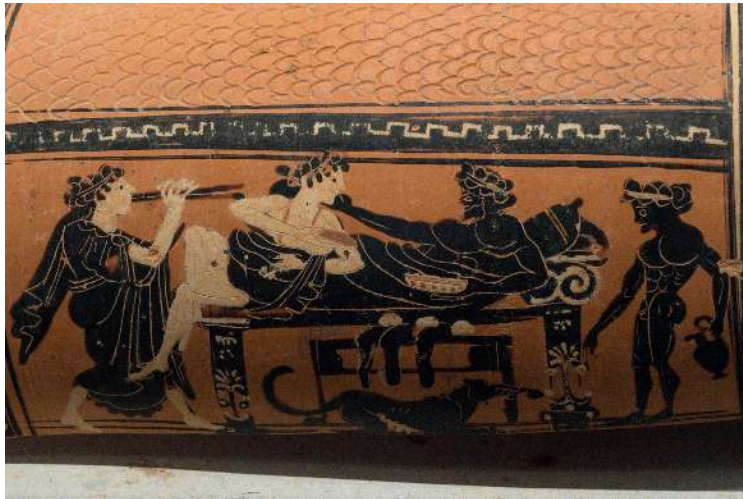


Figure 3.5.1: A Dionysian scene and representation of a banquet (or symposium), where participants recline on couches to share philosophical views while an attendant serves and a flutist offers entertainment. 6th century BC. Find from the region of Ancient Asai. Archaeological Museum of Ancient Corinth. (Photo by Zde, CC BY SA 4.0 [Wikimedia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Corinth_Museum_Antik_Korinth_Inv_166.jpg))

At a banquet honoring a tragic victory, the men discuss the nature of Love, both as a primitive force *and* a god who drove the conduct of all early humans. Essentially an etiological myth, Aristophanes' dialogue claims that mankind has never fully appreciated the nature of Love, nor shown it the praise, temples and altars it deserved. "Since," he claims, the god "is the best friend of men, the helper and healer of the ills which are the great impediment to the happiness of the race," he attempts to describe Love's power so that his audience might enlighten others.

The two sexes, male and female, were not as they are now, but originally three in number, corresponding with the sun, the earth and the moon; "there was man, woman, and the union of the two, having a name corresponding to this double nature, which had once a real existence, but is now lost, and the word 'Androgynous' is only preserved as a term of reproach."

Rather than being bi-pedal, these early versions were round, with their backs and sides forming a circle: a projection of the astral bodies from which they descended. Each "had four hands and four feet, one head with two faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely alike; also four ears, two privy members, and the remainder to correspond." They walked upright, backwards, forwards, and could also roll over in a version of a speedy cartwheel. Having grown arrogant with their circular completeness and power, these early people attempted to roll across the heavens and attack the gods. But Zeus, reluctant to destroy them for this adolescent folly, resolved to cap their ambition by separating the two halves of each. This, he believed, would "humble their pride and improve their manners;" thus, people would continue to exist, but cut into two which would diminish their strength while also increasing their numbers. "This," he reasoned, "will have the advantage of making them more profitable to us. They shall walk upright on two legs, and if they continue insolent and will not be quiet, I will split them again and they shall hop about on a single leg."

Using the ancient power of commandments, he spoke and divided each in two, "as you might divide an egg with a hair; and as he cut them one after another, he bade Apollo give the face and the half of the neck a turn in order that the man might contemplate the section of himself: he would thus learn a lesson of humility." The gift of self-reflection, was accompanied by the bidding to Apollo to patch their wounds and fashion their forms. Pulling their loose skin, "like the purses which draw in," he made a navel, "as a memorial of the primeval state."

Following the division, each part rushed to the other in an intense longing for their previous state. Their desire to again be one was so great that "they were on the point of dying from hunger and self-neglect, because they did not like to do anything apart; and when one of the halves died and the other survived, the survivor sought another mate, man or woman as we call them."

Feeling pity for them, Zeus turned their genitalia around to the front of their bodies, allowing them to seek, find and mate with their other halves: men who seek their male half, women who seek their female half, and the formerly androgynous who seek the opposite sex. The adjustments redirected the ambitions of humans away from challenging the authority of the Olympians and toward communing with their mate.

The internal drive to seek partners is not necessarily carnal, as Aristophanes explains, “but of something else which the soul of either evidently desires and cannot tell, and of which she has only a dark and doubtful presentiment.” Humans’ capacity for love and the sexual desire that accompanies it cannot be fully reasoned, for it is the work of the god of Love and vestigial memories of a more primal state of perfection (Socrates).

For an illustrative video of this story, see *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, “The Origins of Love” on YouTube.

---

3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato’s *Symposium* is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

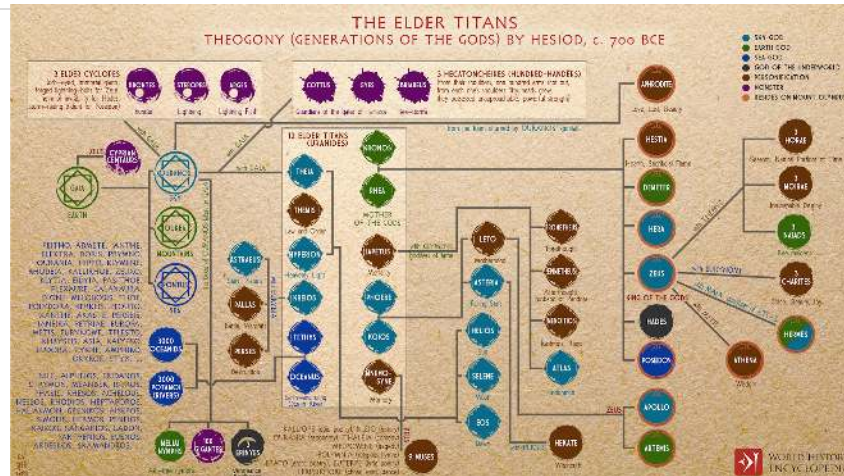


Figure 3.6.1: Family tree of the first, second and third generation of Olympians. (Simeon Netchev, CC By-NC-SA, via *World History Encyclopedia*)

Hesiod's *Theogony*, composed c. the 8th-century BCE as a didactic instructional poem, was part of a rich oral tradition which only achieved written form decades later. The poem (officially called *The Theogony*) traces the history of the world from its creation through the battle between the Olympians and the Titans (The Titanomachy) to the ascension of Zeus as the absolute ruler of all of the Olympian gods. With the rise of Zeus to supremacy and the birth of his many children, the poem ends, and does not address the continued struggles between mankind and the gods. Hesiod's primary intention with this work was to add his interpretation of the Creation to further burnish the image and traditions of the Greeks.

Much of what is known today concerning early Greek mythology comes from Hesiod's work and Homer. Collectively, their works would serve as a major influence on later Greek literature and drama, and Roman mythology, especially through the epic *Metamorphoses* by Ovid.

#### Authorship

*The Theogony* (from the Greek *theogonia*, meaning "generations of the gods") is an epic poem of 1,022 hexameter lines which describes the birth of the gods in the Greek pantheon. It is thought to have been composed c. 700 BCE (give or take a generation on either side of that date). Like many authors of the time, little is known of Hesiod's life. His father emigrated from Cyme in [Asia Minor](#) and settled in Boeotia, a small state in central [Greece](#). Assumptions that the poet was a farmer were garnered from the early verses of the *Theogony*. He may also have been a rhapsodist, a reciter of poetry, who is schooled in the technique and vocabulary of heroic songs.

Although there are some who question whether or not Hesiod actually wrote the *Theogony*, most classicists believe he did. However, parts of the work may have been added by later poets and there is a definite similarity in some aspects to earlier Mesopotamian literature. The historian Dorothea Wender believes that the *Theogony* was an earlier work than *Works and Days*, based upon the lack of polish in the lyrical style of *Theogony*. She further criticizes Hesiod for failing to address the dethroning of Kronos and the poet's relentless focus upon "colourless deities." Finding fault in his characterization of Zeus, whom she believes is too invincible, she finds there is no suspense. "Homer," she asserts, "gets more excitement out of a footrace than Hesiod does out of a full-scale war in heaven" (18). However, to Wender, the poem still has historical interest. Certainly, the *Theogony* was influential and the historian Norman Cantor in his *Antiquity* wrote that the Greeks readily adopted Homer and Hesiod's notion of the gods and Hesiod was influential on Classical Greek literature and philosophy, his Prometheus story, for example, inspiring such playwrights as Aeschylus (c. 525 - c. 456 BCE). His poetic style was often imitated, particularly in Hellenistic times and in Roman times—both the Republic and Imperial Rome—when Hesiod's works continued to be recited and set to music. His legacy even reached to the Roman empire, and the writer Ovid (43 BCE - 17 CE) would use many of the themes of the *Theogony* in his *Metamorphoses*.

3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod

---

The temptation to situate these two influential authors as adversaries plays into neurological literary theory, specifically our primitive desire to find two mighty deities, or forces, in diametrical opposition. Comparisons and contrasts are primarily useful when they elicit meaningful data or conclusions. As their approaches to the literature differ, we're gifted with views of the ancient world that are more complex and more complete.

In the introduction to her translation of the *Theogony*, Wender compared the gods of Homer to those of Hesiod. Although Homer's Olympians may not have been ethical standard bearers—they lied, cheated, and stole—they were still civilized. Homer ignored their sins without mention of any "primitive behavior." However, Hesiod made no effort to "whitewash the mythological past in terms of modern standards with one exception. The exception is Zeus, the hero of the poem, whose omniscience, power and justice are stressed at every opportunity," along with the intensity "of primitive gods and chaotic forces" that mark his dramatic style (17). Homer's epics were written for an upper-class audience while Hesiod's works were more pedestrian, accessible to a broader audience.

---

3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

---

The often-fatal feuds between the Titans and the Olympians is one of the primary themes, proving that such storms and thrums persist throughout all spheres of the universe. The primal Freudian urge to overthrow fathers, or to mate with celestial siblings, or challenge family members for dominance offers not only operatic voyeuristic appeal to audiences, but also awareness that even divine families engage in humanizing conflicts. The poet's influence was clearly autobiographical, stemming from his own family's experience. In his works, Hesiod writes of his father's inability to sustain work as a sea-going trader in Ionia, necessitating a move to Boeotia, on Greece's mainland where the poet was born into an existence of poverty and hard labor. His poetry frequently includes grievances of the working class and those who lord over them. Chief among his complaints is the shiftless deceit of his brother, Perses, whom Hesiod accuses of cheating him out of his fair share of their father's estate. Much of Hesiod's *Works and Days* is concerned with his brother's fraudulence and false character (Harris and Platzner 69).

---

3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

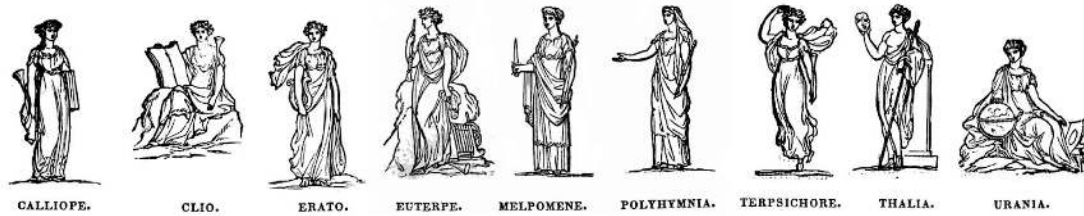


Figure 3.6.3.1: The nine muses were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory); each one held a different aspect of influence over the arts and science: Calliope—epic poetry; Clio—history; Erato—lyrical choral poetry; Euterpe—the flute; Melpomene—tragedy; Polyhymnia—mime; Terpsichore—light verse and dance; Thalia—comedy; Urania—astronomy. (Samuel Griswold Goodrich, Public domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

In the opening lines of the poem, Hesiod praises the nine Muses, who inspired him while he was tending his sheep on Mount Helicon, and taught him to sing. The Nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne [nee-MAHS-ih-nee], (memory), served as divine creative inspiration, those who granted their gifts to favorites. The Muses become his ethereal helpmates, further establishing his link to Zeus and underscoring the poet's ethos to pen such an epic. Speaking of himself in the third person, and demonstrating his often-plainspoken style, Hesiod employs the voice of the Muses to balance with his own humble origins:

And one day they taught Hesiod glorious song while he was shepherding his lambs under holy Helicon, and this word first the goddesses said to me—the Muses of Olympus, daughters of Zeus who holds the aegis:

'Shepherds of the wilderness, wretched things of shame, mere bellies, we know how to speak many false things as though they were true; but we know, when we will, to utter true things.' (II. 23-28)

However, Hesiod adds that while man knows enough to make up convincing lies, he still has the skill to speak the truth when needed. The Muses have gifted him a staff from a blooming laurel, the emblem of Apollo, patron of the Muses and of oracles, further validating his position to speak not only the truth, but to elevate the poem to a paeon to Zeus:

. . . and breathed into me a divine voice to celebrate things that shall be and things there were aforetime; and they bade me sing of the race of the blessed gods that are eternally, but ever to sing of themselves both first and last (II. 30-33).

Instructed by the Muses to speak of those who will "live forever," Hesiod pays homage to the gods with a hymn to the nine Muses who edify the poet of times past, before the days of Zeus when the earth was born out of Chaos. They speak of the rise of their father, Zeus, to the throne on Mount Olympus after his defeat of his own father, Kronos (Cronus):

. . . the goddesses sing of Zeus, the father of gods and men, as they begin and end their strain, how much he is the most excellent among the gods and supreme in power. And again, they chant the race of men and strong giants, and gladden the heart of Zeus within Olympus,—the Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus the aegis-holder (II.47-53).

Hesiod continues describing how the Muses benefit mankind by gifting selected artists—himself included—with song, in addition to celebrating both the "august race of the first-born gods" and Zeus, the father of both the gods and men. They tell him how Zeus eventually defeats Kronos and divides power among the other gods, most significantly with his brothers Poseidon and Hades. Hesiod tells of how Zeus becomes supreme,

And he was reigning in heaven, himself holding the lightning and glowing thunderbolt, when he had overcome by might his father Cronos; and he distributed fairly to the immortals their portions and declared their privileges (II. 72-74).

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

After the hymn to the Muses, Hesiod describes the birth of the first generation of gods. He invokes the Muses to gift him the ability to sweetly tell

... how at the first gods and earth came to be, and rivers, and the boundless sea with its raging swell, and the gleaming stars, and the wide heaven above, and the gods who were born of them, givers of good things, and how they divided their wealth, and how they shared their honours amongst them, and also how at the first they took many-folded Olympus (II. 109-13).

They narrate the transition of the void of Chaos into night and day, allowing for the birth of Earth (Gaia/Gaea) [JEE-ah] who springs to life spontaneously. The original “Mother” of all, Earth is the personification of the terrestrial planet and the creative energy that brings about life. Simultaneously, Eros [AIR-ohs] (Love/Desire), Tartarus [TAHR-tahr-uhs] (Underworld) are brought into existence. Without a partner, Earth births Heaven (Ouranos/Uranus) [OOR-a-noos], who is the personification of the “starry” sky, and whom she creates “equal to herself, to cover her on every side.”

Erebus (Darkness) [AIR-uh-bus], and Nyx (Night) are born from the abyss of Chaos. From Nyx would come Doom, Dreams, Discord, Blame, and Sleep.

Hesiod speaks of how Nyx also gave birth to the Destinies and the merciless Fates,

Clotho and Lachesis and Atropos, who give men at their birth both evil and good to have, and they pursue the transgressions of men and of gods: and these goddesses never cease from their dread anger until they punish the sinner with a sore penalty (II. 119-22).



Figure 3.6.4.1: The Fates were said to be the daughters of either Nyx (the Night) or of Zeus and Themis (Law and Justice). There were three Fates: Clotho (the Spinner), Lachesis (the Measurer/Apportioner), and Atropos (the Unbending/Inflexible one) (Miate). (Image by Johann Gottfried Schadow, Public Domain, [Wikimedia](#))

However, from the “marriage” of Earth and Sky comes the “crooked-scheming Kronos,” the enemy of his father. In what may have been a reflection of the socio-political struggles of the time, each of the sons of Earth and Heaven—who would become known as the Titans—are hated by their jealous father from the moment of their birth. After each child is born, Ouranos hides the babe deep inside Earth, the cave of her womb, away from the light. However, their grief-stricken mother conceives of a plan to repay his wicked crime. Enticing him to a night of love, Earth distracts Ouranos, allowing a hiding Kronos to castrate his father with a long-bladed sickle, given to him by his mother. In doing so he permanently separates Heaven from Earth.

As in the Egyptian creation story, the violent separation is necessary to spark new life. Just as certain plants only reproduce under the pressure of a forest fire, so too does the pressured separation of primordial elements make space for new gods. In Egyptian mythology, the first humans needed a place to live, so the primary gods, Shu and Tefnut gave birth to Geb (earth) and Nut (sky). The brother and sister fell in love and became inseparable. But their grandfather, Atum-Ra found their conduct unacceptable and pushed Nut (sky) away from Geb, allowing the two lovers to see each other, yet unable to ever touch. Nut’s body was pushed up and over Geb, in an arc with her feet and arms reaching protectively over her brother-spouse. Though tragic, the separation creates an environment for their children, Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus, the five primary Egyptian gods, who would go on to birth a new generation of gods. Similarly, Maori mythology (New Zealand) tells of the separation of Rangi, the Sky Father, from Papa, the Earth Mother, by their god children who “longed for freedom, for wind blowing over sharp hill tops and deep valleys, and light to warm their pale bodies.” Their child, Tane-mahuta, stands atop his mother and hefts the bulk of his Sky Father up into the heavens until the pair are forced to part, inviting day and night to exist. Like Hesiod’s version, the Sky Father is thrust deep into the

recesses of space, trailed by angry screaming winds that echo his impotence. Papa's tears, an expression of the melancholic longing for Sky Father, became the rivers and waters of the earth. Yet the myth specifies that while Tane's act of separation was forceful, it did not reflect aggression. He loved both his parents, and set about clothing his mother in the beauty of trees, wrapping her "in a cloak of green" (Reed 10).

Similarly, in the Mesopotamian *Enuma Elish*, the sons of Apsu (the manifestation of fresh water) and Tiamat (the manifestation of salt water or the sea) connive to not only separate the combined power of their parents, but to steal their father's crown and mantle of radiance, before slaying him. Their mother suffers a form of sacrifice, or sparagmos [spah-RAG-mohs] the ritualistic rending of a sacrificial victim, like Orpheus. Rather than being destroyed, like Apsu, Tiamat is torn in two, and her body becomes heaven and the earth.

As in each of these creation myths, the *Theogony* makes the argument that the permanent separation of the earth and heaven is essential for the birth of new gods and the establishment of terrestrial life.

Another parallel theme is the defeat of fathers, as Kronos outmaneuvers Ouranos and in doing so, establishes his right to rule. On one level, we see the foreshadow of Zeus' triumph over Kronos. On another level, the defeat, mutilation and replacement of Ouranos works to retire him from an active role in Greek mythology, sending him far off into the heavens as the representation of dark night sky, a fate parallel to the Maori Sky Father. We only hear of him when Rhea consults her parents for help in the cosmic war to come, but otherwise he remains a remote, emasculated and ineffectual being, perhaps emblematic of gods retired from use when ancient people found a more powerful god to worship (Harris and Platzner 80-81).

The castration of Ouranos, emblematic of sexual violence, Oedipal fulfillment, symbolic patricide and regicide, and necessary separation, results in the incongruous creation of offspring both dreadful and glorious. The dripping blood from the wound gives birth to both the **Furies**—manifestations of the violence enacted by Kronos and the wound he has suffered—and the **Giants**, agents who will ultimately serve Zeus in the later war. The severed genitals are thrown into the sea from which **Aphrodite**, the embodiment of sensual love, is born. Hesiod's description of her unusual birth—out of the death of Ouranos' phallus—focus on her province as "patron to masculine sexual pleasure;" however, her anthropological origins stem from two earlier goddesses: the Sumerian Inanna and the Babylonian Ishtar, both of whom also bear deathly aspects. As deities of both fertility and war, they represent sexual attraction and brutal violence, embodying potent forces (Harris and Platzner 76-77). To temper such female power, grafting a new goddess as the beautiful benefactor of male sexual desire further ensures the supremacy of Zeus' rule.

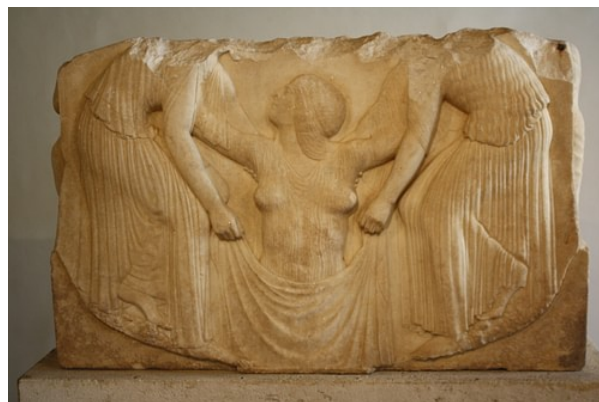


Figure 3.6.4.1: The Birth of Aphrodite. (Mark Cartwright, CC BY-NC-SA, via [World History Encyclopedia](https://www.worldhistory.org/article/14877/the-birth-of-aphrodite/))

Aside from the rise of Zeus and the battle with the Titans, much of the poem is spent on the delineation of the major and minor deities, their various duties and perviours, each with some link to Zeus to further bolster his central importance. Some of the gods will appear in subsequent myths, but others are relegated to background personages for reasons we can only speculate about. The most common theory is loss of records, but with a largely oral tradition, it's more likely that the gods became less important as trade and conquest introduced new, more potent gods from other cultures.

Marriages and births, however, occupy a fair amount of the poem, as they forecast new generations of interesting divine and semi-divine personalities. Hesiod also tells of the marriage of Thaumatas, the old sea god, and **Electra**, who gave birth to the Harpies, foul-smelling and eternally hungry, half-human and half-bird and symbols of female anger or vengeance. Hesiod then speaks of the Gorgons and **Medusa**, who was cursed by Athene for being raped by Poseidon in the goddess's temple.

... who suffered a woeful fate: she was mortal, but the two were undying and grew not old. With her lay the Dark-haired One [Poseidon] (11. 280-83).

According to her fate, Medusa who is mortal—unlike her gorgon sisters—would die at the hands of **Perseus** (a mortal son of Zeus, and another reminder of the poem’s goal to praise Zeus). Yet, as cursed as her life is, her decapitation, akin to Kronos’ mutilation, gives life to two miraculous beings: the winged horse, Pegasus, and Chrysaor who is often referred to as the horse’s “brother,”



Figure 3.6.4.1: Chrysaor is depicted as human on the pediment of the Temple of Artemis at Corfu. His missing arm may have held a golden sword. (By Dr. K., [CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via [Wikimedia](#))

... there sprang forth great Chrysaor and the horse Pegasus who is so called because he was born near the springs (*pegae*) of Ocean; and that other, because he held a golden blade (*aor*) in his hands (II. 284-88).

Continuing the theme of monster children, the poem turns to the children born to Typhaon the Terrible and Echidna—daughter of Chrysaor, and granddaughter of Medusa—who are hounds of hell, well suited to guard the entry of Hades.

... first she bare Orthus the hound of Geryones, [and] ... Cerberus who eats raw flesh, the brazen-voiced hound of Hades, fifty-headed, relentless and strong (II. 310-15).

Still in the creative phase, the Titans Ocean and Tethys [teh-THEEZ] give birth to the rivers of the Earth, including “Styx who is the chiefest of them all.” Styx’ value is many-layered, for she joins with Pallas to “bare Zelus (Emulation) and trim-ankled Nikê (Victory) ... Cratos (Strength) and Bia (Force), wonderful children.” Beyond her prodigy, she parlays her worth by siding with the Zeus and the Olympians against the first-generation gods, and in doing so earns the honor of the “great oath of the gods, and her children to live with him always.” From that point, an oath on the river Styx was considered the most sacred, the most unbreakable (II. 370, 383-403).

Hesiod then speaks of the Hydra, Chimera, and the Nemean lion that would be defeated by the hero **Hercules**, the mightiest son of Zeus. Yet, with each monster’s birth, another positive entity is born to provide cosmic balance. Including **Hekate (Hecate)** [HEH-kha-tee] daughter of Phoebe and granddaughter of the Titans, who is,

... honoured above all. ... [With] splendid gifts, to have a share of the earth and the unfruitful sea. She received honour also in starry heaven, and is honoured exceedingly by the deathless gods (II. 413-17).

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by The Project Gutenberg eBook of Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homerica.

### 3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)



Figure 3.6.5.1: Bust of Zeus, The British Museum. (CC BY SA 3.0,[Wikimedia](#))

#### Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)

Finally, Hesiod comes to the birth of the Olympians who will occupy so much of mythology. Suitably, Zeus' presence promises the most noise:

But Rhea was subject in love to Kronos and bare splendid children, Hestia, Demeter, and gold-shod Hera and strong Hades, pitiless in heart, who dwells under the earth, and the loud-crashing Earth-Shaker, and wise Zeus, father of gods and men, by whose thunder the wide earth is shaken (ll. 453-59).

However, sensing the oncoming threat, Kronos seizes each child and swallows them, except, of course, Zeus who has been stolen away by his mother to be reared in secret on the island of **Crete**. On the advice of her parents, Rhea gives Kronos a swaddled stone in place of the last baby which he greedily swallows, content he has mitigated the family tradition of patricide. Rhea, seeking to restore her offspring, engages Earth who coaxes Kronos into vomiting up the stone (the Omphalos or Navel Stone). At that moment, Zeus, now in full possession of his cosmic powers, defeats his father and liberates his older siblings "from their deathly bonds," acting as a midwife of sorts, and forever earning their loyalty. Without further question, he is appointed king of the Olympians and gifted with his iconic thunder and lightning bolt.

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

Returning to the Titans, the poet introduces other notable figures of Greek mythology including their offspring, destined to be cursed by Zeus. Each curse is memorable for its specificity, and the power over other immortals Zeus commands.

Now Iapetus took to wife the neat-ankled maid Clymene, daughter of Ocean, and went up with her into one bed. And she bare him a stout-hearted son, Atlas: also she bare very glorious Menoetius and clever Prometheus, full of various wiles, and scatter-brained Epimetheus who from the first was a mischief to men who eat bread; for it was he who first took of Zeus the woman, the maiden whom he had formed. But Menoetius was outrageous, and far-seeing Zeus struck him with a lurid thunderbolt and sent him down to Erebus because of his mad presumption and exceeding pride. And Atlas through hard constraint upholds the wide heaven with unwearying head and arms, standing at the borders of the earth before the clear-voiced Hesperides (ll. 507-525).



Figure 3.6.6.1: Hercules and Atlas. In this image, Atlas hands the Apples of Hesperides toward Herakles, who is about to trick the Titan into shouldering the Earth again. (Mark Cartwright, CC BY-NC-SA, via [World History Encyclopedia](#))

Prometheus' curse is particularly memorable for the visceral quality and the sacrifice his defiance engenders. Having stolen fire for the benefit of humanity and having tricked Zeus into accepting the lesser parts of sacrificial cattle, Prometheus endures the long-lived wrath of the mighty father of the gods.

. . . ready-witted Prometheus he bound with inextricable bonds, cruel chains, and drove a shaft through his middle, and set on him a long-winged eagle, which used to eat his immortal liver; but by night the liver grew as much again everyway as the long-winged bird devoured in the whole day (II. 526-32).

Herakles (Hercules), son of Alcmene and Zeus, would later free Prometheus from his chains. In Aeschylus' "Prometheus Bound," Zeus finally liberates the Titan after Prometheus shares foresight that Zeus will be defeated by a child he will sire upon Thetis. This advanced insight allows Zeus to see the value of retiring his rage, an act significant in his maturation as a wise and just leader. That the knowledge comes from Prometheus is significant, since his name means "forethought," a quality Zeus will come to embody.

---

3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.7: The First Woman

---

In response to the theft of fire, Zeus orders the Limping God (Hephaestus) to craft the first human woman, as a “gift” to the brother of Prometheus. In this harsh, if not blatantly misogynistic description, the young, unnamed woman is crafted, then dressed by **Athene** in silver robes,

the beautiful evil to be the price for the blessing, he brought her out, delighting in the finery which the bright-eyed daughter of a mighty father had given her, to the place where the other gods and men were. And wonder took hold of the deathless gods and mortal men when they saw that which was sheer guile, not to be withstood by men.

For from her is the race of women and female kind: of her is the deadly race and tribe of women who live amongst mortal men to their great trouble, no helpmeets in hateful poverty, but only in wealth (II. 582-612).

Later Greek mythology speaks of **Pandora**, the wife of Epimetheus, who opens Pandora's Box—which was more likely a jar—one of the many ironic “gifts” granted her by the gods who created her, for the vessel releases evil into the world. However, Pandora, by name, is not mentioned until Hesiod's later work, the *Works and Days*. In *Theogony* Hesiod writes that a woman was bad for a man because she conspires. Yet, if a man avoids marriage and the difficulties it brings, he will be miserable in his old age because there will not be anyone to care for him. Upon his death, his relatives will divide his property, similar to ravens picking over carrion. However, a married man with a *good* wife earns a balance of good and bad fortune, offering the standard struggles. But a man who chooses an abusive wife, lives his entire life in everlasting pain. Remaining mute about women who endure abusive husbands, this passage of Hesiod's text invites a number of feminist interpretations.

---

3.6.7: The First Woman is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

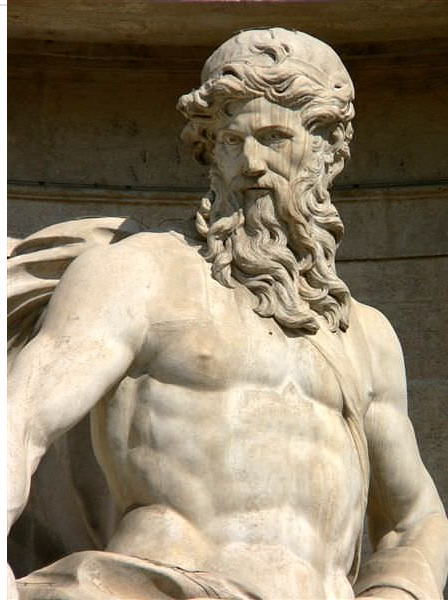


Figure 3.6.8.1: The Titan Oceanus. (Mary Harrsch, CC BY-NC-SA, via [World History Encyclopedia](#))

#### The Battle with the Titans

The battle is prefaced with a brief reminder of Ouranos' fear of his sons—the Giants Kottos, Gyes, and Briareus—whom he had bound and forced underground.

But when first their father was vexed in his heart with Obriareus and Cottus and Gyes, he bound them in cruel bonds, because he was jealous of their exceeding manhood and comeliness and great size: and he made them live beneath the wide-pathed earth he made them live beneath the wide-pathed earth (Il. 617-19).

However, Zeus, aware of the injustice and sensing an opportunity, frees them, igniting the climactic battle in the ten-year war between the Olympians who are aided by the Giants (the Titan sons of Ouranos), and the Titans (those born from Kronos alone). Zeus stirs them into action with a stirring battle speech. War growing in their hearts, the allies commence in a boulder-hurdling, fire-in-the-sky battle of seismic proportions, which only ends when the Giant brothers bury the Titans in the pits of Tartarus under three hundred boulders. The vast depth of Tartarus is vividly described in metaphor:

For a brazen anvil falling down from heaven nine nights and days would reach the earth upon the tenth: and again, a brazen anvil falling from earth nine nights and days would reach Tartarus upon the tenth (Il. 723-25).

To further secure the rebellious Titans, Zeus places a bronze gate around the pit and places the three brothers as “warders” (wardens) of the prison. Those who know Greek mythology well, though, will note parallels between the ten-year war and another ten-year war in Troy, recounted in *The Iliad*, a work that serves to close out the era of Greek mythology.

The Olympians' and Giants' mighty victory is hardly over when Earth releases another terrible offspring, a child made from her union with Tartarus, the dreadful Typhoeon, a creature of 100 snake-like heads, each belching fire and filling the air with roars like a bull and a lion, and terrible hissing, descriptions that suggest the “monster” is volcanic activity. Lens theory offers some clarity here. Volcanic eruptions are commonly previewed by earthquakes, which might feel like an earth-shaking clash of gods, followed by the four phases of the actual eruption: ash and pumice ejecta; magma ejecta and pyroclastic surges, accompanied by reports of thunder and dry lightning; magma fountaining; caldera collapse. Each phase is accompanied by a cacophony of noise—roars, echos, hisses—as the mountain explodes in a terrifying and awesome show (Barber and Barber 82-85). Hesiod's description balances the tension of awe and fear, not unlike the experience of observing a volcanic eruption:

From his shoulders grew an hundred heads of a snake, a fearful dragon, with dark, flickering tongues, and from under the brows of his eyes in his marvellous heads flashed fire, and fire burned from his heads as he glared. And there were voices in all his dreadful heads which uttered every kind of sound unspeakable; for at one time they made sounds such that the gods

understood, but at another, the noise of a bull bellowing aloud in proud ungovernable fury; and at another, the sound of a lion, relentless of heart; and at another, sounds like whelps, wonderful to hear; and again, at another, he would hiss, so that the high mountains re-echoed (II. 826-39).

Zeus swings once more into the fray, exercising his supreme Olympic power, firing his lightning and thunderbolts at Typhoeon's heads, cauterizing the necks as he cuts off the heads. Once the beast dies (collapses), Zeus buries him in Tartarus, and turns to his preferred pastime, procreating.

---

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

---

The remainder of the poem is concerned with Zeus, his various pairings and the birth of his many children. His first wife, Metis (representative of female intelligence), bares him Athene. With **Leto**, he sires the twins **Apollo** and **Artemis**, the huntress. With **Hera**, his sister, **Hebe**, **Ares**, and **Eileithuia** are born. To Hera, "without the act of love" the limping god **Hephaistos** is born. Following Zeus' broad family, the pairing and offspring of the other Olympians are listed in catalog form. Lower on the rank are the semi-divine children of gods and humans, each offered in brief introduction to set the stage for the more detailed myths to come. The prolific family list returns to the framing device of the Muses, reminding the reader that these goddesses are essential for the poetic artform:

And now farewell, you dwellers on Olympus and you islands and continents and thou briny sea within. Now sing the company of goddesses, sweet-voiced Muses of Olympus, daughter of Zeus who holds the aegis,—even those deathless one who lay with mortal men and bare children like unto gods (ll. 963-968).

After mentioning the many sons and daughters of Zeus', and the second-generation gods, Hesiod ends his poem, suggesting an afterthought, by listing the children of goddesses and mortals, reminding the reader of their rank and value in his hierarchy.

---

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

\*Spellings have been updated to American English

(ll. 1-25) From the Heliconian Muses let us begin to sing, who hold the great and holy mount of Helicon, and dance on soft feet about the deep-blue spring and the altar of the almighty son of Cronos, and, when they have washed their tender bodies in Permessus or in the Horse's Spring or Olmeius, make their fair, lovely dances upon highest Helicon and move with vigorous feet. Thence they arise and go abroad by night, veiled in thick mist, and utter their song with lovely voice, praising Zeus the aegis-holder and queenly Hera of Argos who walks on golden sandals and the daughter of Zeus the aegis-holder bright-eyed Athene, and Phoebus Apollo, and Artemis who delights in arrows, and Poseidon the earth-holder who shakes the earth, and reverend Themis and quick-glancing Aphrodite, and Hebe with the crown of gold, and fair Dione, Leto, Iapetus, and Cronos the crafty counselor, Eos and great Helius and bright Selene, Earth too, and great Oceanus, and dark Night, and the holy race of all the other deathless ones that are for ever. And one day they taught Hesiod glorious song while he was shepherding his lambs under holy Helicon, and this word first the goddesses said to me—the Muses of Olympus, daughters of Zeus who holds the aegis:

(ll. 26-28) 'Shepherds of the wilderness, wretched things of shame, mere bellies, we know how to speak many false things as though they were true; but we know, when we will, to utter true things.'

(ll. 29-35) So said the ready-voiced daughters of great Zeus, and they plucked and gave me a rod, a shoot of sturdy laurel, a marvelous thing, and breathed into me a divine voice to celebrate things that shall be and things there were aforetime; and they bade me sing of the race of the blessed gods that are eternally, but ever to sing of themselves both first and last. But why all this about oak or stone?

(ll. 36-52) Come thou, let us begin with the Muses who gladden the great spirit of their father Zeus in Olympus with their songs, telling of things that are and that shall be and that were aforetime with consenting voice. Unwearying flows the sweet sound from their lips, and the house of their father Zeus the loud-thunderer is glad at the lily-like voice of the goddesses as it spread abroad, and the peaks of snowy Olympus resound, and the homes of the immortals. And they uttering their immortal voice, celebrate in song first of all the reverend race of the gods from the beginning, those whom Earth and wide Heaven begot, and the gods sprung of these, givers of good things. Then, next, the goddesses sing of Zeus, the father of gods and men, as they begin and end their strain, how much he is the most excellent among the gods and supreme in power. And again, they chant the race of men and strong giants, and gladden the heart of Zeus within Olympus,—the Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus the aegis-holder.

(ll. 53-74) Them in Pieria did Mnemosyne (Memory), who reigns over the hills of Eleuther, bear of union with the father, the son of Cronos, a forgetting of ills and a rest from sorrow. For nine nights did wise Zeus lie with her, entering her holy bed remote from the immortals. And when a year was passed and the seasons came round as the months waned, and many days were accomplished, she bare nine daughters, all of one mind, whose hearts are set upon song and their spirit free from care, a little way from the topmost peak of snowy Olympus. There are their bright dancing-places and beautiful homes, and beside them the Graces and Himerus (Desire) live in delight. And they, uttering through their lips a lovely voice, sing the laws of all and the goodly ways of the immortals, uttering their lovely voice. Then went they to Olympus, delighting in their sweet voice, with heavenly song, and the dark earth resounded about them as they chanted, and a lovely sound rose up beneath their feet as they went to their father. And he was reigning in heaven, himself holding the lightning and glowing thunderbolt, when he had overcome by might his father Cronos; and he distributed fairly to the immortals their portions and declared their privileges.

(ll. 75-103) These things, then, the Muses sang who dwell on Olympus, nine daughters begotten by great Zeus, Cleio and Euterpe, Thaleia, Melpomene and Terpsichore, and Erato and Polyhymnia and Urania and Calliope, who is the chiefest of them all, for she attends on worshipful princes: whomsoever of heaven-nourished princes the daughters of great Zeus honor, and behold him at his birth, they pour sweet dew upon his tongue, and from his lips flow gracious words. All the people look towards him while he settles causes with true judgements: and he, speaking surely, would soon make wise end even of a great quarrel; for therefore are there princes wise in heart, because when the people are being misguided in their assembly, they set right the matter again with ease, persuading them with gentle words. And when he passes through a gathering, they greet him as a god with gentle reverence, and he is conspicuous amongst the assembled: such is the holy gift of the Muses to men. For it is through the Muses and far-shooting Apollo that there are singers and harpers upon the earth; but princes are of Zeus, and happy is he whom the Muses love: sweet flows speech from his mouth. For though a man have sorrow and grief in his newly-troubled soul and live in dread because his

heart is distressed, yet, when a singer, the servant of the Muses, chants the glorious deeds of men of old and the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus, at once he forgets his heaviness and remembers not his sorrows at all; but the gifts of the goddesses soon turn him away from these.

(ll. 104-115) Hail, children of Zeus! Grant lovely song and celebrate the holy race of the deathless gods who are for ever, those that were born of Earth and starry Heaven and gloomy Night and them that briny Sea did rear. Tell how at the first gods and earth came to be, and rivers, and the boundless sea with its raging swell, and the gleaming stars, and the wide heaven above, and the gods who were born of them, givers of good things, and how they divided their wealth, and how they shared their honors amongst them, and also how at the first they took many-folded Olympus. These things declare to me from the beginning, ye Muses who dwell in the house of Olympus, and tell me which of them first came to be.

(ll. 116-138) Verily at the first Chaos came to be, but next wide-bosomed Earth, the ever-sure foundations of all the deathless ones who hold the peaks of snowy Olympus, and dim Tartarus in the depth of the wide-pathed Earth, and Eros (Love), fairest among the deathless gods, who unnerves the limbs and overcomes the mind and wise counsels of all gods and all men within them. From Chaos came forth Erebus and black Night; but of Night were born Aether and Day, whom she conceived and bare from union in love with Erebus. And Earth first bare starry Heaven, equal to herself, to cover her on every side, and to be an ever-sure abiding-place for the blessed gods. And she brought forth long Hills, graceful haunts of the goddess-Nymphs who dwell amongst the glens of the hills. She bare also the fruitless deep with his raging swell, Pontus, without sweet union of love. But afterwards she lay with Heaven and bare deep-swirling Oceanus, Coeus and Crius and Hyperion and Iapetus, Theia and Rhea, Themis and Mnemosyne and gold-crowned Phoebe and lovely Tethys. After them was born Cronos the wily, youngest and most terrible of her children, and he hated his lusty sire.

(ll. 139-146) And again, she bare the Cyclopes, overbearing in spirit, Brontes, and Steropes and stubborn-hearted Arges, who gave Zeus the thunder and made the thunderbolt: in all else they were like the gods, but one eye only was set in the midst of their foreheads. And they were surnamed Cyclopes (Orb-eyed) because one orb'd eye was set in their foreheads. Strength and might and craft were in their works.

(ll. 147-163) And again, three other sons were born of Earth and Heaven, great and doughty beyond telling, Cottus and Briareos and Gyes, presumptuous children. From their shoulders sprang an hundred arms, not to be approached, and each had fifty heads upon his shoulders on their strong limbs, and irresistible was the stubborn strength that was in their great forms. For of all the children that were born of Earth and Heaven, these were the most terrible, and they were hated by their own father from the first.

And he used to hide them all away in a secret place of Earth so soon as each was born, and would not suffer them to come up into the light: and Heaven rejoiced in his evil doing. But vast Earth groaned within, being straitened, and she made the element of gray flint and shaped a great sickle, and told her plan to her dear sons. And she spoke, cheering them, while she was vexed in her dear heart:

(ll. 164-166) 'My children, gotten of a sinful father, if you will obey me, we should punish the vile outrage of your father; for he first thought of doing shameful things.'

(ll. 167-169) So she said; but fear seized them all, and none of them uttered a word. But great Cronos the wily took courage and answered his dear mother:

(ll. 170-172) 'Mother, I will undertake to do this deed, for I reverence not our father of evil name, for he first thought of doing shameful things.'

(ll. 173-175) So he said: and vast Earth rejoiced greatly in spirit, and set and hid him in an ambush, and put in his hands a jagged sickle, and revealed to him the whole plot.

(ll. 176-206) And Heaven came, bringing on night and longing for love, and he lay about Earth spreading himself full upon her.

Then the son from his ambush stretched forth his left hand and in his right took the great long sickle with jagged teeth, and swiftly lopped off his own father's members and cast them away to fall behind him. And not vainly did they fall from his hand; for all the bloody drops that gushed forth Earth received, and as the seasons moved round she bare the strong Erinyes and the great Giants with gleaming armor, holding long spears in their hands and the Nymphs whom they call Meliae all over the boundless earth. And so soon as he had cut off the members with flint and cast them from the land into the surging sea, they were swept away over the main a long time: and a white foam spread around them from the immortal flesh, and in it there grew a maiden. First she drew near

holy Cythera, and from there, afterwards, she came to sea-girt Cyprus, and came forth an awful and lovely goddess, and grass grew up about her beneath her shapely feet. Her gods and men call Aphrodite, and the foam-born goddess and rich-crowned Cytherea, because she grew amid the foam, and Cytherea because she reached Cythera, and Cyprogenes because she was born in billowy Cyprus, and Philommedes because sprang from the members. And with her went Eros, and comely Desire followed her at her birth at the first and as she went into the assembly of the gods. This honor she has from the beginning, and this is the portion allotted to her amongst men and undying gods,—the whisperings of maidens and smiles and deceits with sweet delight and love and graciousness.



Figure 3.6.10.1: Venus (Aphrodite) figures are denoted by several artistic markers, including nudity, sensuality, tendrils of hair and often a proximity to water. Getty Center. (CC BY, Photo by A. Murray 2024)

(Il. 207-210) But these sons whom he begot himself great Heaven used to call Titans (Strainers) in reproach, for he said that they strained and did presumptuously a fearful deed, and that vengeance for it would come afterwards.

(Il. 211-225) And Night bare hateful Doom and black Fate and Death, and she bare Sleep and the tribe of Dreams. And again the goddess murky Night, though she lay with none, bare Blame and painful Woe, and the Hesperides who guard the rich, golden apples and the trees bearing fruit beyond glorious Ocean. Also she bare the Destinies and ruthless avenging Fates, Clotho and Lachesis and Atropos, who give men at their birth both evil and good to have, and they pursue the transgressions of men and of gods: and these goddesses never cease from their dread anger until they punish the sinner with a sore penalty. Also deadly Night bare Nemesis (Indignation) to afflict mortal men, and after her, Deceit and Friendship and hateful Age and hard-hearted Strife.



Figure 3.6.10.1: The Elements, fashioned as the first Olympians, pay tribute to Friendship. Marble, The Getty Center. (CC BY, Photo by A. Murray 2024)

(ll. 226-232) But abhorred Strife bare painful Toil and Forgetfulness and Famine and tearful Sorrows, Fightings also, Battles, Murders, Manslaughters, Quarrels, Lying Words, Disputes, Lawlessness and Ruin, all of one nature, and Oath who most troubles men upon earth when anyone wilfully swears a false oath.

(ll. 233-239) And Sea begat Nereus, the eldest of his children, who is true and lies not: and men call him the Old Man because he is trusty and gentle and does not forget the laws of righteousness, but thinks just and kindly thoughts. And yet again he got great Thaumais and proud Phorcys, being mated with Earth, and fair-cheeked Ceto and Eurybia who has a heart of flint within her.

(ll. 240-264) And of Nereus and rich-haired Doris, daughter of Ocean the perfect river, were born children, passing lovely amongst goddesses, Ploto, Eucrante, Sao, and Amphitrite, and Eudora, and Thetis, Galene and Glauce, Cymothoe, Speo, Thoe and lovely Halie, and Pasithea, and Erato, and rosy-armed Eunice, and gracious Melite, and Eulimene, and Agaue, Doto, Proto, Pherusa, and Dynamene, and Nisaea, and Actaea, and Protomedea, Doris, Panopea, and comely Galatea, and lovely Hippothoe, and rosy-armed Hipponoe, and Cymodoce who with Cymatolege and Amphitrite easily calms the waves upon the misty sea and the blasts of raging winds, and Cymo, and Eione, and rich-crowned Alimede, and Glauconome, fond of laughter, and Pontoporea, Leagore, Euagore, and Laomedea, and Polynoe, and Autonoe, and Lysianassa, and Euarne, lovely of shape and without blemish of form, and Psamathe of charming figure and divine Menippe, Neso, Eupompe, Themisto, Pronoe, and Nemertes who has the nature of her deathless father. These fifty daughters sprang from blameless Nereus, skilled in excellent crafts.

(ll. 265-269) And Thaumais wedded Electra the daughter of deep-flowing Ocean, and she bare him swift Iris and the long-haired Harpies, Aello (Storm-swift) and Ocypetes (Swift-flier) who on their swift wings keep pace with the blasts of the winds and the birds; for quick as time they dart along.

(ll. 270-294) And again, Ceto bare to Phorcys the fair-cheeked Graiae, sisters gray from their birth: and both deathless gods and men who walk on earth call them Graiae, Pemphredo well-clad, and saffron-robed Enyo, and the Gorgons who dwell beyond glorious Ocean in the frontier land towards Night where are the clear-voiced Hesperides, Sthenno, and Euryale, and Medusa who suffered a woeful fate: she was mortal, but the two were undying and grew not old. With her lay the Dark-haired One in a soft meadow amid spring flowers. And when Perseus cut off her head, there sprang forth great Chrysaor and the horse Pegasus who is so called because he was born near the springs (*pegae*) of Ocean; and that other, because he held a golden blade (*aor*) in his hands. Now Pegasus flew away and left the earth, the mother of flocks, and came to the deathless gods: and he dwells in the house of Zeus and brings to wise Zeus the thunder and lightning. But Chrysaor was joined in love to Callirrhoe, the daughter of glorious Ocean, and begot three-headed Geryones. Him mighty Heracles slew in sea-girt Erythea by his shambling oxen on that day when he drove the wide-browed oxen to holy Tiryns, and had crossed the ford of Ocean and killed Orthus and Eurytion the herdsman in the dim stead out beyond glorious Ocean.

(ll. 295-305) And in a hollow cave she bare another monster, irresistible, in no wise like either to mortal men or to the undying gods, even the goddess fierce Echidna who is half a nymph with glancing eyes and fair cheeks, and half again a huge snake, great and awful, with speckled skin, eating raw flesh beneath the secret parts of the holy earth. And there she has a cave deep down under

a hollow rock far from the deathless gods and mortal men. There, then, did the gods appoint her a glorious house to dwell in: and she keeps guard in Arima beneath the earth, grim Echidna, a nymph who dies not nor grows old all her days.

(ll. 306-332) Men say that Typhaon the terrible, outrageous and lawless, was joined in love to her, the maid with glancing eyes. So she conceived and brought forth fierce offspring; first she bare Orthus the hound of Geryones, and then again she bare a second, a monster not to be overcome and that may not be described, Cerberus who eats raw flesh, the brazen-voiced hound of Hades, fifty-headed, relentless and strong. And again she bore a third, the evil-minded Hydra of Lerna, whom the goddess, white-armed Hera nourished, being angry beyond measure with the mighty Heracles. And her Heracles, the son of Zeus, of the house of Amphitryon, together with warlike Iolaus, destroyed with the un pitying sword through the plans of Athene the spoil-driver. She was the mother of Chimaera who breathed raging fire, a creature fearful, great, swift-footed and strong, who had three heads, one of a grim-eyed lion; in her hinderpart, a dragon; and in her middle, a goat, breathing forth a fearful blast of blazing fire. Her did Pegasus and noble Bellerophon slay; but Echidna was subject in love to Orthus and brought forth the deadly Sphinx which destroyed the Cadmeans, and the Nemean lion, which Hera, the good wife of Zeus, brought up and made to haunt the hills of Nemea, a plague to men. There he preyed upon the tribes of her own people and had power over Tretus of Nemea and Apesas: yet the strength of stout Heracles overcame him.

(ll. 333-336) And Ceto was joined in love to Phorcys and bare her youngest, the awful snake who guards the apples all of gold in the secret places of the dark earth at its great bounds. This is the offspring of Ceto and Phorcys.

(ll. 334-345) And Tethys bare to Ocean eddying rivers, Nilus, and Alpheus, and deep-swirling Eridanus, Strymon, and Meander, and the fair stream of Ister, and Phasis, and Rhesus, and the silver eddies of Achelous, Nessus, and Rhodius, Haliacmon, and Heptaporus, Granicus, and Aesepus, and holy Simois, and Peneus, and Hermus, and Caicus fair stream, and great Sangarius, Ladon, Parthenius, Euenus, Ardescus, and divine Scamander.

(ll. 346-370) Also she brought forth a holy company of daughters who with the lord Apollo and the Rivers have youths in their keeping—to this charge Zeus appointed them—Peitho, and Admete, and Ianthe, and Electra, and Doris, and Prymno, and Urania divine in form, Hippo, Clymene, Rhodoe, and Callirrhoe, Zeuxo and Clytie, and Idyia, and Pasithoe, Plexaura, and Galaxaura, and lovely Dione, Melobosis and Thoe and handsome Polydora, Cerceis lovely of form, and soft eyed Pluto, Perseis, Ianeira, Acaste, Xanthe, Petraea the fair, Menestho, and Europa, Metis, and Eurynome, and Telesto saffron-clad, Chryseis and Asia and charming Calypso, Eudora, and Tyche, Amphirho, and Ocyrhoe, and Styx who is the chiefest of them all. These are the eldest daughters that sprang from Ocean and Tethys; but there are many besides. For there are three thousand neat-ankled daughters of Ocean who are dispersed far and wide, and in every place alike serve the earth and the deep waters, children who are glorious among goddesses. And as many other rivers are there, babbling as they flow, sons of Ocean, whom queenly Tethys bare, but their names it is hard for a mortal man to tell, but people know those by which they severally dwell.

(ll. 371-374) And Theia was subject in love to Hyperion and bare great Helius (Sun) and clear Selene (Moon) and Eos (Dawn) who shines upon all that are on earth and upon the deathless Gods who live in the wide heaven.

(ll. 375-377) And Eurybia, bright goddess, was joined in love to Crius and bare great Astraeus, and Pallas, and Perses who also was eminent among all men in wisdom.

(ll. 378-382) And Eos bare to Astraeus the strong-hearted winds, brightening Zephyrus, and Boreas, headlong in his course, and Notus,—a goddess mating in love with a god. And after these Erigenia bare the star Eosphorus (Dawn-bringer), and the gleaming stars with which heaven is crowned.

(ll. 383-403) And Styx the daughter of Ocean was joined to Pallas and bare Zelus (Emulation) and trim-ankled Nike (Victory) in the house. Also she brought forth Cratos (Strength) and Bia (Force), wonderful children. These have no house apart from Zeus, nor any dwelling nor path except that wherein God leads them, but they dwell always with Zeus the loud-thunderer. For so did Styx the deathless daughter of Ocean plan on that day when the Olympian Lightener called all the deathless gods to great Olympus, and said that whosoever of the gods would fight with him against the Titans, he would not cast him out from his rights, but each should have the office which he had before amongst the deathless gods. And he declared that he who was without office and rights under Cronos, should be raised to both office and rights as is just. So deathless Styx came first to Olympus with her children through the wit of her dear father. And Zeus honored her, and gave her very great gifts, for her he appointed to be the great oath of the gods, and her children to live with him always. And as he promised, so he performed fully unto them all. But he himself mightily reigns and rules.

(ll. 404-452) Again, Phoebe came to the desired embrace of Coeus.

Then the goddess through the love of the god conceived and brought forth dark-gowned Leto, always mild, kind to men and to the deathless gods, mild from the beginning, gentlest in all Olympus. Also she bare Asteria of happy name, whom Perses once led to his great house to be called his dear wife. And she conceived and bare Hecate whom Zeus the son of Cronos honored above all. He gave her splendid gifts, to have a share of the earth and the unfruitful sea. She received honor also in starry heaven, and is honored exceedingly by the deathless gods. For to this day, whenever any one of men on earth offers rich sacrifices and prays for favor according to custom, he calls upon Hecate. Great honor comes full easily to him whose prayers the goddess receives favorably, and she bestows wealth upon him; for the power surely is with her. For as many as were born of Earth and Ocean amongst all these she has her due portion. The son of Cronos did her no wrong nor took anything away of all that was her portion among the former Titan gods: but she holds, as the division was at the first from the beginning, privilege both in earth, and in heaven, and in sea. Also, because she is an only child, the goddess receives not less honor, but much more still, for Zeus honors her. Whom she will she greatly aids and advances: she sits by worshipful kings in judgment, and in the assembly whom she will is distinguished among the people. And when men arm themselves for the battle that destroys men, then the goddess is at hand to give victory and grant glory readily to whom she will. Good is she also when men contend at the games, for there too the goddess is with them and profits them: and he who by might and strength gets the victory wins the rich prize easily with joy, and brings glory to his parents. And she is good to stand by horsemen, whom she will: and to those whose business is in the gray discomfortable sea, and who pray to Hecate and the loud-crashing Earth-Shaker, easily the glorious goddess gives great catch, and easily she takes it away as soon as seen, if so she will. She is good in the byre with Hermes to increase the stock. The droves of kine and wide herds of goats and flocks of fleecy sheep, if she will, she increases from a few, or makes many to be less. So, then, albeit her mother's only child, she is honored amongst all the deathless gods. And the son of Cronos made her a nurse of the young who after that day saw with their eyes the light of all-seeing Dawn. So from the beginning she is a nurse of the young, and these are her honors.

(ll. 453-491) But Rhea was subject in love to Cronos and bare splendid children, Hestia, Demeter, and gold-shod Hera and strong Hades, pitiless in heart, who dwells under the earth, and the loud-crashing Earth-Shaker, and wise Zeus, father of gods and men, by whose thunder the wide earth is shaken. These great Cronos swallowed as each came forth from the womb to his mother's knees with this intent, that no other of the proud sons of Heaven should hold the kingly office amongst the deathless gods. For he learned from Earth and starry Heaven that he was destined to be overcome by his own son, strong though he was, through the contriving of great Zeus. Therefore he kept no blind outlook, but watched and swallowed down his children: and unceasing grief seized Rhea. But when she was about to bear Zeus, the father of gods and men, then she besought her own dear parents, Earth and starry Heaven, to devise some plan with her that the birth of her dear child might be concealed, and that retribution might overtake great, crafty Cronos for his own father and also for the children whom he had swallowed down. And they readily heard and obeyed their dear daughter, and told her all that was destined to happen touching Cronos the king and his stout-hearted son. So they sent her to Lyctus, to the rich land of Crete, when she was ready to bear great Zeus, the youngest of her children. Him did vast Earth receive from Rhea in wide Crete to nourish and to bring up. Thither came Earth carrying him swiftly through the black night to Lyctus first, and took him in her arms and hid him in a remote cave beneath the secret places of the holy earth on thick-wooded Mount Aegaeum; but to the mightily ruling son of Heaven, the earlier king of the gods, she gave a great stone wrapped in swaddling clothes. Then he took it in his hands and thrust it down into his belly: wretch! he knew not in his heart that in place of the stone his son was left behind, unconquered and untroubled, and that he was soon to overcome him by force and might and drive him from his honors, himself to reign over the deathless gods.

(ll. 492-506) After that, the strength and glorious limbs of the prince increased quickly, and as the years rolled on, great Cronos the wily was beguiled by the deep suggestions of Earth, and brought up again his offspring, vanquished by the arts and might of his own son, and he vomited up first the stone which he had swallowed last. And Zeus set it fast in the wide-pathed earth at goodly Pytho under the glens of Parnassus, to be a sign thenceforth and a marvel to mortal men. And he set free from their deadly bonds the brothers of his father, sons of Heaven whom his father in his foolishness had bound. And they remembered to be grateful to him for his kindness, and gave him thunder and the glowing thunderbolt and lightening: for before that, huge Earth had hidden these. In them he trusts and rules over mortals and immortals.

(ll. 507-543) Now Iapetus took to wife the neat-ankled maid Clymene, daughter of Ocean, and went up with her into one bed. And she bare him a stout-hearted son, Atlas: also she bare very glorious Menoetius and clever Prometheus, full of various wiles, and scatter-brained Epimetheus who from the first was a mischief to men who eat bread; for it was he who first took of Zeus the

woman, the maiden whom he had formed. But Menoetius was outrageous, and far-seeing Zeus struck him with a lurid thunderbolt and sent him down to Erebus because of his mad presumption and exceeding pride. And Atlas through hard constraint upholds the wide heaven with unwearying head and arms, standing at the borders of the earth before the clear-voiced Hesperides; for this lot wise Zeus assigned to him. And ready-witted Prometheus he bound with inextricable bonds, cruel chains, and drove a shaft through his middle, and set on him a long-winged eagle, which used to eat his immortal liver; but by night the liver grew as much again everyway as the long-winged bird devoured in the whole day. That bird Heracles, the valiant son of shapely-ankled Alcmene, slew; and delivered the son of Iapetus from the cruel plague, and released him from his affliction—not without the will of Olympian Zeus who reigns on high, that the glory of Heracles the Theban-born might be yet greater than it was before over the plenteous earth. This, then, he regarded, and honored his famous son; though he was angry, he ceased from the wrath which he had before because Prometheus matched himself in wit with the almighty son of Cronos. For when the gods and mortal men had a dispute at Mecone, even then Prometheus was forward to cut up a great ox and set portions before them, trying to befool the mind of Zeus. Before the rest he set flesh and inner parts thick with fat upon the hide, covering them with an ox paunch; but for Zeus he put the white bones dressed up with cunning art and covered with shining fat. Then the father of men and of gods said to him:

(ll. 543-544) ‘Son of Iapetus, most glorious of all lords, good sir, how unfairly you have divided the portions!’

(ll. 545-547) So said Zeus whose wisdom is everlasting, rebuking him. But wily Prometheus answered him, smiling softly and not forgetting his cunning trick:

(ll. 548-558) ‘Zeus, most glorious and greatest of the eternal gods, take whichever of these portions your heart within you bids.’ So he said, thinking trickery. But Zeus, whose wisdom is everlasting, saw and failed not to perceive the trick, and in his heart he thought mischief against mortal men which also was to be fulfilled. With both hands he took up the white fat and was angry at heart, and wrath came to his spirit when he saw the white ox-bones craftily tricked out: and because of this the tribes of men upon earth burn white bones to the deathless gods upon fragrant altars. But Zeus who drives the clouds was greatly vexed and said to him:

(ll. 559-560) ‘Son of Iapetus, clever above all! So, sir, you have not yet forgotten your cunning arts!’

(ll. 561-584) So spake Zeus in anger, whose wisdom is everlasting; and from that time he was always mindful of the trick, and would not give the power of unwearying fire to the Melian race of mortal men who live on the earth. But the noble son of Iapetus outwitted him and stole the far-seen gleam of unwearying fire in a hollow fennel stalk. And Zeus who thunders on high was stung in spirit, and his dear heart was angered when he saw amongst men the far-seen ray of fire. Forthwith he made an evil thing for men as the price of fire; for the very famous Limping God formed of earth the likeness of a shy maiden as the son of Cronos willed. And the goddess bright-eyed Athene girded and clothed her with silvery raiment, and down from her head she spread with her hands a brodered veil, a wonder to see; and she, Pallas Athene, put about her head lovely garlands, flowers of new-grown herbs. Also she put upon her head a crown of gold which the very famous Limping God made himself and worked with his own hands as a favor to Zeus his father. On it was much curious work, wonderful to see; for of the many creatures which the land and sea rear up, he put most upon it, wonderful things, like living beings with voices: and great beauty shone out from it.

(ll. 585-589) But when he had made the beautiful evil to be the price for the blessing, he brought her out, delighting in the finery which the bright-eyed daughter of a mighty father had given her, to the place where the other gods and men were. And wonder took hold of the deathless gods and mortal men when they saw that which was sheer guile, not to be withstood by men.

(ll. 590-612) For from her is the race of women and female kind: of her is the deadly race and tribe of women who live amongst mortal men to their great trouble, no helpmeets in hateful poverty, but only in wealth. And as in thatched hives bees feed the drones whose nature is to do mischief—by day and throughout the day until the sun goes down the bees are busy and lay the white combs, while the drones stay at home in the covered skeps and reap the toil of others into their own bellies—even so Zeus who thunders on high made women to be an evil to mortal men, with a nature to do evil. And he gave them a second evil to be the price for the good they had: whoever avoids marriage and the sorrows that women cause, and will not wed, reaches deadly old age without anyone to tend his years, and though he at least has no lack of livelihood while he lives, yet, when he is dead, his kinsfolk divide his possessions amongst them. And as for the man who chooses the lot of marriage and takes a good wife suited to his mind, evil continually contends with good; for whoever happens to have mischievous children, lives always with unceasing grief in his spirit and heart within him; and this evil cannot be healed.

(ll. 613-616) So it is not possible to deceive or go beyond the will of Zeus; for not even the son of Iapetus, kindly Prometheus, escaped his heavy anger, but of necessity strong bands confined him, although he knew many a wile.

(ll. 617-643) But when first their father was vexed in his heart with Obriareus and Cottus and Gyes, he bound them in cruel bonds, because he was jealous of their exceeding manhood and comeliness and great size: and he made them live beneath the wide-pathed earth, where they were afflicted, being set to dwell under the ground, at the end of the earth, at its great borders, in bitter anguish for a long time and with great grief at heart. But the son of Cronos and the other deathless gods whom rich-haired Rhea bare from union with Cronos, brought them up again to the light at Earth's advising. For she herself recounted all things to the gods fully, how that with these they would gain victory and a glorious cause to vaunt themselves. For the Titan gods and as many as sprang from Cronos had long been fighting together in stubborn war with heart-grieving toil, the lordly Titans from high Othyrs, but the gods, givers of good, whom rich-haired Rhea bare in union with Cronos, from Olympus. So they, with bitter wrath, were fighting continually with one another at that time for ten full years, and the hard strife had no close or end for either side, and the issue of the war hung evenly balanced. But when he had provided those three with all things fitting, nectar and ambrosia which the gods themselves eat, and when their proud spirit revived within them all after they had fed on nectar and delicious ambrosia, then it was that the father of men and gods spoke amongst them:

(ll. 644-653) 'Hear me, bright children of Earth and Heaven, that I may say what my heart within me bids. A long while now have we, who are sprung from Cronos and the Titan gods, fought with each other every day to get victory and to prevail. But do you show your great might and unconquerable strength, and face the Titans in bitter strife; for remember our friendly kindness, and from what sufferings you are come back to the light from your cruel bondage under misty gloom through our counsels.'

(ll. 654-663) So he said. And blameless Cottus answered him again: 'Divine one, you speak that which we know well: nay, even of ourselves we know that your wisdom and understanding is exceeding, and that you became a defender of the deathless ones from chill doom. And through your devising we are come back again from the murky gloom and from our merciless bonds, enjoying what we looked not for, O lord, son of Cronos. And so now with fixed purpose and deliberate counsel we will aid your power in dreadful strife and will fight against the Titans in hard battle.'

(ll. 664-686) So he said: and the gods, givers of good things, applauded when they heard his word, and their spirit longed for war even more than before, and they all, both male and female, stirred up hated battle that day, the Titan gods, and all that were born of Cronos together with those dread, mighty ones of overwhelming strength whom Zeus brought up to the light from Erebus beneath the earth. An hundred arms sprang from the shoulders of all alike, and each had fifty heads growing upon his shoulders upon stout limbs. These, then, stood against the Titans in grim strife, holding huge rocks in their strong hands. And on the other part the Titans eagerly strengthened their ranks, and both sides at one time showed the work of their hands and their might. The boundless sea rang terribly around, and the earth crashed loudly: wide Heaven was shaken and groaned, and high Olympus reeled from its foundation under the charge of the undying gods, and a heavy quaking reached dim Tartarus and the deep sound of their feet in the fearful onset and of their hard missiles. So, then, they launched their grievous shafts upon one another, and the cry of both armies as they shouted reached to starry heaven; and they met together with a great battle-cry.

(ll. 687-712) Then Zeus no longer held back his might; but straight his heart was filled with fury and he showed forth all his strength. From Heaven and from Olympus he came forthwith, hurling his lightning: the bolts flew thick and fast from his strong hand together with thunder and lightning, whirling an awesome flame. The life-giving earth crashed around in burning, and the vast wood crackled loud with fire all about. All the land seethed, and Ocean's streams and the unfruitful sea. The hot vapor lapped round the earthborn Titans: flame unspeakable rose to the bright upper air: the flashing glare of the thunder-stone and lightning blinded their eyes for all that there were strong. Astounding heat seized Chaos: and to see with eyes and to hear the sound with ears it seemed even as if Earth and wide Heaven above came together; for such a mighty crash would have arisen if Earth were being hurled to ruin, and Heaven from on high were hurling her down; so great a crash was there while the gods were meeting together in strife. Also the winds brought rumbling earthquake and duststorm, thunder and lightning and the lurid thunderbolt, which are the shafts of great Zeus, and carried the clangor and the warcry into the midst of the two hosts. An horrible uproar of terrible strife arose: mighty deeds were shown and the battle inclined. But until then, they kept at one another and fought continually in cruel war.

(ll. 713-735) And amongst the foremost Cottus and Briareos and Gyes insatiate for war raised fierce fighting: three hundred rocks, one upon another, they launched from their strong hands and overshadowed the Titans with their missiles, and buried them beneath the wide-pathed earth, and bound them in bitter chains when they had conquered them by their strength for all their great spirit, as

far beneath the earth to Tartarus. For a brazen anvil falling down from heaven nine nights and days would reach the earth upon the tenth: and again, a brazen anvil falling from earth nine nights and days would reach Tartarus upon the tenth. Round it runs a fence of bronze, and night spreads in triple line all about it like a neck-circlet, while above grow the roots of the earth and unfruitful sea. There by the counsel of Zeus who drives the clouds the Titan gods are hidden under misty gloom, in a dank place where are the ends of the huge earth. And they may not go out; for Poseidon fixed gates of bronze upon it, and a wall runs all round it on every side. There Gyes and Cottus and great-souled Obriareus live, trusty warders of Zeus who holds the aegis.

(ll. 736-744) And there, all in their order, are the sources and ends of gloomy earth and misty Tartarus and the unfruitful sea and starry heaven, loathsome and dank, which even the gods abhor.

It is a great gulf, and if once a man were within the gates, he would not reach the floor until a whole year had reached its end, but cruel blast upon blast would carry him this way and that. And this marvel is awful even to the deathless gods.

(ll. 744-757) There stands the awful home of murky Night wrapped in dark clouds. In front of it the son of Iapetus stands immovably upholding the wide heaven upon his head and unwearying hands, where Night and Day draw near and greet one another as they pass the great threshold of bronze: and while the one is about to go down into the house, the other comes out at the door.

And the house never holds them both within; but always one is without the house passing over the earth, while the other stays at home and waits until the time for her journeying come; and the one holds all-seeing light for them on earth, but the other holds in her arms Sleep the brother of Death, even evil Night, wrapped in a vaporous cloud.

(ll. 758-766) And there the children of dark Night have their dwellings, Sleep and Death, awful gods. The glowing Sun never looks upon them with his beams, neither as he goes up into heaven, nor as he comes down from heaven. And the former of them roams peacefully over the earth and the sea's broad back and is kindly to men; but the other has a heart of iron, and his spirit within him is pitiless as bronze: whomsoever of men he has once seized he holds fast: and he is hateful even to the deathless gods.

(ll. 767-774) There, in front, stand the echoing halls of the god of the lower-world, strong Hades, and of awful Persephone. A fearful hound guards the house in front, pitiless, and he has a cruel trick. On those who go in he fawns with his tail and both his ears, but suffers them not to go out back again, but keeps watch and devours whomsoever he catches going out of the gates of strong Hades and awful Persephone.

(ll. 775-806) And there dwells the goddess loathed by the deathless gods, terrible Styx, eldest daughter of back-flowing Ocean. She lives apart from the gods in her glorious house vaulted over with great rocks and propped up to heaven all round with silver pillars. Rarely does the daughter of Thaumais, swift-footed Iris, come to her with a message over the sea's wide back.

But when strife and quarrel arise among the deathless gods, and when any of them who live in the house of Olympus lies, then Zeus sends Iris to bring in a golden jug the great oath of the gods from far away, the famous cold water which trickles down from a high and beetling rock. Far under the wide-pathed earth a branch of Oceanus flows through the dark night out of the holy stream, and a tenth part of his water is allotted to her. With nine silver-swirling streams he winds about the earth and the sea's wide back, and then falls into the main; but the tenth flows out from a rock, a sore trouble to the gods. For whoever of the deathless gods that hold the peaks of snowy Olympus pours a libation of her water is forsworn, lies breathless until a full year is completed, and never comes near to taste ambrosia and nectar, but lies spiritless and voiceless on a strewn bed: and a heavy trance overshadows him. But when he has spent a long year in his sickness, another penance and an harder follows after the first. For nine years he is cut off from the eternal gods and never joins their councils of their feasts, nine full years. But in the tenth year he comes again to join the assemblies of the deathless gods who live in the house of Olympus. Such an oath, then, did the gods appoint the eternal and primeval water of Styx to be: and it spouts through a rugged place.

(ll. 807-819) And there, all in their order, are the sources and ends of the dark earth and misty Tartarus and the unfruitful sea and starry heaven, loathsome and dank, which even the gods abhor.

And there are shining gates and an immovable threshold of bronze having unending roots and it is grown of itself. And beyond, away from all the gods, live the Titans, beyond gloomy Chaos. But the glorious allies of loud-crashing Zeus have their dwelling upon Ocean's foundations, even Cottus and Gyes; but Briareos, being goodly, the deep-roaring Earth-Shaker made his son-in-law, giving him Cymopolea his daughter to wed.

(ll. 820-868) But when Zeus had driven the Titans from heaven, huge Earth bare her youngest child Typhoeus of the love of Tartarus, by the aid of golden Aphrodite. Strength was with his hands in all that he did and the feet of the strong god were untiring. From his shoulders grew an hundred heads of a snake, a fearful dragon, with dark, flickering tongues, and from under the brows of his eyes in his marvelous heads flashed fire, and fire burned from his heads as he glared. And there were voices in all his dreadful heads which uttered every kind of sound unspeakable; for at one time they made sounds such that the gods understood, but at another, the noise of a bull bellowing aloud in proud ungovernable fury; and at another, the sound of a lion, relentless of heart; and at another, sounds like whelps, wonderful to hear; and again, at another, he would hiss, so that the high mountains re-echoed. And truly a thing past help would have happened on that day, and he would have come to reign over mortals and immortals, had not the father of men and gods been quick to perceive it. But he thundered hard and mightily: and the earth around resounded terribly and the wide heaven above, and the sea and Ocean's streams and the nether parts of the earth. Great Olympus reeled beneath the divine feet of the king as he arose and earth groaned thereat. And through the two of them heat took hold on the dark-blue sea, through the thunder and lightning, and through the fire from the monster, and the scorching winds and blazing thunderbolt. The whole earth seethed, and sky and sea: and the long waves raged along the beaches round and about, at the rush of the deathless gods: and there arose an endless shaking. Hades trembled where he rules over the dead below, and the Titans under Tartarus who live with Cronos, because of the unending clamor and the fearful strife. So when Zeus had raised up his might and seized his arms, thunder and lightning and lurid thunderbolt, he leaped from Olympus and struck him, and burned all the marvelous heads of the monster about him. But when Zeus had conquered him and lashed him with strokes, Typhoeus was hurled down, a maimed wreck, so that the huge earth groaned. And flame shot forth from the thunder-stricken lord in the dim rugged glens of the mount, when he was smitten. A great part of huge earth was scorched by the terrible vapor and melted as tin melts when heated by men's art in channeled crucibles; or as iron, which is hardest of all things, is softened by glowing fire in mountain glens and melts in the divine earth through the strength of Hephaestus. Even so, then, the earth melted in the glow of the blazing fire. And in the bitterness of his anger Zeus cast him into wide Tartarus.

(ll. 869-880) And from Typhoeus come boisterous winds which blow damply, except Notus and Boreas and clear Zephyr. These are a god-sent kind, and a great blessing to men; but the others blow fitfully upon the seas. Some rush upon the misty sea and work great havoc among men with their evil, raging blasts; for varying with the season they blow, scattering ships and destroying sailors. And men who meet these upon the sea have no help against the mischief. Others again over the boundless, flowering earth spoil the fair fields of men who dwell below, filling them with dust and cruel uproar.

(ll. 881-885) But when the blessed gods had finished their toil, and settled by force their struggle for honors with the Titans, they pressed far-seeing Olympian Zeus to reign and to rule over them, by Earth's prompting. So he divided their dignities amongst them.

(ll. 886-900) Now Zeus, king of the gods, made Metis his wife first, and she was wisest among gods and mortal men. But when she was about to bring forth the goddess bright-eyed Athene, Zeus craftily deceived her with cunning words and put her in his own belly, as Earth and starry Heaven advised. For they advised him so, to the end that no other should hold royal sway over the eternal gods in place of Zeus; for very wise children were destined to be born of her, first the maiden bright-eyed Tritogeneia, equal to her father in strength and in wise understanding; but afterwards she was to bear a son of overbearing spirit, king of gods and men. But Zeus put her into his own belly first, that the goddess might devise for him both good and evil.

(ll. 901-906) Next he married bright Themis who bare the Horae (Hours), and Eunomia (Order), Dike (Justice), and blooming Eirene (Peace), who mind the works of mortal men, and the Moerae (Fates) to whom wise Zeus gave the greatest honour, Clotho, and Lachesis, and Atropos who give mortal men evil and good to have.

(ll. 907-911) And Eurynome, the daughter of Ocean, beautiful in form, bare him three fair-cheeked Charities (Graces), Aglaea, and Euphrosyne, and lovely Thaleia, from whose eyes as they glanced flowed love that unnerves the limbs: and beautiful is their glance beneath their brows.

(ll. 912-914) Also he came to the bed of all-nourishing Demeter, and she bare white-armed Persephone whom Aidoneus carried off from her mother; but wise Zeus gave her to him.

(ll. 915-917) And again, he loved Mnemosyne with the beautiful hair: and of her the nine gold-crowned Muses were born who delight in feasts and the pleasures of song.

(ll. 918-920) And Leto was joined in love with Zeus who holds the aegis, and bare Apollo and Artemis delighting in arrows, children lovely above all the sons of Heaven.

(ll. 921-923) Lastly, he made Hera his blooming wife: and she was joined in love with the king of gods and men, and brought forth Hebe and Ares and Eileithyia.

(ll. 924-929) But Zeus himself gave birth from his own head to bright-eyed Tritogeneia, the awful, the strife-stirring, the host-leader, the unwearying, the queen, who delights in tumults and wars and battles. But Hera without union with Zeus—for she was very angry and quarreled with her mate—bare famous Hephaestus, who is skilled in crafts more than all the sons of Heaven.

(ll. 929a-929t) But Hera was very angry and quarreled with her mate. And because of this strife she bare without union with Zeus who holds the aegis a glorious son, Hephaestus, who excelled all the sons of Heaven in crafts. But Zeus lay with the fair-cheeked daughter of Ocean and Tethys apart from Hera deceiving Metis (Thought) although she was full wise. But he seized her with his hands and put her in his belly, for fear that she might bring forth something stronger than his thunderbolt: therefore did Zeus, who sits on high and dwells in the aether, swallow her down suddenly. But she straightway conceived Pallas Athene: and the father of men and gods gave her birth by way of his head on the banks of the river Triton. And she remained hidden beneath the inward parts of Zeus, even Metis, Athena's mother, worker of righteousness, who was wiser than gods and mortal men. There the goddess (Athena) received that whereby she excelled in strength all the deathless ones who dwell in Olympus, she who made the host-scaring weapon of Athena. And with it (Zeus) gave her birth, arrayed in arms of war.

(ll. 930-933) And of Amphitrite and the loud-roaring Earth-Shaker was born great, wide-ruling Triton, and he owns the depths of the sea, living with his dear mother and the lord his father in their golden house, an awful god.

(ll. 933-937) Also Cytherea bare to Ares the shield-piercer Panic and Fear, terrible gods who drive in disorder the close ranks of men in numbing war, with the help of Ares, sacker of towns: and Harmonia whom high-spirited Cadmus made his wife.

(ll. 938-939) And Maia, the daughter of Atlas, bare to Zeus glorious Hermes, the herald of the deathless gods, for she went up into his holy bed.

(ll. 940-942) And Semele, daughter of Cadmus was joined with him in love and bare him a splendid son, joyous Dionysus,—a mortal woman an immortal son. And now they both are gods.

(ll. 943-944) And Alcmena was joined in love with Zeus who drives the clouds and bare mighty Heracles.

(ll. 945-946) And Hephaestus, the famous Lamé One, made Aglaea, youngest of the Graces, his buxom wife.

(ll. 947-949) And golden-haired Dionysus made brown-haired Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, his buxom wife: and the son of Cronos made her deathless and unageing for him.

(ll. 950-955) And mighty Heracles, the valiant son of neat-ankled Alcmena, when he had finished his grievous toils, made Hebe the child of great Zeus and gold-shod Hera his shy wife in snowy Olympus. Happy he! For he has finished his great works and lives amongst the undying gods, untroubled and unageing all his days.

(ll. 956-962) And Perseis, the daughter of Ocean, bore unwearying Helios Circe and Aeetes the king. And Aeetes, the son of Helios who shows light to men, took to wife fair-cheeked Idyia, daughter of Ocean the perfect stream, by the will of the gods: and she was subject to him in love through golden Aphrodite and bare him neat-ankled Medea.

(ll. 963-968) And now farewell, you dwellers on Olympus and you islands and continents and thou briny sea within. Now sing the company of goddesses, sweet-voiced Muses of Olympus, daughter of Zeus who holds the aegis,—even those deathless ones who lay with mortal men and bare children like unto gods.

(ll. 969-974) Demeter, bright goddess, was joined in sweet love with the hero Iasion in a thrice-plowed fallow in the rich land of Crete, and bare Plutus, a kindly god who goes everywhere over land and the sea's wide back, and him who finds him and into whose hands he comes he makes rich, bestowing great wealth upon him.

(ll. 975-978) And Harmonia, the daughter of golden Aphrodite, bare to Cadmus Ino and Semele and fair-cheeked Agave and Autonoe whom long haired Aristaeus wedded, and Polydorus also in rich-crowned Thebe.

(ll. 979-983) And the daughter of Ocean, Callirrhoe was joined in the love of rich Aphrodite with stout hearted Chrysaor and bare a son who was the strongest of all men, Geryones, whom mighty Heracles killed in sea-girt Erythea for the sake of his shambling oxen.

(ll. 984-991) And Eos bare to Tithonus brazen-crested Memnon, king of the Ethiopians, and the Lord Emathion. And to Cephalus she bare a splendid son, strong Phaethon, a man like the gods, whom, when he was a young boy in the tender flower of glorious youth with childish thoughts, laughter-loving Aphrodite seized and caught up and made a keeper of her shrine by night, a divine spirit.

(ll. 993-1002) And the son of Aeson by the will of the gods led away from Aeetes the daughter of Aeetes the heaven-nurtured king, when he had finished the many grievous labors which the great king, over-bearing Pelias, that outrageous and presumptuous doer of violence, put upon him. But when the son of Aeson had finished them, he came to Iolcus after long toil bringing the coy-eyed girl with him on his swift ship, and made her his buxom wife. And she was subject to Iason, shepherd of the people, and bare a son Medeus whom Cheiron the son of Philyra brought up in the mountains. And the will of great Zeus was fulfilled.

(ll. 1003-1007) But of the daughters of Nereus, the Old man of the Sea, Psamathe the fair goddess, was loved by Aeacus through golden Aphrodite and bare Phocus. And the silver-shod goddess Thetis was subject to Peleus and brought forth lion-hearted Achilles, the destroyer of men.

(ll. 1008-1010) And Cytherea with the beautiful crown was joined in sweet love with the hero Anchises and bare Aeneas on the peaks of Ida with its many wooded glens.

(ll. 1011-1016) And Circe the daughter of Helios, Hyperion's son, loved steadfast Odysseus and bare Agrius and Latinus who was faultless and strong: also she brought forth Telegonus by the will of golden Aphrodite. And they ruled over the famous Tyrenians, very far off in a recess of the holy islands.

(ll. 1017-1018) And the bright goddess Calypso was joined to Odysseus in sweet love, and bare him Nausithous and Nausinous.

(ll. 1019-1020) These are the immortal goddesses who lay with mortal men and bare them children like unto gods.

---

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by The Project Gutenberg eBook of Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homeric.

### 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

---

In a written, multi-paragraph response, consider the character development of Zeus from his fraught entry to the world, to his many “wives,” and amorous pursuits, his offspring, and his political conquests. What characteristics mark him as a leader? What characteristics mar his ability to lead? Why would early authors, like Hesiod, craft a character who is divine but imperfect? What underlying message do Hesiod and early mythographers intend for their audience?

Use textual examples and illustrations to support your response. Use MLA in-text citation to carefully and responsibly document all quotations, paraphrases and summaries.

---

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt is shared under a [CC BY](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.8: Study Questions

---

1. Consider the placement of the Parthenon pediment upon the temple. What might this positioning, along with the story related through the sculptures, indicate about the importance of the story.
  2. Explain the meaning of *cosmology* and *cosmogony*, especially noting the difference. Which term best applies to the creation epics of Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, and the Bible? Which term best suits Hesiod's *Theogony*? Find evidence to support the answers.
  3. What commonalities exist between the creation epics of *Enuma elish*, the Egyptian creation epic, the Biblical creation, and the *Theogony*? Consider major deities and their functions as well as plot points.
  4. What role do the Muses serve in Hesiod's development of the *Theogony*? In developing your response, consider Hesiod's rustic background.
  5. Reflect on Feminist literary criticism (located in "Literary Criticism for Myths"), and assess Hesiod's tone toward the first woman (the implied Pandora). What factors may have influenced the tone of the description?
  6. Examine the overall structure of the *Theogony*. Draw a descriptive outline that reflects the major events and when the major and minor gods are introduced. What significant themes appear most commonly? What historical events might parallel the events in the epic?
- 

3.8: Study Questions is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 3.9: Bibliography

---

Barber, Elizabeth Wayland and Paul T. Barber. *When They Severed Earth From Sky: How the Human Mind Shapes Myth*. Princeton, 2005.

Budge, Sir E. A. Wallis. *Legends of the Gods: The Egyptian Texts, edited with Translations*. Project Gutenberg, Public Domain, [www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9411](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9411). Accessed 8 September 2023.

*Holy Bible: New International Version*. Zondervan, 1984.

James, Vanessa. *The Genealogy of Greek Mythology: An Illustrated Family Tree of Greek Myth from the First Gods to the Founders of Rome*. Penguin, 2003.

*King James Version of the Bible*. Project Gutenberg, Public Domain, [www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10). Accessed 30 October 2023.

Levin, Molly. "Babylon Memphis Persepolis: Eastern Context of Greek Culture." *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 3 July 2005, [bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2005/2005.07.03/](http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2005/2005.07.03/). Accessed 1 November 2023.

Lockyer, Sir Norman. *The Dawn of Astronomy: A Study of the Temple-Worship and Mythology of the Ancient Egyptians*. Cassell and Co, Ltd, 1894. Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/64849/pg64849-images.html](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/64849/pg64849-images.html). Public Domain. Accessed 2 November 2023.

Mark, Joshua J. "Enuma Elish--The Babylonian Epic of Creation--Full Text." *World History Encyclopedia*, 04 May 2018, CC BY NC SA, [www.worldhistory.org/article/225/enuma-elish---the-babylonian-epic-of-creation---fu/#citation\\_info](http://www.worldhistory.org/article/225/enuma-elish---the-babylonian-epic-of-creation---fu/#citation_info). Accessed: 5 Sep 2023.

—. "Ancient Egyptian Religion." *World History Encyclopedia*, 20 January 2016, CC BY NC SA, [www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian\\_Religion/](http://www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian_Religion/). Accessed 2 October 2023.

Metzger, Bruce M. and Michael D. Coogan, eds. *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*. Oxford UP, 1993.

Miate, Liana. "Fates." *World History Encyclopedia*, 16 Dec 2022, CC BY NC SA, [www.worldhistory.org/Fates/](http://www.worldhistory.org/Fates/). Accessed 21 Sep 2023.

Pruitt, Sarah. "How the Ancient Greeks Designed the Parthenon to Impress--And Last." *History*, 16 July 2019, [www.history.com/news/parthenon-acropolis-ancient-greece-engineering](http://www.history.com/news/parthenon-acropolis-ancient-greece-engineering). Accessed 12 October 2023.

Reed, A.W. *Maori Legends*. Reed, 1972. pp 10-13.

Smith, George. *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*. Ed. A. H. Sayce, Schribener and Sons, Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/60559/pg60559-images.html#Chapter\\_I](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/60559/pg60559-images.html#Chapter_I). Accessed 3 November 2023.

Socrates. *Symposium*. Trans. Benjamin Jowett. Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1600/pg1600-images.html](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1600/pg1600-images.html). Accessed 19 September 2023.

---

3.9: Bibliography is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 4: Separation from the Divine

- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind
- 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology
  - 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)
  - 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)
  - 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)
  - 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)
  - 4.2.5: Odysseus
  - 4.2.6: Zeus
  - 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus
  - 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin
- 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden
- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24, The King James Version of the Bible)
- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity
- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
  - 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 4.16: Bibliography

Where did our people come from? Why do we suffer while others appear to prosper? Who, or what, controls our fate? Such universal questions and others like them are addressed through the myths of early cultures, many of which contain rationale to justify our state of existence. The Babylonian creation epic explains that humans were created to assume the labor of the gods, freeing said gods to receive the subsequent worship of the humans. One version of Ancient Egypt's creation epic explains that humans were created by the joyful tears of Atum, so moved after the return of his two children, Shu and Tefnut. Atum's tears fell upon the ripe soil of earth and became the first humans (Mark "Egyptian Mythology"). The humans, in return, offered love and praise to their creator. Biblical stories explain why women suffer childbirth pains, why men must toil and why people were separated for want of a common language. Greek myths, specifically those by Hesiod, emphasize the de-evolution of humans, from an idealized golden race to the iron race, beset with petty quarrels and unscrupulous dishonesty.

Despite their miserable disposition, the Titan Prometheus [prō-MEE-thee-uhs] offers himself as a benefactor to humanity.

---

4: Separation from the Divine is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind

Where did our people come from? Why do we suffer while others appear to prosper? Who, or what, controls our fate? Such universal questions and others like them are addressed through the myths of early cultures, many of which contain rationale to justify our state of existence. The Babylonian creation epic explains that humans were created to assume the labor of the gods, freeing said gods to receive the subsequent worship of the humans. One version of Ancient Egypt's creation epic explains that humans were created by the joyful tears of Atum, so moved after the return of his two children, Shu and Tefnut. Atum's tears fell upon the ripe soil of earth and became the first humans (Mark "Egyptian Mythology"). The humans, in return, offered love and praise to their creator. Biblical stories explain why women suffer childbirth pains, why men must toil and why people were separated for want of a common language. Greek myths, specifically those by Hesiod, emphasize the de-evolution of humans, from an idealized golden race to the iron race, beset with petty quarrels and unscrupulous dishonesty.

Despite their miserable disposition, the Titan Prometheus [prō-MEE-thee-uhs] offers himself as a benefactor to humanity.

### Prometheus, Architect of Humankind

Unlike other ancient myths, Greek mythology demonstrates less interest in the creation of humans. In both the *Theogony* and his second major poem, *Works and Days*, Hesiod focuses on the stages of humankind, with no explicit magical creative moment, like seen in God's creation of Adam and Eve. While authors like Hesiod, Aeschylus and the Roman poet Ovid linger over the human experience, thoughts of birth are reserved for the gods, again drawing the theatrical spotlight to their greatness.

Throughout the works of these authors, references to the creation of mortals are predictably contradictory. However, a reliable consistency is the hand of Prometheus in the creation of people.

Similar to Zeus and Kronos, Prometheus' intellectual wit is widely referenced. The poet Ovid, a contemporary of the historical Jesus, used Hesiod as his source and wrote the most complete remaining narrative of Prometheus' divine act. Following the genesis of the earthly spheres from Chaos, the poet writes of Prometheus mixing water and primordial soil made potent with the divine seed, resulting in the first human:

A being more divine,  
Of soul exalted more, and form'd to rule  
The rest was wanting. Then he finish'd MAN!  
Or by the world's creator, power supreme,  
Form'd from an heavenly seed; or new-shap'd earth  
Late from celestial ether torn, and still  
Congenial warmth retaining, moisten'd felt,  
Prometheus' fire, and moulded took the form  
Of him all-potent. Others earth behold  
Pronely;—to man a face erect was given.  
The heavens he bade him view, and raise his eyes  
High to the stars. Thus earth of late so rude,  
So shapeless, man, till now unknown, became (Ovid 1.88-100).



Figure 4.1.1: Roman fresco painting that depicts Prometheus (seated left) fashioning the first man who will be animated by Athene, who stands to the right watching Prometheus at work. The painting comes from the arcosolium of a tomb from the Sepolcreto Ostiense (Roccia di San Paolo). (Following Hadrian, CC BY-SA 2.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

Ovid's vision venerates the act and product of Prometheus akin to biblical tones. "The Book of Genesis," which predates *Metamorphosis* by 1,300 years, may have influenced Ovid's rendering. Yet, this auspicious tone towards mankind as being supreme is in direct contrast to earlier texts, such as *Enuma elish* which describes human creation as a byproduct of Quingu's bloodletting, his penalty for leading the rebellion of Tia'mat. From Quingu's blood, "Ea created mankind/On whom he imposed the service of the gods, and set the gods free" (Tablet VI.33-34, qtd. in Mark). Humans, created to serve the gods by toiling up the earth, are subjected to difficult lives before they return to the earth in death. In contrast, Prometheus' generous and welcoming creative effort offers humans a more prominent and esteemed position in the cosmic narrative.

---

4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology

---

The **trickster archetype** occurs throughout world mythology, often appearing as an antagonist to the protagonist, and occasionally as the protagonist. Familiar characters such as Loki from Norse mythology, Coyote from Native American mythology, Maui from Polynesian and Oceanian mythologies, the Hero Twins of *Popol Vuh*, and Odysseus from Greek mythology each present the spark of energy needed to attract an audience's attention and drive the plot. Such individuals are characterized by their quick wit, superior intellect, their ability to turn an obstacle into an opportunity, and often, their comic timing which is a necessary diversion from the solemnity of the other characters. Chief amongst their character traits is a moral ambiguity which provides them with a dexterity not provided to more morally rigid protagonists, those who must uphold society with their ethically-correct behavior. Tricksters are allowed, often expected, to challenge norms and trample into either good or bad conduct, seeming to delight in the act of disruption, and only providing help or service to humanity as an accident of their mischief.

---

4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

Loki, the adopted brother of Odin, represents a marginalized personality. Not quite a god—he is the son of Farbauti, a Frost Giant, and Laufey or Nal, a beautiful, tall, needle-sharp woman—he was raised amongst the Aesir and Vanir in Asgard where he regularly disrupts the peace with his mischievous, and occasionally deadly, pranks. His ability to shapeshift adds another layer to his complexity, as a character whose loyalties are constantly morphing and impossible to discern.

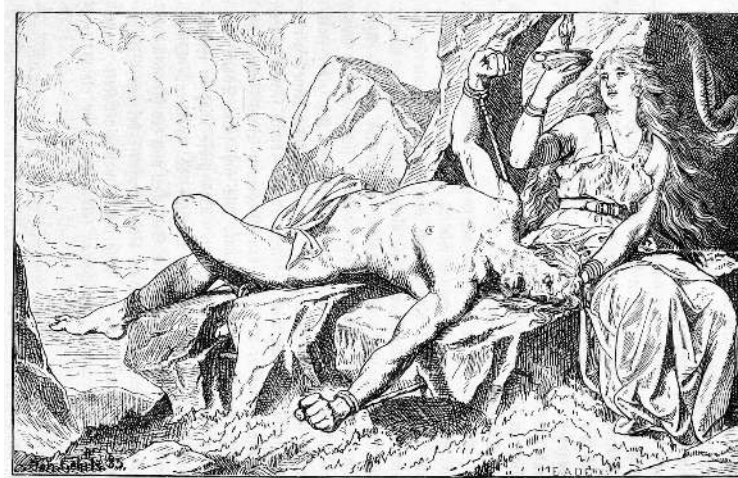


Figure 4.2.1.1: One of the more creative punishments Loki earned was to be chained to a rock—like Prometheus—while a serpent drips poison on his face. His wife, Signy, holds up a bowl to catch the poison, and when she must leave to empty it, the poison drips onto his face, causing him to shudder and the earth to shake. Thus the episode serves as an etiological explanation for earthquakes. (Johannes Gehrts, Public domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

Found primarily in Sturluson's *Prose Edda* (c. CE 1220, one of our main sources on Norse mythology), Loki's notorious chicanery spans from the theft of Sif's glorious hair, to the death of Baldr, the most beloved god in Asgard. To add further agitation to the lives of the gods and mortals, he fathers not one, but three monstrous children: the Midgard Wolf, the Midgard Serpent, and Hel, his daughter who oversees the realm of the dead. William Sayers attempts an explanation where Loki is seen as an inventive fixer who unlocks bogged-down situations with his dynamic words and actions, while another aspect of his character centers around him being the "blamer," accusing and judging people around him. His harshness could be due to him being an outsider (his parents were probably giants), while maintaining his role as part of the divine family through his sworn brother Odin (Sayers qtd. in Groeneveld). Neil Gaiman, more concisely says, "Loki makes the world more interesting but less safe. He is the father of monsters, the author of woes, the sly god" (24).

4.2.1: Loki (Norse) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

---

Whereas Loki represents the disruptive aspect of tricksters, the North American Native Coyote represents both the creative power of the universe, and in that sense, a very parental role, as well as a trickster character. Often, there are multiple coyotes, as with the Chumash myths (a tribal community from central-southern California and the Channel Islands). In this fashion, they operate as cosmic opposites, creating at once tension in addition to balance.

Unlike Loki, who seems to possess a cat-like ability to land on his feet, Coyote is just as often the butt of the jokes he commits on others in the animistic Native pantheon. In a Chumash tale, Coyote's envy of the red-headed woodpecker makes him easy prey for the sarcastic bird, who suggests Coyote could get a red crest by simply sticking a hot coal upon his head. Coyote foolishly complies, resulting in his self-inflicted wound and the mocking laughter of the woodpecker (Blackburn 231).

In several tribal traditions, however, Coyote serves as a benefactor to people, by bringing them fire from the mountain. In the Navajo tradition, Coyote orchestrates the theft of fire, using the abilities of the Bird People, including Hawk (who burns his tail with the embers, etiologically explaining his name: Red Tailed hawk). When the birds' efforts all fall short, Coyote succeeds by tying a fagot of wood to his white tail, which burns as he runs down the mountain. Though he has sacrificed his beautiful white tail which would be forever black-tipped, he has served the people, saving them from a deadly cold winter (Newcomb 138-50). In these traditions, the actions of Coyote remind the audience that like their spiritual ancestors, humans are a complex network of noble and animalistic actions.

---

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

The South Pacific demi-god Maui differs from traditional trickster archetypes by leaning toward more positive trickery, or more specifically conduct that offers more benefit to people even as it serves his needs directly. The many descriptive titles applied to him demonstrate his action's connotations: Maui the Deceiver, Maui the Evil House, Maui the Many Devices, Maui the Brave, Maui the Kind, Maui the Wise, and Maui the Eight Eyes or the Supernatural (Hart and Reed 16).

Like traditional heroes, Maui survives a miraculous birth. Upon his birth, his mother sees that he has no life. Heartbroken and loath to let her baby go, she cuts off her topknot of hair and wraps the infant's body in it before setting it upon the ocean's waves. But Maui is not dead and the topknot keeps him afloat, securing his future as one who will outwit and outmatch both humans and the elements of nature.

As a young man, Maui felt the sun raced across the sky too quickly, leaving his grandmother too little time to cook for him. To tame the sun's ambition, he conceives of a plan to slow its path. His brothers, wary from experience with Maui's malicious sense of humor, serve as reluctant henchmen, weaving flax ropes that will be used to lasso and hold the sun. While his brothers wrestle against the burning power of the mighty sun, Maui takes up his favorite weapon, the jawbone of his ancestor, using it to pummel the sun into heeding his wishes. He succeeds, slowing its arc across the sky to offer people sufficient time to attend to their duties and pleasures. The rays of the sun represent the wounds it suffered from contending with the powerful demi-god. In addition to mastering fire for mortals, Maui's intervention with celestial bodies also includes controlling the phases of the moon by holding his massive hand over the full moon, permitting just the light he desired to shine through his fingers (16-19). Locating the natural etiological rationale is uncomplicated, but greater emphasis is placed upon the value of such a potent and truculent character. Like other tricksters, he straddles several worlds: human and divine, ethical and unethical or self-serving conduct, heroic and comic. Cultural admiration for his feats may reflect the need for a strong protector deity in a land full of volcanic and seismic dangers, and later British colonization. He represents brash rule-breaking in a world where such actual behavior may have harsh, if not fatal, consequences.

---

4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

#### 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

Assessing the threats of the landscape as inspiration for tricksters offers a lens to appreciate the Hero Twins of Mayan mythology. The twins, Hunahpu [Hū-NAH-pū] and Xbalanque [she-BAL-an-kay], also have a miraculous birth and conception, for that matter. Their mother, Blood Moon, the daughter of one of the Lords of Xibalba [she-BAL-bah] (the death-dealing gods who live in the even more deadly underworld of Xibalba), comes across a tree where two heads hang, one the future father of her children (Hun Hunahpu), and the other his brother (Vucub Hunahpu). The two heads were victims of the Lords of Xibalba, having failed their tests. Hun Hunahpu spits into the hand of Blood Moon, and she becomes pregnant with the Hero Twins. The boys are born immediately in peril and must use their wits, and the Jungian knowledge from their father and uncle's failures to survive in a world that clearly wanted to kill them. Their own twin half-brothers, seen as a darker, more menacing version of the twins, offer the first challenge to their survival with their regular abuse of the younger twins. When the Hero Twins are old enough, they deceive their brothers into climbing trees, which are impossible to climb out of. Trapped, the older brothers transform into monkeys, bringing undeniable laughter to the twins and their grandmother. The efforts of the Hero Twins emphasize their ability to utilize inherited intelligence from their father and uncle to mete out justice and secure their own chances of survival. Unlike Loki or Coyote, those who receive embarrassing or deadly consequences from the Hero Twins have clearly earned it.



Figure 4.2.4.1: Mayan vase with the image of Hunahpú & Ixbalanqué, the Twin Heroes. (Image by [Xjunajpù](#), CC BY SA 3.0, Wikimedia)

4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.2.5: Odysseus

Greek mythology likewise hosts a variety of trickster characters, including the mortal Odysseus, who bears the protection of Athene as his favorite. In the *Iliad*, Odysseus is regularly referenced as “wiley old Odysseus,” or “the great tactician,” references to the audience of his value in the decade-long war. His crafty behavior extends before and after the epic, as referenced both in the *Iliad* and the other works that compose the Trojan Cycle. Odysseus is the author of the loyalty oath pledged by all suitors of Helen, those who pressed their case for marriage to her father. Seeking to avoid a massacre when a single suitor was selected to be Helen’s royal consort, Odysseus suggests each applicant swear an oath to protect and defend Helen’s husband. Assuming, correctly, that each applicant would believe himself to be the obvious choice, Odysseus watches each man take the oath. By such mechanisms, Odysseus assures that Menelaos–Helen’s ultimate husband–will have a massive army to lay siege to Troy when she is spirited away by Prince Paris.

*The Odyssey* further highlights the evolution of Odysseus’ trickster tendencies, which start as impishly opportunistic, then quickly veer into arrogantly clumsy with his blinding of the cyclops Polyphemus, son of the vengeful Poseidon. The act propels the epic into a ten-year quest of redemption, forcing Odysseus to evolve into a hero again worthy of respect. His ability to learn from his costly juvenile misdeeds and proceed in a more morally mature fashion furthers his ethos. But it is ultimately his longing for his wife, Penelope, that secures the audiences’ acceptance and approval of him.



Figure 4.2.5.1: Amongst his many exploits, Odysseus wanted to hear the song of the sirens without endangering his men. He instructed them to lash him to the mast, lest he fling himself overboard, and for his men to stopper their ears with wax to outfox the sirens’ irresistible songs. The act is both cavalier and calculated, aligning with Prometheus’ ability to measure and insure against consequences. “Ulysses and the Sirens.” (Herbert James Draper, Public Domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

4.2.5: Odysseus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.2.6: Zeus

Odysseus' cleverness is an extension of the Ancient Greek tradition of tricksters, which traces back to the first generation when Ouranos, fearful of his own progeny and their potential to usurp him, applies his cosmic power to return his children to Mother Earth's womb. However, he is outmaneuvered by Gaea and with the help of their son, Kronos the arch-deceiver, who answers his father's trickery with a castrating stroke, relegating Ouranos to impotent insignificance for failing to predict the betrayal. The act ensures Kronos' immediate survival, but also endangers his own legacy as he becomes quickly aware of the genetic disposition to dispose of and replace fathers. Learning from his own father's hesitation to act resolutely, Kronos consumes his children in a cannibalistic nightmare that is only halted when his last son, Zeus, is replaced with a stone by Rhea and her mother, Gaea. Imperfect as a trickster, Kronos falls for the deceit. Zeus is raised securely and privately away from Kronos' awareness. It's important to note that while Kronos and Zeus are aided by their mothers, neither goddess is considered a trickster, and credit for the successful deceit is largely extended to the males. Historically, cultures were shifting away from an all-powerful Earth Goddess, or Great Goddess, toward male-centric religions. The myths that survive may be records of that religious transition, granting the role of "arch-deceiver" or "trickster" to the conquering empires and their dominant religion.

Following his ascension as king of the new Olympic pantheon, Zeus is warned that a male child of his by Metis would continue the family tradition of patricide and replacement. His own deception of his father still very fresh in his mind, he acts to subvert this fate by swallowing Metis, the embodiment of female intelligence, and in this fashion commits a nearly identical act of cannibalism as his own father. Safe in the belief of his own victory over destiny, he morphs the instrument of his demise into a female child, the less-threatening gender which further ensures his own status as ruler. Again, the biased view that only males are capable of trickery determines Zeus' choices. In the later Trojan War, Athene will exhibit a high degree of intervention, or trickery, upon the Trojans to ensure the victory of her favorites. Athene, as goddess of warcraft, anoints Odysseus as her favorite throughout the *Iliad*, often appearing to him to offer insider intelligence that improves the odds in favor of the Greek forces. His tactical mind and quick actions align with her own. In *The Odyssey* she weaves her praise of his mental dexterity:

Whoever gets around you must be sharp  
and guileful as a snake; even a god  
might bow to you in ways of dissimulation.  
You! You chameleon!  
Bottomless bag of tricks! . . . Two of a kind, we are,  
contrivers, both. (Fitzgerald 13.285-94)

Her flattery is demonstrative of her patronal pride in him, for he represents the male mortal version of herself.

---

4.2.6: Zeus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

Zeus' acceptance of Athene's craftiness establishes the foundation for Hermes' introduction and acceptance to the pantheon. Born in a cave, rather than upon Olympus, Hermes demonstrates his first acts of trickery shortly after his birth, feeding both his appetite and ingenuity by hunting a tortoise and then transforming its shell into the first lyre; these acts he follows with stealing and butchering the sacred cattle of Apollo, covering his crime by reversing the tracks of the cattle. When caught, he pleads innocent by virtue of his infancy. After all, he argues, how could a baby steal, butcher and consume a cow, much less a whole herd? Finding the episode comical, Zeus dismisses the crime, offers as recompense to his older son the first lyre, and insists the two become friends. Hermes, ever mindful of his father's sovereignty, finds a place in Olympus as herald and messenger of the gods, patron of travelers and thieves (human tricksters), and conveyer of the dead to Hades. Serving the Olympians in these ways, he personifies the pathway between the worlds of the immortal, the mortal living and the dead. In this employment, his tendencies are used in socially acceptable, even beneficial ways.



Figure 4.2.7.1: Hermes, messenger of the Olympus, wearing a chlamys and winged sandals, holds a kerykeion. He is depicted in action, running while looking backward as an indication of his duplicitous nature. Tondo from an Attic black-figure kylix attributed to Oltos, dating to c. 530 BCE. (CC-BY SA 4.0 International license, via [Wikimedia](#))

It is through the line of Hermes that we link back to Odysseus, via Hermes' son, Autolycus, who is the maternal grandfather of Odysseus. Autolycus [ow-TÖL-ee-kus], whose name means "true wolf," lives up to his reputation as a thief and rogue. Born from the deceitful act of Hermes, who used his staff to lull the virgin Chioné to sleep before preying upon her, Autolycus inherits the genetic code of thievery and manipulation from his father:

"But Hermes brooks delay not: with his rod,  
 "Compelling sleep, he strokes the virgin's face;  
 "Beneath the potent touch she sinks, and yields  
 "Without resistance to his amorous force.  
 . . . .  
 "When its full time the womb matur'd had seen,

“Autolycus was born; the crafty seed  
“Of the wing'd-footed god; acute of thought  
“To every shade of theft; from his sire's art  
“Degenerate nought; white he was wont to make  
“Appear as black; and black from white produce. (Ovid 147-48)

With the ability and desire to make black appear as white, and white appear as black, the audience knows the mind of Autolycus: a man who derives great pleasure from manipulating others. His infamous exploits included cattle theft, and like his father who stole from his half-brother, Autolycus steals from a neighbor, and renders the cattle invisible via further trickery. Yet his acts had none of the charisma, nor the beneficial side effects of his father's deeds. Thus when he attempts the same deceit upon a more cunning opponent, Sisyphus, he finds himself outmatched. Sisyphus is able to reclaim his cattle due to an identifying mark placed upon their hooves. Not content with the return of his cattle, several authors, including Ovid, Plutarch and Euripides, show Sisyphus avenging himself upon Autolycus' virgin daughter, Anticleia, raping her on the eve of her wedding to Laertes. Thus, Sisyphus, not Laertes, becomes the biological father of Odysseus, an issue Odysseus is taunted with in the *Odyssey*. Sisyphus, for all his machinations, inevitably offends the gods and is doomed to an eternity of pushing a boulder up a hill, an effort which is only rewarded by the boulder rolling downhill again. The meaning behind his fate has become a widely used reference for a painful but futile act: a Sisyphean effort. Unlike Sisyphus, Odysseus remains in the favor of the gods by focusing his trickery—save for Polyphemus—upon mortals, and paying homage to the gods through sacrifice, and in return receives the patronage of Athene and protection of Zeus.

---

4.2.7: [Hermes and Autolycus](#) is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

Zeus extends his benevolence to mortals who not only honor him with their sacrifice, but who also observe and abide by the Olympian rules. While we see evidence of mortals deceiving other mortals, and gods deceiving other gods, there is sparse, if any, evidence of gods deceiving mortals. However, his intolerance of fellow immortals deceiving him is notorious. Evidence of his rage appears in the *Iliad* when Hera beguiles Zeus into an amorous night to distract him from Athene's intervention in the Trojan War. Zeus rages against her, threatening to punish her as he had before: "Do you not remember that time you hung from high and on your feet I slung two anvils, and about your hands drove a golden chain, unbreakable?" (Homer *Iliad* 15.4). So great was his rage that none of the other Olympians could release her from this punishment. Hence, when Prometheus violates the sacred mandate of Olympian order, he stokes the prodigious fury of Zeus.

Building upon Hesiod's version, the poet Aeschylus offers a much more psychologically evolved version of the Titan's motives, found in the *Prometheus Bound*, the only surviving full text of the three plays in his Promethean cycle. The other two plays, the *Prometheus Unbound* and the *Prometheus the Fire-Carrier*, only exist in fragments and through references from subsequent authors. In the *Prometheus Bound*, the survival of humans is deeply personal to Prometheus, and when Zeus threatens to exterminate the entire race, Prometheus enacts his plan which earns him both the title of trickster and the enmity of Zeus. He slaughters a bull, separating the better parts, the meat and intestines into a pile covered with the hide and topped with the stomach, widely considered the worst part. In another pile, he heaps the bones and the glistening fat, making that pile appear more appealing. When he invites Zeus to select an offering—a symbolic choice that will last for eternity—the supreme god is duped into selecting the lesser pile. While Hesiod insists Zeus was not tricked, but a cooperative participant in the spectacle, Aeschylus emphasizes the philanthropic desire to bless mankind as Prometheus' primary motivation. Thus, the Titan is elevated as a savior and Zeus is positioned as the villain, who then denies humans the necessary fire to cook the meat they have earned.



Figure 4.2.8.1: "The Theft of Fire," fresco by Christian Griepenkerl in Oldenburg. The representation of Prometheus emphasizes his deceit as a dark shadowy character who creeps toward the sacred flame, held by the sleeping figure of Zeus, whose arm rests possessively around the flame and Ganymede. (Public Domain, [Wikimedia](#))

But Prometheus, unflustered by Zeus' growing ire, steals fire in a fennel stalk and gifts it to humans. Zeus, not only defied and defrauded, experiences a crisis of leadership. While his power is indomitable, it isn't infallible to deceit. In order to maintain a sense of control, he must punish the insurgent in a show that matches the offense. Being lashed to a rock where his liver is eaten by Zeus' eagle every day, Prometheus represents the sacrificial champion, promoting him far above archetypal tricksters.



Figure 4.2.8.1: Prometheus Vase by Victor Etienne Simyan (1826–1886); decoration by Silas Rice (1821–1873). Philadelphia Museum of Art. (CC SA Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Despite the cost, humans benefited greatly from the gift of fire with the ability to light their hearths and to cook meat for consumption and sustenance, thereby securing their survival.

While humans thrive, the seemingly endless stalemate between Zeus and Prometheus bears out for eons. The impasse is finally broken when Prometheus (the embodiment of forethought) reveals a prophecy that can doom or save Zeus. A male child conceived by Zeus and Thetis, daughter of the Titan Ocean, would cause his downfall. With this foresight, Zeus declines his lustful inclinations, a first for him, and weds Thetis to the mortal king Peleus. Their only child will be Achilles, the greatest fighter of his age and ultimate victor in Homer's *Iliad*. By offering Zeus this piece of intelligence, Prometheus extends not only a peaceful means of ending their dispute, but also an opportunity for Zeus to maintain his supremacy without losing face. However, the more significant gain comes after time with the maturity Zeus gains, transitioning from an oversexed despot to a wiser and more reasonable arbiter of justice, one who can balance the temperaments of his siblings and the many children of Olympus.

---

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion is shared under a CC BY-NC-SA license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

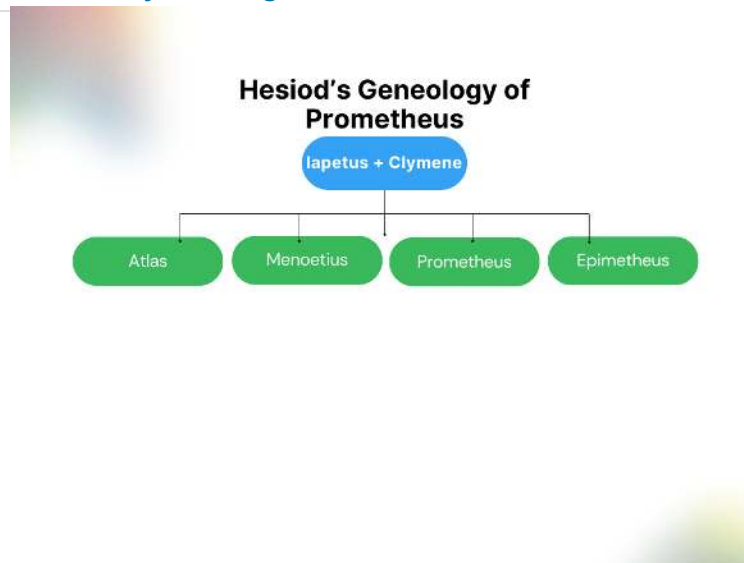


Figure 4.3.1: Hesiod's version of Prometheus' family. (Image by A. Murray, 2024. CC BY)

Hesiod's *Works and Days* cites Prometheus' mother as Clymene [Klee-MAH-nee], a daughter of the Titan Ocean, known for her prophetic abilities. His father Iapetus [ee-AP-ah-toos] was brother to Kronos, and considered an older Titan. According to Hesiod, his brother Atlas was also punished by Zeus for leading the rebellion against the Olympians in the Titanomachy. Atlas was condemned to hold up the vault of Heaven, though other references in mythology and art show Atlas shouldering Earth; his surname, Telamon, means "to suffer" or "to bear." Menoetius, whose name (*menos*) means "might," or "passion," or "force," and (*oitos/etius*) "ill-fated" or "doomed," may have been the embodiment of rashness and violent rage. He too was punished by Zeus, who struck him with his thunderbolt and imprisoned him in Tartarus, "because of his mad presumption and exceeding pride," (Hesiod *Theogony*) and for siding with Atlas during the Titanomachy. The two brothers who sided with Zeus and the Olympians, Prometheus (forethought) and Epimetheus (afterthought) are differentiated by their motives; whereas Prometheus rebels out of a sense of justice and protectiveness for humanity, Epimetheus acts capriciously and foolishly, accepting the "gift" of Pandora on behalf of mankind. In doing so, he disregards Prometheus' fateful warning about gifts from the gods.

Unlike Hesiod, Aeschylus sites Prometheus' mother as Themis, a prophetic goddess of divine law and order. This genetic lineage brings his rebellion into sharper focus, as it refutes the edicts of Zeus, while calling for greater justice for humans. Aeschylus's aim, however, may have been far more nuanced if we consider Themis's affiliation with Gaea (Earth), further connecting Prometheus to Earth's inherent powers of prophecy. As an agent of intelligent prophecy, Prometheus finds himself on both sides of Zeus' ascension of power: "Although he had used his intelligence to help Zeus overthrow the Titans, in *Prometheus Bound* he must use it to maintain universal absolutes of justice and freedom, principles that Zeus' despotism threaten to obliterate" (Harris and Platzner 122).

4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind

Having gained the gift of prophecy from his Titan mother, Clymene [Klee-MAH-nee], an Oceanide Titan (Aeschylus's version names his mother as Themis), he represents celestial intelligence and is posted in diametrical opposition to Zeus, who represents celestial strength. Aeschylus's interpretation of their enmity poses it as the entry to Zeus' necessary evolution from a warrior-general who seized power by defeating his father's generation, and maintained it by swallowing the female aspects of intelligence (another seizing of power), into a fair-minded leader who can reconcile the divided celestial powers into one principled being without use of force.

In the *Prometheus Bound*, the first of the three plays in the cycle, Zeus appears as a ruler of unchecked and unschooled power. Perhaps made more volatile for his lack of true omniscience, Zeus sees Prometheus as a rebellious threat to his autocracy. Zeus is a traditional lawmaker, and though audiences may note that he rarely applies the codes to his own moral conduct, he is still the rightful ruler and in that role must present unquestioned authority. Prometheus' theft of fire is therefore construed as a direct assault against his sovereignty, one that cannot be brooked. Greek audiences were acutely attuned to the importance of social cohesion in consideration of the fragility of empires and the conquests that consistently changed the shape of their world. The breach also brings to light Zeus' faults as a divine ruler: "this ethically infantile Zeus is neither omnipotent (all-powerful) nor omniscient (all-knowing)," making him subject to tragic miscalculation (Harris and Platzner 119).

In taking up the defense of humanity against Zeus' early rule, Prometheus not only ensures their continuance as a species, but also offers other gifts, enlightening them with the craftwork of civilization. His benevolent efforts included the alphabet and critical thinking, the tools that awakened their burgeoning minds and improved their governance over the environment. With such influence, humans rose to a status far above their previous state, bringing them closer, in some ways, to the Olympians they worshiped. Though still limited by their mortality, the gifts offered them the ability to build citadels, temples, and establish regimes, essentially the groundwork for human domination over the earth. His last gift, philosophical hope, may be the most valuable as it ensures humans will never surrender to despair, but seek to improve their circumstances and to increase their knowledge of the earth, heavens and the divine. However, in serving humans so well, Prometheus further divides them from the divinity of Olympus.

The irony of his gifts' result is doubled by the meaning behind his own name: forethought.

Aeschylus's Prometheus cycle (c.479-424 B.C.E) comes several hundred years after Hesiod's *Works and Days* (c.700 B.C.E), a poem which positions Prometheus as a powerful rebel to Zeus' steady rule. Prometheus' disruption of the social order mirrors the Ancient Greek vacillating attitude toward individualistic behavior. Though they valued individuals, conduct that separated one from the greater social structure, even if it was done for ethically just reasons, was viewed as a threat to the social hierarchy. Individual dissenters, nonconformists, and mavericks "can collide destructively with legitimate authority, damaging both themselves and the state" (Harris and Platzner 121). Hesiod's interpretation of Prometheus' actions emphasizes this social law. Describing his character as "shifty," blaming his theft of fire as the origins of human's toil, Hesiod's condemnation of Prometheus serves to justify Zeus' extensive punishment. In addition to surviving the daily trial of having his liver eaten by Zeus' eagle, Prometheus must watch helplessly as humans are subjected to a much deeper and more lasting punishment, the release of all evils and plagues upon mankind.

---

4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

Reflecting upon the *Theogony*'s nameless woman who alone carries blame for the misery of mankind, audiences are reminded of the text's condemning tone toward mortal women. Describing the unnamed woman as "an evil thing for men," it lifts responsibility for the evils of the world from men, placing them firmly upon the head of womankind. In this line of reasoning, Christian and Ancient Greek texts synchronize, citing the curiosity, or weakness, of the first woman as the cause of mankind's fall from grace.

In *Works and Days* the vilification of Pandora, and by extension, womankind, persists. Meaning "many gifts" (*pan*=many or all) and (*dora*=gift), Pandora represents Zeus' darkly ironic "gift" to Prometheus' progeny. Unlike Eve, who was created to be a helpmate and partner to Adam, Pandora was crafted as an early Trojan Horse, a weapon to humble the burgeoning race of Man. At Zeus' commandment, his most inventive children, Hephaestus, Athene and Hermes, conceive of the counterbalance to Prometheus' gift of fire: a curse for mankind. Hephaestus mixes water and earth into a primordial clay to mold the first woman with a "lovely maiden-shape, like to the immortal goddesses in face." Athene is instructed to teach her the necessary domestic arts, while Aphrodite endows her the uncanny combination of grace and remorseless longing and sorrows. Hermes, the trickster, is told to give her a "shameless mind and a deceitful nature," (Hesiod II. 60-68), which Stanley Lombardo translates as "a bitchy mind and a cheating heart" (qtd. in Harris and Platzner 111). With such characteristics "gifted" by the gods, the overt misogyny is undeniable. Zeus' revenge to modern readers appears bitter and vitriolic, perhaps referential to his own excessive sexual conquests; while *he* is able to deftly manage his many relations with goddesses, mortal men are really and truly screwed.

Once her internal qualities are sorted, the gods style her with clothes, a crown of flowers and golden necklaces from the goddess of persuasion, but as a strident reminder, Hesiod returns to Hermes's gifts, specifically the ability to lie and deceive with ease of tongue (Hesiod II. 69-82). The final gift is a jar, not a box which was a 19th century inversion. Ancient Greeks used large earthenware jars as storage vessels, and within this jar she holds a dowry consisting of all the pains of the world. Some versions of the myth state the jar contained the blessings of humankind, and many scholars believe Hesiod wrote his version of the myth based on earlier versions, and in his interpretation, he changed the jar's contents to the woes of mankind. In either interpretation, this first woman possesses the womb-jar through which she will give birth to the sufferings of mankind.



Figure 4.5.1: Pandora receives the gifts of the gods from Athene, while Ares looks pensively over his shoulder in anticipation of conflict between the sexes. The British Museum, London. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, via [The Trustees of the British Museum](https://www.britishmuseum.org/))

While Prometheus is gifted with foresight, a power he uses to warn his brother not to accept any gift from Zeus, his brother Epimetheus [epih-MEE-thee-uhs], is fated to ignore the warning, for his name means "after-thought" or "hindsight." He represents the impulsive blindness of one initially smitten with the beguiling offer of a divine benefaction, unable or unwilling to see the cost. Yet, Epimetheus's folly isn't the focus of Hesiod's lesson. As a Titan, his character is fixed and unblemished as the basic manifestation of hindsight. Pandora, however, is the representative of current and future sorrows and the legacy of blamed women who will follow, like Helen and Eve. The prototype may have been influenced by an earlier goddess called *Bios*, "Giver of All," who held the ability to give and take away life. By Hesiod's time, however, Zeus had supplanted all versions of primordial goddesses, as he does in *Works and Days*, assuming the procreative powers of *Bios* by refashioning her as Pandora. This inversion

of creative powers addresses both the etiological explanation for the separation between gods and man, and the existence of pain and misery, but it also extends the feminist and historical explanation for the subversion of potent goddesses in favor of the patriarchy.



Figure 4.5.1: The Birth of Pandora. Epimetheus, with a mallet in his right hand, receives her as she rises from the earth. Eros hovers above to ensure the union. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK. (CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via [Wikimedia](#))

Hesiod essentially argues that in ordering the creation of the “lovely evil” Zeus provides a cosmic balance to the advantage humans gained from Prometheus' enlightenment. Pandora, dressed in attractive packaging is analogous to the lesser sacrifice richly dressed to trick Zeus at Mekone. For all the evils the jar released, though, Pandora is credited with closing the lid while hope remained inside, leaving humans with the most essential gift, the ability to remain resilient in the face of disease, violent destruction and death.

---

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

The early Biblical authors were quite familiar with the myths of the Ancient Greeks; thus the parallels between Pandora and Eve are quite natural. Like the Greeks, Biblical authors also blamed the first woman for the loss of the idyllic Eden and the downfall of humanity, or the Golden Age of Man in the Greek version. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* refers to the loss of Eden as "the Fortunate Fall," inferring that the separation from Paradise and God's grace, though tragic, was necessary to force humans out of adolescence and into full adulthood. The Bible's version, however, lacks this philosophical statement, though the etiological insights are made plain: God's three curses account for the acrimonious relationship between serpents and humans, the pains of childbirth, and men's life of toil, not to mention the first marital spat.

The marital discord stems from the failure of the first woman to abide by God's commandment: *eat what you like, but not from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. However, like innocent and naive children, Adam and his wife aren't told *why* they must not eat, only that they must obey. Milton emphasizes the importance of Free Will in their choice to disobey God, but the biblical text only offers the talking serpent, another parallel to primordial and Greek traditions which associate serpents with the Great Goddess and Gaea. The serpent finds her alone and tempts her to eat from the fruit, (which wasn't identified as an apple, since apples weren't native to the region where the biblical texts were written) claiming it would make her wise like God. Desirous of such knowledge—who wouldn't be?—she falls for this slick sales technique and bites. Finding the fruit of knowledge delicious, not at all deadly, she gives it to Adam who eats without question or thought. Despite his willing participation, the weight of the transgression has historically fallen upon the woman, because, like the Greeks, the biblical authors believed women were not capable of reigning in their sexual charms and guile no matter how well-founded, innocent or ignorant their intentions. This social tenant removes culpability from Adam's participation, just as the Greek version does with Epimetheus, leaving the woman to bear the complete weight of Original Sin.

The initial impact of the sin appears in the next line, "And the eyes of them both were opened," inferring that they experienced a sexual awakening, one that comes with full knowledge of the divine. Like the opening of Pandora's jar, the knowledge they receive encompasses *all* the good and evil of the universe and the emotional burden of instantaneous maturity it forces upon them. And like Zeus, God cannot brook the rebellion of his divine law so early into his reign, and must make an example of the recalcitrant pair, providing a referential lesson for subsequent generations of humans.



Figure 4.6.1: "Eve" marble sculpture by Rodan. In this demure, self-aware pose, Eve is depicted as a child-like young woman, hiding her shame and her sudden awareness of her naked vulnerability. National Museum of Art, Washington D.C. (CC BY-SA 4.0 International, [Wikimedia](#))

Until the Fall, the first woman is unnamed. Like Pandora, who is unnamed in the *Theogony*, she only earns a name after the transgression, after the pair have cognition of their loss and their punishment, only then does Adam name her Eve, “mother of all.” Her prior nameless existence further aligns her with Pandora, who was programmed by the gods to be morally bereft, a character of no voice, no free will, no true autonomy, but instead only a vessel for Zeus' revenge against Prometheus' largesse. Though Eve speaks and acts seemingly of her own volition, she later argues that she was seduced by the serpent's words, and thereby isn't responsible for her actions. Determining whether this defense is plausible relies on the impetus of her own creation, as a suitable partner for the lonely Adam, a helpmate, a companion, but not a divinely inspired prodigy like Adam. Like Pandora, Eve is created to be a beautiful jar, useful to carry out what God or Zeus designs.

---

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

3:1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

3:2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3:3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

3:8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

3:9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

3:10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

3:11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

3:12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

3:13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

3:14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

3:16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

3:17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

3:18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

3:20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

3:23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

---

4.7: [The Fall of Humanity \(Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible\)](#) is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

## 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

In the *Theogony*, *Works and Days*, and “Genesis,” the separation of humans from the nature of the divine is blamed upon a woman. Earlier traditions, such as the Mesopotamian epics, hold a more reverential view of women and their mystical attachment to primordial conception and birth. As priestesses, they served as spiritual midwives, transitioning the savage parts of the psyche into the rites of civilization. *Gilgamesh*, one of the earliest heroic epics, the companionship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu illustrates the necessary edification of the savage masculine, as each man reconciles his brutal nature with the demands of the civilized world. Similar to Zeus' edict to fashion Pandora and the jar of painful miseries to constrict humanity's achievements and mastery of fire, the Babylonian gods breathe life into Enkidu, a truly natural man who lives amongst the animals as their protector. Programmed to be a challenger and distraction to Gilgamesh, Enkidu draws the ruthless king's attention away from the destruction and cruelty he enacts upon his own people. In Enkidu, Gilgamesh faces his equal and opposite self: a man who appears beastly, hairy, unkempt and wild in all aspects, but who is driven to guard the animals of the forest. As such, he is deeply connected to his inner nature, yet this keeps him at odds with society, as he foils the traps set by hunters, thus interfering with men's domination of nature. After the outcry from the hunters, the gods respond by sending a priestess of Ishtar who initiates Enkidu in the rites of humans, including intimate relations, which draws him closer to humanity but severs his kinship with the natural world. To the animals, he now smells too human, and knowing the threat of man, they flee from him leaving him in between worlds.

Gilgamesh, though he wears the crown of state, practices none of the responsibilities or dignities of leadership. He engages in a tyrannical assault of his people, protecting no one and nothing but his own darker impulses, demonstrating little aptitude for leadership. Their first meeting unsurprisingly finds them in a wrestling match, which allows each to show his fitness for battle. Being marginalized from their native cultures, the men join in heroic escapades against monsters and beasts that represent the injurious aspects of nature, including the earthshaking “bull of heaven” and volcanic fire god Humbaba.

In slaying these destructive elements, Gilgamesh's violence is channeled into more productive arenas, creating space to appreciate Enkidu's companionship and loyalty. But when he rebuffs a proposal from Ishtar, goddess of love and war, in favor of his relationship with Enkidu, she retaliates by striking Enkidu with a fatal sickness. With his last breath, he curses the priestess for entangling him in the trap of civilization and severing his ties to nature. The lament is intercepted by the Shamash, the sun god, who sagely advises Enkidu of the many benefits he earned from social assimilation, including everlasting fame from their adventures and the unending friendship of Gilgamesh, which surpass his primitive existence within nature. Receiving this, Enkidu reverses his imprecation against the priestess, and offers a blessing to the woman who ushered him toward the greater potential of life amongst humanity.

Unlike *Gilgamesh*, Hesiod's two major poems, along with “Genesis,” fail to reconcile the divine feminine within Pandora and Eve, instead casting both first women as *femme fatales*, beautiful but deadly figures who exist primarily to drain male supremacy, leaving them impotent and essentially dead. As a fixture of Athenian males' honor-based culture, Greek gods and heroes largely view the feminine principle as another barrier to their success, a distracting seductress like Circe, a dangerous witch like Medea, an intellectual threat like Metis, or a warrior foe to be conquered like the Amazons.

However, both Gilgamesh and Enkidu evolve as heroes more aligned with their humanity *because* of their interaction with women, despite the initial threat Ishtar and her priestess suggest.



Figure 4.8.1: Ishtar, shown with her symbols of war, is a formidable agent, both tempting and threatening to the burgeoning bond between Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Her offer of love to the king is a test of his fidelity to Enkidu, a man who sacrificed his unity with nature for the adventurous life Gilgamesh promised. In this role she aids in solidifying their partnership. “Ishtar on an Akkadian Seal.” (Sailko, CC BY 3.0, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

---

4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

The origin myths of early Greek and Near East cultures emphasize conflict, generally inspired by the masculine obsession of competitiveness. Hesiod, like many early writers, found such feuding inevitable, regardless of the collateral cost. The long history of humans at war seems to bolster his view. At the core of this drive toward dissension is Eris, goddess of discord and the personification of antagonism. As a child of Night, she draws her origins from the darker aspects of human nature, those that inspire envy, animosity, rage, violence and warfare. To balance her negative influence, Night also spawned a benevolent daughter known as Strife, but her influence drives friendly competition, self-improvement, and self-actualization. She inspires athletes to run faster, artists to create their most inspiring works, and scholars to seek intellectual enlightenment; her influence engages the best of human potential, thus aligning her with the ethos of Prometheus.



Figure 4.9.1: Eris (Strife) is the goddess of discord. Her unwelcome appearance at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus ultimately led to the Trojan War. (Altes Museum, Public domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

*Works and Days* addresses the history of humanity classified by eras of precious metals which decline in value as mortals become more flawed, and more human. As is common, the earliest age, that which is most distant from memory, is idealized as the **Age of Gold**. In this age men exist alongside Kronos and his contemporaries in a purely masculine, ageless paradise. Women, not yet present, arrive at the hand of Zeus in a later generation, leaving these bachelors carefree and joyful, knowing no discord. This race lives in harmony with the land, receiving its bounty and enjoying the freedom to feast without recourse. Even their deaths are rewarding, as they slip into a sleep-like expiration before becoming magnanimous spirits who offer guidance and care for future generations.

In this age Hesiod doesn't reference the creation of man, possibly because he considered them indigenous, original to the land, and in that assumption it wasn't necessary to state the obvious. Other creation epics cite Prometheus as the creator of man; however Hesiod's preference for Zeus and contempt for Prometheus' challenge to Zeus' authority might resolve the exclusion.

The glory that was the Age of Gold is greatly diluted in the **Age of Silver**, an age dominated by shorter, more painful lifespans. This generation owed their existence to the Olympians, who extended their childhood to 100 years—perhaps a reference to their childish impulses—but because of their egotistical and bellicose ways, their adult lives were full of misery. While the men of the Age of Gold enjoyed a prosperous existence, the Age of Silver ignores their duty to worship the gods, and suffers for it. Hesiod appears to moralize here, disappointed at the generation's affinity for Eris's influence and ignorance of the good Strife. This race, too, is covered by the earth, exterminated by Zeus for their failings.

The **Age of Bronze** finds itself even further devolved from the Silver. Created by Zeus, perhaps out of ash trees, they are distinguished by their ashen spears and their allegiance to the rageful Ares and his propensity to bloodshed. Their era is defined by their use of bronze for their speartips, shields and other implements of war, as well as for their homes which must've made them impossibly hot. Hesiod notes that the race doesn't eat, an odd characteristic which distinctly separates them from the feasting Age of Gold, and might infer that they instead feast at the table of battle. This race is killed off by a plague-like death, a fate even the most terrifying of men cannot escape. Notably, this is the first race to enter the dank, chill halls of Hades, a death more final and more ignoble than the previous races earned.

The **Age of Heroes** represents Zeus' third attempt at crafting a respectable generation. This time, their warlike tendencies are tempered by honor and justness, influenced by their semi-divine heritage. This age includes the heroes from familiar myths, *The Oedipus Rex* cycle and the *Iliad*, and because Zeus is the father of many he provides a special paradise for the most valiant in their afterlife, the "Islands of the Blessed," where they exist in fields of plenty akin to the Golden Aged men. Though this age is the shortest-lived, Hesiod praises their fidelity to Kronos, whom Zeus in his generosity has freed.

Notably, the Age of Heroes interrupts the continuity of the metallic ages, a mark scholars have attributed to Hesiod's structuring of the narrative both as a social history and social commentary. Scholars are aligned in the sourcing of Hesiod's four metal ages due to parallels between his and biblical episodes, specifically Daniel 7. Though *Works and Days* predates the Book of Daniel, the texts share a common source in Near Eastern texts which serves as parent-text to the subsequent texts. In the book of Daniel, a consensus of interpreters agree upon Persian sources, pointing to a description of a tree composed of branches of differing metals: gold, silver, bronze, the fourth consisting of a mix of iron and steel. The biblical author of Daniel aligns the golden age with the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, whose dream serves as a historical prophecy that humanity will inevitably decline, but will rise again with the potential to attain another golden age, Edenic perfection. Where scholars disagree is in the number of ages recorded in Daniel, some fixed on the four described (gold, silver, bronze and iron) and others finding evidence of a fifth age, an "anticipated [and] unending divine reign—that inverts the decline which has led up to the present in Daniel" (Crabbe 155).

Inserting the Age of Heroes offers Hesiod an opportunity to graft into the tradition his own optimistic concept that the apparent inexorable descent of man can be reversed. For an author often fixed in pessimistic perspectives, here Hesiod echos the last element left in Pandora's jar, hope as the balm for humanity's decline.

The **Age of Iron** concludes Hesiod's examination of human history, finding the Iron Age men even more diluted versions of the prior generations. The poet's lens narrows on the base behavior of men reflected in the base metal they use. This is Hesiod's and his audiences' age, and his unwavering disappointment emerges through the descriptions of the petty iron-hearted people who reward evil conduct and delight in the discord caused by familial strife. The race is fated to be destroyed by Zeus as soon as the signs of

the apocalypse appear: babies born stressed, having grayed hair at birth, fated to grow old quickly and painfully as the societal bonds of family honor dissolve; elderly parents cursed rather than honored; and neighboring cities sacking each other. The gods have no mercy or blessings for this race, though they make way for some good amongst the evil conduct, but even this only creates more rancor as arrogance and ugliness triumphs over goodness. Qualities meant to temper the worser conduct, such as shame, presented as the goddess Aidos [EH-dthāhs], and divine retribution, presented as the goddess Nemesis, even turn from this most degenerate race.

This race finds no honor or respite in death as even the cold vaults of Hades are closed to them.

Given the fatalistic vision of Hesiod's Iron Age, it's easy to assume the poet holds no hope for his generation to survive, much less to improve. Yet, the ensuing stanzas of the poem offer detailed and exhaustive advice for Perses and the larger audience for paying proper homage to the gods, specifications for planting, farming and harvesting, advice for marriage and managing a household and for living a virtuous life. Each stanza, framed with fealty to Zeus' unending power and supremacy, indicates Hesiod's underlying goal to philosophize on the ability of men to recognize, own, and replace their hubris with actual *humanity* and in doing so to return to the idealized golden age.

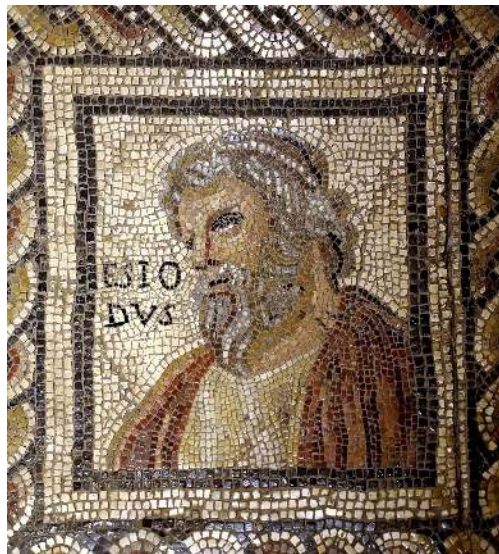


Figure 4.10.1: Roman tile mosaic of Hesiod. (TimeTravelRome, CC BY 2.0 via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

---

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

Aeschylus's vision of Prometheus fashions him as humanity's savior. His views are developed amongst a trilogy of plays: *Prometheus Bound*, *Prometheus Unbound*, and *Prometheus the Fire-Carrier*. Tragically, of the three, only the first survives as a complete play while the others exist as fragments and within referential material from other authors. E.D.A. Morshead, translator of the *Prometheus Bound*, opines:

A stupendous theological drama of which two-thirds has been lost has left an aching void, which now can never be filled, in our minds. No reader of poetry needs to be reminded of the glorious attempt of Shelley to work out a possible and worthy sequel to the *Prometheus*. Who will not echo the words of Mr. Gilbert Murray, when he says that “no piece of lost literature has been more ardently longed for than the *Prometheus Freed*”?

Yet, Romantic poets Mary Shelley and her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley both sought to resurrect and fulfill the vision of Aeschylus. Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* offers the Titan as a social reformer and a Christ-like savior, while Zeus is the Old Testament God, a despot worthy of usurping.

While Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* offers no attention to the creation of man, both Percy and Mary Shelley use the tradition of his creative moment as the core of their novel and play. Mary Shelley's subtitle to *Frankenstein, A Modern Prometheus*, summons affiliations of the scientist who felt he could attain the power of God by revivifying mortified flesh. Even audiences who haven't read the novel still hold a basic understanding of the plot and themes: a mad scientist harnesses lightning to spark life into a corpse and in doing so creates a monster he cannot control. Shelley's work addresses sacred taboos that remind us to avoid the sin of hubris and leave the dead unmolested. The text, however, draws more subtle genetic connections to *Prometheus Bound*. Frankenstein finds human beings complex and marvelous, as befits a man of science, and also finds them worthy of exceeding natural limitations. Like Prometheus, he strives to improve the state of man, to unleash the secrets of the heavens and grant that benefit to mankind. Yet, throughout the novel the doctor wrestles with his internal guilt for exceeding medical and ethical guidelines and for the deaths that his actions cause. The same thread of guilt permeates Aeschylus' work as well.

If Prometheus' role as generator of “natural man” and antagonist of Zeus results in his punishment, Shelley thusly aligns her “Modern Prometheus” for his generation of “unnatural man,” a creature who carries his own metaphoric Pandora's jar of curses as his unwelcome inheritance from his unnatural sire.



Figure 4.11.1: “To the Greeks, notably Aeschylus, he was Prometheus *pyrphoros*, the fire-bringer; to the Romans, however, he was Prometheus plasticator, the creator of man; by the second or third century the two roles were fused, “so that the fire stolen by Prometheus was also the fire of life with which he animated his man of clay” (Ozolins 109). Christian Griepenkerl's painting shows the weary Titan reaching out for the hand of Heracles, who has just slain the eagle by the fiat of Zeus. (Christian Griepenkerl, Public Domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Prometheus_Bound.jpg))

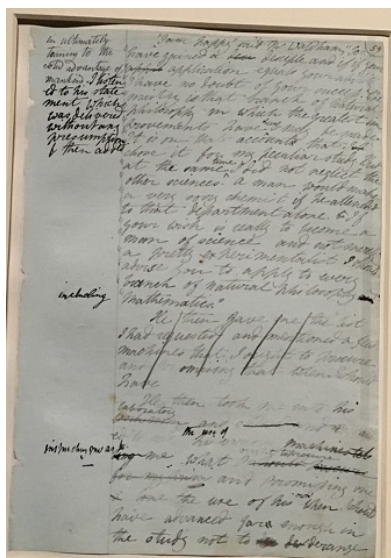


Figure 4.11.1: This page from Mary Shelley’s draft of *Frankenstein* shows the editorial marks by Percy, evidence of their collaborative marriage. (Percy Bysshe Shelley, Public Domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](#))

Like his wife, Percy Bysshe Shelley held Aeschylus in high regard, completely immersing himself in the drama while composing his *Prometheus Unbound*. Aeschylus’s themes of socio-political structures and their intersection with morality weave throughout Shelley’s work. Finding less interest in the easy moral allegory of the oppressed finding transcendence in saving and reconciling with his oppressor, Shelley, in his own words, is taken by the character because, “Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.” The Titan, Shelley finds, is similar in his anti-heroic tendencies to Milton’s Satan, yet superior since he doesn’t sink to the low of Satan’s single-minded reptilian vengeance. Prometheus endures his punishment, using the platform of his mountain cave to think and philosophize deeply, a choice that frees his mind as a prelude to the freedom he’ll ultimately earn by his noble refusal to denigrate his oppressor, Jupiter (Zeus). In the third act, Demogorgon (Eternity) appears, rising upon his earthquake-loud chariot and overtakes the despotic Jupiter who is confronted with the shattering realization that Demogorgon is the child prophesied to dethrone him. In a moment of tragic reversal, Jupiter falls from his throne of privilege.

Allowing his Prometheus to free himself is a departure from Greek traditions, which have either Heracles breaking the bonds or Zeus freeing the Titan in exchange for the powerful foresight Prometheus offers. Shelley’s choice removes the power from Zeus and his agent, Heracles, and places the agency of deliverance within Prometheus. The fourth and final act of *Prometheus Unbound*, Panthea and Earth, long-term witnesses to Prometheus’ imprisonment, describe the glorious voices of humankind singing in enduring love and unity as evidence of Prometheus’ triumph of will against the intractable and ignoble Jupiter. In a theme that could easily transfer to social political institutions of any time in history, Shelley’s work emphasizes the qualities necessary for moral survival under oppressive regimes: fostering love, autonomy and self-actualization to attain psychological liberation. The Titan’s influence over humankind is underscored by their resilience, rather than resentment against tyranny and the self-efficacy they exhibit which ensures their victorious survival. This is the enduring legacy of Prometheus, channeling the best of humanity and reflecting that at vainglorious Jupiter.

By offering different visions of the Promethean saga, each of the Shelleys opens a window into the cost of creation. Mary Shelley’s invention explores the darker prospect of creation when the act is devoid of ethical and moral intentions. Percy Bysshe Shelley’s drama addresses the price paid when the act is in direct opposition to the institutional leadership. Like Dr. Frankenstein who harnessed Zeus’ symbolic lightning to give life to his experimental offspring, so too has Prometheus, whose heroic endurance discharges “its collected lightning” granting humans the illumination to restore equilibrium between institutions and individuals (M. Shelley).

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

Aeschylus's version of *Prometheus Bound* was composed with two primary ambitions: firstly, to offer an alternate interpretation of the contest between the Titan and the Olympian, one that justifies the defiance of the Titan, secondly, to explore the torment of Io, a hapless victim of Zeus and Hera's marital discord.

Io [Ī-o] as the child of Melia, a wood nymph and daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, and Inachus [ĪN-a-kus], a river god from the Argive plain, was the descendent of three significant dynasties, the houses of Argos, Thebes, and Crete.

As a princess, she was assigned to serve Hera as priestess to the goddess's most sacred temple, Heraeum, near Mycenae in central Greece. But this role brought her to the eye of Zeus, who immediately began a nightly campaign to seduce her. Preying upon her through her dreams, he relentlessly badgered the virgin to accept his lecherous advances. Ultimately, he surrounded her with mist, and forced his "affections" upon her. However, Hera noticed the odd cloud on an otherwise sunny day and investigated. Acting quickly and without thought, Zeus transformed the girl into a white cow. But Hera, who knew her spouse's philandering moves well, cannily asked that he make a gift to her of the cow. Zeus complied, albeit reluctantly, relieving himself of the obligation to protect his victim from further harassment, which Hera had already designed. To keep Zeus away, Hera employed the watchman Argus, whose 100 eyes never rested.

Feeling remorseful yet unwilling to defy Hera directly, Zeus sent Hermes to free Io. However, not even the sly god of thieves and trickery could slip past the vigilant eyes of Argus. Using his other skills, he disguised himself as a shepherd and sang the warden to sleep. Once sedated, Hermes decapitated Argus, an act which earned him the title Argeiphontes [ar-jee-i-FON-teez], "slayer of Argus."

The murder of her favorite guard both wounded and further enraged Hera. After preserving his eyes upon the tail feathers of the peacock, she sent a gadfly to constantly sting Io, causing her to flee across Greece to escape the torturous insect. Her path led northwest to the sea around Ithaca, which now bears her name, the Ionian Sea. She then fled across the Pindus mountains to Macedonia, Thrace, through the straits between Europe and Asia, a region that would be named the Bosphorus, "cow crossing," and finally north from Scythia, around the Black Sea (modern day Romania) into the Caucasus Mountains (modern day Ukraine), where she found Prometheus and related her agonizing tale.

The curse of Io presents the worser face of the Olympians. Emphasizing their impulsive, callous reactions, Aeschylus highlights the unmerited and cruel punishment she suffers, as opposed to Prometheus who openly defied Zeus. The poignancy of her tale emphasizes the stakes of Prometheus' standoff against Zeus, but also underscores the risk to innocent young women who fall under the gaze of an amoral, capricious autocrat. Carefully positioned in the middle of the drama, Aeschylus understood the emotional impact upon the audience who now see the supreme rulers of Olympus as blatantly impassive to the misery they've inflicted.

However, seeing the King of Gods so indifferent offers space for his eventual and rewarding change and growth. Zeus' evolution from an Id-centric, militant demagogue unfolds throughout the trilogy of plays. Thus his interactions with Prometheus in the first play emphasizes his rage at Prometheus' resistance to bend to his will, and Prometheus' foretelling of his own impending torture. He and Io are kindred in their misery, yet Prometheus shares a promising future for Io: at the Nile she will escape the torture and Zeus will restore to her human form allowing her to birth their son, Epaphus, who will beget fifty daughters. Of them, forty-eight will murder their husbands, but of the two who depart from the tradition, one will birth a line of kings and the other will birth a prestigious line leading to a hero who will eventually free Prometheus. Though the hero is unnamed in the drama, it is understood to be Heracles, another son of Zeus.

In prognosticating Io's future, the Titan has also predicted his own emancipation. Yet, first he must accept and endure his imprisonment in Tartarus while he awaits Zeus' eventual maturation.

Ironically, only Prometheus and his foresight can save Zeus, yet this cannot happen until Zeus is sufficiently emotionally mature and ready to put away his instruments of anger, including earthquakes and lightning strikes. When this occurs in *Prometheus the Firebringer*, the two mighty forces reconcile. Zeus agrees to exchange Prometheus' freedom for his own salvation which comes with the knowledge that a union with Thetis, daughter of Ocean, would produce a son powerful enough to supplant him. Displaying a measure of self-constraint unseen in Ouranos and Kronos, Zeus arranges a marriage between Thetis and the mortal king Peleus, who will become the parents of the greatest fighter of the Trojan War: Achilles.

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

#### Overview

The *Prometheus Bound* is conspicuous for its gigantic and strictly superhuman plot. *Prometheus* presents to us the gods of Olympus in the days when mankind crept like emmets upon the earth or dwelt in caves, scorned by Zeus and the other powers of heaven, and—still aided by Prometheus the Titan—wholly without art or science, letters or handicrafts. For his benevolence towards oppressed mankind, Prometheus is condemned by Zeus to uncounted ages of pain and torment, shackled and impaled in a lonely cleft of a Scythian precipice. The play opens with this act of divine resentment enforced by the will of Zeus and by the handicraft of Hephaestus, who is aided by two demons, impersonating Strength and Violence. These agents of the ire of Zeus disappear after the first scene, the rest of the play represents Prometheus in the mighty solitude, but visited after a while by a Chorus of sea nymphs who, from the distant depths of ocean, have heard the clang of the demons' hammers, and arrive, in a winged car, from the submarine palace of their father Oceanus. To them Prometheus relates his penalty and its cause: his over-tenderness to the luckless race of mankind. Oceanus himself follows on a hippogriff, and counsels Prometheus to submit to Zeus. But the Titan who has handled the sea nymphs with all gentleness, receives the advice with scorn and contempt, and Oceanus retires. But the courage which he lacks his daughters possess to the full; they remain by Prometheus to the end, and share his fate, literally in the crack of doom. But before the end, the strange half human figure of Io, victim of the lust of Zeus and the jealousy of Hera, comes wandering by, and tells Prometheus of her wrongs. He, by his divine power, recounts to her not only the past but also the future of her wanderings. Then, in a fresh access of frenzy, she drifts away into the unknown world. Then Prometheus partly reveals to the sea maidens his secret, and the mysterious cause of Zeus' hatred against him—a cause which would avail to hurl the tyrant from his power. So deadly is this secret, that Zeus will, in the lapse of ages, be forced to reconcile himself with Prometheus, to escape dethronement. Finally, Hermes, the messenger of Zeus, appears with fresh threats that he may extort the mystery from the Titan. But Prometheus is firm, defying both the tyrant and his envoy, though already the lightning is flashing, the thunder rolling, and sky and sea are mingling their fury. Hermes can say no more; the sea nymphs resolutely refuse to retire, and await their doom. In this crash of the world, Prometheus flings his final defiance against Zeus, and amid the lightning and shattered rocks that are overwhelming him and his companions, speaks his last word, "*It is unjust!*"

*Enter IO, horned like a cow.*

(\*line numbers are approximations)

**IO.**

Alack! what land, what folk are here? 498\*  
Whom see I clenched in rocky fetters drear  
Unto the stormy crag? for what thing done 500  
Dost thou in agony atone?  
Ah, tell me whither, well-a-day!  
My feet have roamed their weary way?  
Ah, but it maddens, the sting! it burns in my piteous side!  
Ah, but the vision, the spectre, the earth-born, the myriad-eyed!  
Avoid thee! Earth, hide him, thine offspring! he cometh—O aspect of ill!  
Ghostly, and crafty of face, and dead, but pursuing me still!  
Ah, woe upon me, woe ineffable!  
He steals upon my track, a hound of hell—  
Where'er I stray, along the sands and brine, 510  
Weary and foodless, come his creeping eyne!  
And ah, the ghostly sound—  
The wax-stopped reed-flute's weird and drowsy drone!  
Alack my wandering woes, that round and round  
Lead me in many mazes, lost, foredone!  
O child of Cronos! for what deed of wrong  
Am I enthralled by thee in penance long?

Why by the stinging bruise, the thing of fear,  
Dost thou torment me, heart and brain?  
Nay, give me rather to the flames that sear, 520  
Or to some hidden grave,  
Or to the rending jaws, the monsters of the main!  
Nor grudge the boon for which I crave, O king!  
Enough, enough of weary wandering,  
Pangs from which none can save!

Hearken! in pity hold  
Io, the ox-horned maid, thy love of old!

**PROMETHEUS.**

Hear Zeus or not, I hear and know thee well,  
Daughter of Inachus; I know thee driven,  
Stung by the gadfly, mazed with agony. 530  
Ay, thou art she whose beauty fired the breast  
Of Zeus with passion; she whom Hera's hate  
Now harasses o'er leagues and leagues of land.

**IO.**

Alack, thou namest Inachus my sire!  
Wottest thou of him? how, from lips of pain,  
Comes to my woeful ears truth's very strain?  
How knowest thou the curse, the burning fire  
The god-sent, piercing pest that stings and clings?  
Ah me! in frenzied, foodless wanderings  
Hither I come, and on me from on high 540  
Lies Hera's angry craft! Ah, men unblest!  
Not one there is, not one, that is unblest as I.  
But thou—tell me the rest!  
Utter the rede of woes to come for me;  
Utter the aid, the cure, if aid or cure there be!

**PROMETHEUS.**

Lo, clearly will I show forth all thy quest—  
Not in dark speech, but with such simple phrase  
As doth befit the utterance of a friend.  
I am Prometheus, who gave fire to men.

**IO.**

O daring, proven champion of man's race, 550  
What sin, Prometheus, dost thou thus atone?

**PROMETHEUS.**

One moment since, I told my woes and ceased.

**IO.**

Then should I plead my suit to thee in vain?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Nay, speak thy need; nought would I hide from thee.

**IO.**

Pronounce who nailed thee to the rocky cleft.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Zeus, by intent; Hephaestus, by his hand.

**IO.**

For what wrongdoing do these pains atone?

**PROMETHEUS.**

What I have said, is said; suffice it thee!

**IO.**

Yet somewhat add; forewarn me in my woe  
What time shall bring my wandering to its goal? 560

**PROMETHEUS.**

Fore-knowledge is fore-sorrow; ask it not.

**IO.**

Nay, hide not from me destiny's decree.

**PROMETHEUS.**

I grudge thee not the gift which I withhold.

**IO.**

Then wherefore tarry ere thou tell me all?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Nothing I grudge, but would not rack thy soul.

**IO.**

Be not compassionate beyond my wish.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Well, thou art fain, and I will speak. Attend!

**CHORUS.**

Nay—ere thou speak, hear me, bestow on me  
A portion of the grace of granted prayers.  
First let us learn how Io's frenzy came— 570  
(She telling her disasters manifold)  
Then of their sequel let her know from thee.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Well were it, Io, thus to do their will—  
Right well! they are the sisters of thy sire.  
'Tis worth the waste and effluence of time,  
To tell, with tears of perfect moan, the doom  
Of sorrows that have fallen, when 'tis sure  
The listeners will greet the tale with tears.

**IO.**

I know not how I should mistrust your prayer;  
Therefore the whole that ye desire of me 580  
Ye now shall learn in one straightforward tale.  
Yet, as it leaves my lips, I blush with shame  
To tell that tempest of the spite of Heaven,  
And all the wreck and ruin of my form,  
And whence they swooped upon me, woe is me!  
Long, long in visions of the night there came

Voices and forms into my maiden bower,  
Alluring me with smoothly glozing words—  
*O maiden highly favoured of high Heaven,  
Why cherish thy virginity so long? 590  
Thine is it to win wedlock's noblest crown!  
Know that Zeus' heart thro' thee is all aflame,  
Pierced with desire as with a dart, and longs  
To join in utmost rite of love with thee.  
Therefore, O maiden, shun not with disdain  
Th' embrace of Zeus, but hie thee forth straightway  
To the lush growth of Lerna's meadow-land,  
Where are the flocks and steadings of thy home,  
And let Zeus' eye be eased of its desire.*  
Night after night, haunted by dreams like these, 600  
Heartsick, I ventured at the last to tell  
Unto my sire these visions of the dark.  
Then sent he many a wight, on sacred quest,  
To Delphi and to far Dodona's shrine,  
Being fain to learn what deed or word  
Would win him favour from the powers of heaven.  
But they came back repeating oracles  
Mystic, ambiguous, inscrutable,  
Till, at the last, an utterance direct,  
Obscure no more, was brought to Inachus— 610  
A peremptory charge to fling me forth  
Beyond my home and fatherland, a thing  
Sent loose in banishment o'er all the world;  
And—should he falter—Zeus should launch on him  
A fire-eyed bolt, to shatter and consume  
Himself and all his race to nothingness.  
Bowing before such utterance from the shrine  
Of Loxias, he drove me from our halls,  
Barring the gates against me: loth he was  
To do, as I to suffer, this despite: 620  
But the strong curb of Zeus had overborne  
His will to me-ward. As I parted thence,  
In form and mind I grew dishumanized,  
And horned as now ye see me, poison-stung  
By the envenomed bitings of the brize,  
I leapt and flung in frenzy, rushed away  
To the bright waters of Cerchneia's stream  
And Lerna's beach: but ever at my side,  
A herdsman by his heifer, Argus moved,  
Earth-born, malevolent of mood, and peered, 630  
With myriad eyes, where'er my feet would roam.  
But on him in a moment, unforeseen,  
Came Fate, and sundered him from life; but I,  
Still maddened by the gadfly's sting, the scourge  
Of God's infliction, roam the weary world.

How I have fared, thou hearest: be there aught  
Of what remains to bear, that thou canst tell,  
Speak on! but let not thy compassion warm  
Thy words to cheering falsehood. Worst of woes  
Are words that break their promise to our hope! 640

**CHORUS.**

Woe! woe! avaunt—thou and thy tale of bane!  
O never, never dared I dream  
Such horror of strange sounds should pierce mine ear;  
Such loathly sights, such tortures hard to bear,  
Outrage, pollution, agony supreme,  
Wasting my heart with double edge of pain!  
Ah Fate, ah Fate! I gaze on Io's dole,  
And shudder to my soul!

**PROMETHEUS.**

Thou willest all too soon, fulfilled of fear—  
Tarry awhile, till thou have learned the whole. 650

**CHORUS.**

Say on, reveal it! suffering souls are fain  
To know aright what yet remains to bear.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Lightly, with help of mine, did ye achieve  
That which ye first desired: from Io's mouth  
craved to hear, recounted by herself,  
The story of her strivings. Listen now  
To what shall follow, to what woefulness  
The wrath of Hera must compel this maid.  
(To Io)  
And thou, O child of Inachus, within  
Thine inmost heart store up these words of mine, 660  
That thou may'st learn thy wanderings and their goal.  
First from this spot toward the sunrise turn,  
And cross the steppe that knoweth not the plough:  
Thus to the nomad Scythians shalt thou come,  
Who dwell in wattled homes, not built on earth  
But borne along on wains of sturdy wheel—  
Equipped, themselves, with bows of mighty reach.  
Pass them avoidingly, and leave their land,  
And skirt the beaches where the tides make moan,  
Till lo! upon the left hand thou shalt find 670  
The Chalybes, stout craftsmen of the steel—  
Beware of them! no gentleness is theirs,  
No kindly welcome to a stranger's foot!  
Thence to the Stream of Violence shalt thou come—  
Like name, like nature; see thou cross it not,  
( 'Tis fatal to the forder!) till thou come  
Right to the very Caucasus, the peak  
That overtops the world, and from its brows

The river pants in spray its wrathful stream.  
Thence, o'er the pinnacles that court the stars, 680  
Onward and southward thou must take thy way,  
And reach the warlike horde of Amazons,  
Maidens through hate of man; and gladly they  
Will guide thy maiden feet. That host, in days  
That are not yet, shall fix their home and dwell  
At Themiscyra, on Thermodon's bank,  
Nigh whereunto the grim projecting fang

Of Salmydessus' cape affronts the main,  
The seaman's curse, to ships a stepmother! 690  
Then at the jutting land, Cimmerian styled,  
That screens the narrowing portal of the mere,  
Thou shalt arrive; pass o'er it, brave at heart,  
And ferry thee across Macotis' ford.

So shall there be great rumour evermore,  
In ears of mortals, of thy passage strange;  
And Bosporos shall be that channel's name,  
Because the ox-horned thing did pass thereby.  
So, from the wilds of Europe wander'd o'er,  
To Asia's continent thou com'st at last. 700  
(*To the CHORUS*)

And ye, what think ye? Seems he not, that lord  
And tyrant of the gods, as tyrannous  
Unto all other lives? A high god's lust  
Constrained this mortal maid to roam the world!  
(*To Io*)

Poor maid! a brutal wooer sure was thine!  
For know that all which I have told thee now  
Is scarce the prelude of thy woes to come.

**IO.**

Alas for me, alas!

**PROMETHEUS.**

Again thou criest, with a heifer's low.  
What wilt thou do, learning thy future woes? 710

**CHORUS.**

What, hast thou further sorrows for her ear?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Yea, a vext ocean of predestined pain.

**IO.**

What profit then is life to me? Ah, why  
Did I not cast me from this stubborn crag?  
So with one spring, one crash upon the ground,  
I had attained surcease from all my woes.  
Better it is to die one death outright  
Than linger out long life in misery.  
Mine, with whose fate it standeth not to win 720  
The goal of death, which were release from pain!

Now, there is set no limit to my woe  
Till Zeus be hurled from his omnipotence.

**IO.**

Zeus hurled from pride of place! Can such things be?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Thou wert full fain, methinks, to see that sight!

**IO.**

Even so—his overthrow who wrought my pain.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Then may'st thou know thereof; such fall shall be.

**IO.**

And who shall wrench the sceptre from his hand?

**PROMETHEUS.**

By his own mindless counsels shall he fall.

**IO.**

And how? unless the telling harm, say on! 730

**PROMETHEUS.**

Wooring a bride, his ruin he shall win.

**IO.**

Goddess, or mortal? tell me, if thou may'st.

**PROMETHEUS.**

No matter which—more must not be revealed.

**IO.**

Doth then a consort thrust him from his throne?

**PROMETHEUS.**

The child she bears him shall o'ercome his sire.

**IO.**

And hath he no avoidance of this doom?

**PROMETHEUS.**

None, surely—till that I, released from bonds—

**IO.**

Who can release thee, but by will of Zeus?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Fate gives this duty to a child of thine!

**IO.**

How? Shall a child of mine undo thy woes? 740

**PROMETHEUS.**

Yea, of thy lineage, thirteen times removed.

**IO.**

Dark beyond guessing grows thine oracle.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Yea—seek not therefore to foreknow thy woes.

**IO.**

As thou didst proffer hope, withdraw it not.

**PROMETHEUS.**

Two tales I have—choose! for I grant thee one.

**IO.**

And which be they? reveal, and leave me choice.

**PROMETHEUS.**

I grant it: shall I in all clearness show  
Thy future woes, or my deliverance?

**CHORUS.**

Nay! of the two, vouchsafe her wish to her  
And mine to me, deigning a truth to each— 750  
To her, reveal her future wanderings—  
To me, thy future saviour, as I crave!

**PROMETHEUS.**

I will not set myself to thwart your will  
Withholding aught of what ye crave to know.  
First to thee, Io, will I tell and trace  
Thy scared circuitous wandering mark it well,  
Deep in retentive tablets of the soul.  
When thou hast overpast the ferry's flow  
That sunders continent from continent,  
Straight to the eastward and the flaming face 760  
Of dawn, and highways trodden by the sun,  
Pass, till thou come unto the windy land  
Of daughters born to Boreas: beware  
Lest the strong spirit of the stormy blast  
Snatch thee aloft, and sweep thee to the void,  
On wings of raving wintry hurricane!  
Wend by the noisy tumult of the wave,  
Until thou reach the Gorgon-haunted plains  
Beside Cisthene. In that solitude  
Dwell Phorcys' daughters, beldames worn with time, 770  
Three, each swan-shapen, single-toothed, and all  
Peering thro' shared endowment of one eye;  
Never on them doth the sun shed his rays,  
Never falls radiance of the midnight moon.  
But, hard by these, their sisters, clad with wings,  
Serpentine-curved, dwell, loathed of mortal men,—  
The Gorgons!—he of men who looks on them  
Shall gasp away his life. Of such fell guard  
I bid thee to beware. Now, mark my words  
When I another sight of terror tell— 780  
Beware the Gryphon pack, the hounds of Zeus,  
As keen of fang as silent of their tongues!  
Beware the one-eyed Arimaspians band  
That tramp on horse-hoofs, dwelling by the ford  
Of Pluto and the stream that flows with gold:

Keep thou aloof from these. To the world's end  
Thou comest at the last, the dark-faced tribe  
That dwell beside the sources of the sun,  
Where springs the river, Aethiopian named.  
Make thou thy way along his bank, until 790  
Thou come unto the mighty downward slope  
Where from the overland of Byblis hills  
Nile pours his hallowed earth-refreshing wave.  
He by his course shall guide thee to the realm  
Named from himself, three-angled, water-girt;  
There, Io, at the last, hath Fate ordained,  
For thee and for thy race, the charge to found,  
Far from thy native shore, a new abode.  
Lo, I have said: if aught hereof appear  
Hard to thy sense and inarticulate, 800

Question me o'er again, and soothly learn—  
God wot, I have too much of leisure here!

**CHORUS.**

If there be aught beyond, or aught pass'd o'er,  
Which thou canst utter, of her woe-worn maze,  
Speak on! if all is said, then grant to us  
That which we asked, as thou rememberest.

**PROMETHEUS.**

She now hath learned, unto its utmost end,  
Her pilgrimage; but yet, that she may know  
That 'tis no futile fable she hath heard,  
I will recount her history of toil 810  
Ere she came hither; let it stand for proof  
Of what I told, my forecast of the end.  
So, then—to sum in brief the weary tale—  
I turn me to thine earlier exile's close.  
When to Molossia's lowland thou hadst come,  
Nigh to Dodona's cliff and ridge sublime,  
(Where is the shrine oracular and seat  
Of Zeus, Thesprotian styled, and that strange thing  
And marvel past belief, the prophet-oaks  
That syllable his speech), thou by their tongues, 820  
With clear acclaim and unequivocal,  
Wert thus saluted—*Hail, O bride of Zeus*  
*That art to be*—hast memory thereof?  
Thence, stung anew with frenzy, thou didst hie  
Along the shoreward track, to Rhea's lap,  
The mighty main; then, stormily distraught,  
Backward again and eastward. To all time,  
Be well assured, that inlet of the sea  
All mortal men shall call Ionian,  
In memory that Io fared thereby. 830  
Take this for proof and witness that my mind  
Hath more in ken than ever sense hath shown.

(To the CHORUS)

That which remains, to you and her alike  
I will relate, and, to my former words  
Reverting, add this final prophecy.

(To Io)

There lieth, at the verge of land and sea,  
Where Nilus issues thro' the silted sand,  
A town, Canopus called: and there at length  
Shall Zeus renew the reason in thy brain  
With the mere touch and contact of his hand 840  
Fraught now with fear no more: and thou shalt bear  
A child, dark Epaphus—his very name  
Memorial of Zeus' touch that gave him life.  
And his shall be the foison and the fruit  
Of all the land enriched by spreading Nile.  
Thence the fifth generation of his seed  
Back unto Argos, yet unwillingly,  
Shall flee for refuge—fifty maidens they,  
Loathing a wedlock with their next in blood,  
More kin than kind, from their sire's brother sprung. 850  
And on their track, astir with wild desire,  
Like falcons fierce closing on doves that flee,  
Shall speed the suitors, craving to achieve  
A prey forbidden, a reluctant bride.  
Yet power divine shall foil them, and forbid  
Possession of the maids, whom Argive land  
Shall hold protected, when unsleeping hate,  
Horror, and watchful ambush of the night,  
Have laid the suitors dead, by female hands.  
For every maid shall smite a man to death, 860  
Dyeing a dagger's edges in his throat—  
Such bed of love befall mine enemies!  
Yet in one bride shall yearning conquer hate,  
Bidding her spare the bridegroom at her side,  
Blunting the keen edge of her set resolve.  
Thus of two scorns the former shall she choose,  
The name of coward, not of murderess.  
In Argos shall she bear, in after time,  
A royal offspring. Long it were to tell  
In clear succession all that thence shall be. 870  
Take this for sooth—in lineage from her  
A hero shall arise, an archer great,  
And he shall be my saviour from these woes.  
Such knowledge of the future Themis gave,  
The ancient Titaness, to me her son.  
  
But how, and by what skill, 'twere long to say,  
And no whit will the knowledge profit thee.

**IO.**

O woe, O rending and convulsive pain,

Frenzy and agony, again, again  
Searing my heart and brain! 880  
O dagger of the sting, unforged with fire  
Yet burning, burning ever! O my heart,  
Pulsing with horror, beating at my breast!  
O rolling maddened eyes! away, apart,  
Raving with anguish dire,  
I spring, by frenzy-fiends possest.  
O wild and whirling words, that sweep in gloom  
Down to dark waves of doom!

[Exit IO.]

---

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus) is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

## 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

(\*Spellings have been adapted to American English)

### Invocation of the Muses

(ll. 1-10) Muses of Pieria who give glory through song, come hither, tell of Zeus your father and chant his praise. Through him mortal men are famed or un-famed, sung or unsung alike, as great Zeus wills. For easily he makes strong, and easily he brings the strong man low; easily he humbles the proud and raises the obscure, and easily he straightens the crooked and blasts the proud,— Zeus who thunders aloft and has his dwelling most high.

Attend thou with eye and ear, and make judgments straight with righteousness. And I, Perses [the audience], would tell of true things.

### The Two Strifes

(ll. 11-24) So, after all, there was not one kind of Strife alone, but all over the earth there are two. As for the one, a man would praise her when he came to understand her; but the other is blameworthy: and they are wholly different in nature. For one fosters evil war and battle, being cruel: her no man loves; but perforce, through the will of the deathless gods, men pay harsh Strife [Eris] her honor due. But the other is the elder daughter of dark Night, and the son of Cronos who sits above and dwells in the aether, set her in the roots of the earth: and she is far kinder to men. She stirs up even the shiftless to toil; for a man grows eager to work when he considers his neighbor, a rich man who hastens to plough and plant and put his house in good order; and neighbor vies with his neighbor as he hurries after wealth. This Strife is wholesome for men. And potter is angry with potter, and craftsman with craftsman, and beggar is jealous of beggar, and minstrel of minstrel.

(ll. 25-41) Perses, lay up these things in your heart, and do not let that Strife who delights in mischief hold your heart back from work, while you peep and peer and listen to the wrangles of the court-house. Little concern has he with quarrels and courts who has not a year's victuals laid up betimes, even that which the earth bears, Demeter's grain. When you have got plenty of that, you can raise disputes and strive to get another's goods. But you shall have no second chance to deal so again: nay, let us settle our dispute here with true judgment divided our inheritance, but you seized the greater share and carried it off, greatly swelling the glory of our bribe-swallowing lords who love to judge such a cause as this. Fools! They know not how much more the half is than the whole, nor what great advantage there is in mallow [marsh grass] and asphodel [lily].

### The Source of Human Struggles

(ll. 42-53) For the gods keep hidden from men the means of life. Else you would easily do work enough in a day to supply you for a full year even without working; soon would you put away your rudder over the smoke, and the fields worked by ox and sturdy mule would run to waste. But Zeus in the anger of his heart hid it, because Prometheus the crafty deceived him; therefore he planned sorrow and mischief against men. He hid fire; but that the noble son of Iapetus stole again for men from Zeus the counselor in a hollow fennel-stalk, so that Zeus who delights in thunder did not see it. But afterwards Zeus who gathers the clouds said to him in anger:

(ll. 54-59) 'Son of Iapetus, surpassing all in cunning, you are glad that you have outwitted me and stolen fire—a great plague to you yourself and to men that shall be. But I will give men as the price for fire an evil thing in which they may all be glad of heart while they embrace their own destruction.'

(ll. 60-68) So said the father of men and gods, and laughed aloud. And he bade famous Hephaestus make haste and mix earth with water and to put in it the voice and strength of humankind, and fashion a sweet, lovely maiden-shape, like to the immortal goddesses in face; and Athene to teach her needlework and the weaving of the varied web; and golden Aphrodite to shed grace upon her head and cruel longing and cares that weary the limbs. And he charged Hermes the guide, the Slayer of Argus, to put in her a shameless mind and a deceitful nature.

(ll. 69-82) So he ordered. And they obeyed the lord Zeus, the son of Cronos. Forthwith the famous Lane God molded clay in the likeness of a modest maid, as the son of Cronos purposed. And the goddess bright-eyed Athene girded and clothed her, and the divine Graces and queenly Persuasion put necklaces of gold upon her, and the rich-haired Hours crowned her head with spring flowers. And Pallas Athene bedecked her form with all manners of finery. Also the Guide, the Slayer of Argus, contrived within her

lies and crafty words and a deceitful nature at the will of loud thundering Zeus, and the Herald of the gods put speech in her. And he called this woman Pandora, because all they who dwelt on Olympus gave each a gift, a plague to men who eat bread.

(ll. 83-89) But when he had finished the sheer, hopeless snare, the Father sent glorious Argos-Slayer, the swift messenger of the gods, to take it to Epimetheus as a gift. And Epimetheus did not think on what Prometheus had said to him, bidding him never take a gift of Olympian Zeus, but to send it back for fear it might prove to be something harmful to men. But he took the gift, and afterwards, when the evil thing was already his, he understood.

(ll. 90-105) For ere this the tribes of men lived on earth remote and free from ills and hard toil and heavy sickness which bring the Fates upon men; for in misery men grow old quickly. But the woman took off the great lid of the jar with her hands and scattered all these and her thought caused sorrow and mischief to men. Only Hope remained there in an unbreakable home within under the rim of the great jar, and did not fly out at the door; for ere that, the lid of the jar stopped her, by the will of Aegis-holding Zeus who gathers the clouds. But the rest, countless plagues, wander amongst men; for earth is full of evils and the sea is full. Of themselves diseases come upon men continually by day and by night, bringing mischief to mortals silently; for wise Zeus took away speech from them. So is there no way to escape the will of Zeus.

(ll. 106-108) Or if you will, I will sum you up another tale well and skilfully—and do you lay it up in your heart,—how the gods and mortal men sprang from one source.

### The Age of Gold

(ll. 109-120) First of all the deathless gods who dwell on Olympus made a golden race of mortal men who lived in the time of Cronos when he was reigning in heaven. And they lived like gods without sorrow of heart, remote and free from toil and grief: miserable age rested not on them; but with legs and arms never failing they made merry with feasting beyond the reach of all evils. When they died, it was as though they were overcome with sleep, and they had all good things; for the fruitful earth unforced bare them fruit abundantly and without stint. They dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things, rich in flocks and loved by the blessed gods.

### The Age of Silver

(ll. 121-139) But after earth had covered this generation—they are called pure spirits dwelling on the earth, and are kindly, delivering from harm, and guardians of mortal men; for they roam everywhere over the earth, clothed in mist and keep watch on judgments and cruel deeds, givers of wealth; for this royal right also they received;—then they who dwell on Olympus made a second generation which was of silver and less noble by far. It was like the golden race neither in body nor in spirit. A child was brought up at his good mother's side an hundred years, an utter simpleton, playing childishly in his own home. But when they were full grown and were come to the full measure of their prime, they lived only a little time in sorrow because of their foolishness, for they could not keep from sinning and from wronging one another, nor would they serve the immortals, nor sacrifice on the holy altars of the blessed ones as it is right for men to do wherever they dwell. Then Zeus the son of Cronos was angry and put them away, because they would not give honor to the blessed gods who live on Olympus.

### The Age of Bronze

(ll. 140-155) But when earth had covered this generation also—they are called blessed spirits of the underworld by men, and, though they are of second order, yet honor attends them also—Zeus the Father made a third generation of mortal men, a brazen race, sprung from ash-trees; and it was in no way equal to the silver age, but was terrible and strong. They loved the lamentable works of Ares and deeds of violence; they ate no bread, but were hard of heart like adamant, fearful men. Great was their strength and unconquerable the arms which grew from their shoulders on their strong limbs. Their armor was of bronze, and their houses of bronze, and of bronze were their implements: there was no black iron. These were destroyed by their own hands and passed to the dank house of chill Hades, and left no name: terrible though they were, black Death seized them, and they left the bright light of the sun.

### The Age of Heroes

(ll. 156-169b) But when earth had covered this generation also, Zeus the son of Cronos made yet another, the fourth, upon the fruitful earth, which was nobler and more righteous, a god-like race of hero-men who are called demi-gods, the race before our

own, throughout the boundless earth. Grim war and dread battle destroyed a part of them, some in the land of Cadmus at seven-gated Thebe when they fought for the flocks of Oedipus, and some, when it had brought them in ships over the great sea gulf to Troy for rich-haired Helen's sake: there death's end enshrouded a part of them. But to the others father Zeus the son of Cronos gave a living and an abode apart from men, and made them dwell at the ends of earth. And they live untouched by sorrow in the islands of the blessed along the shore of deep swirling Ocean, happy heroes for whom the grain-giving earth bears honey-sweet fruit flourishing thrice a year, far from the deathless gods, and Cronos rules over them; for the father of men and gods released him from his bonds. And these last equally have honor and glory.

### The Age of Iron

(ll. 169c-169d) And again far-seeing Zeus made yet another generation, the fifth, of men who are upon the bounteous earth.

(ll. 170-201) Thereafter, would that I were not among the men of the fifth generation, but either had died before or been born afterwards. For now truly is a race of iron, and men never rest from labor and sorrow by day, and from perishing by night; and the gods shall lay sore trouble upon them. But, notwithstanding, even these shall have some good mingled with their evils. And Zeus will destroy this race of mortal men also when they come to have gray hair on the temples at their birth. The father will not agree with his children, nor the children with their father, nor guest with his host, nor comrade with comrade; nor will brother be dear to brother as aforetime. Men will dishonor their parents as they grow quickly old, and will carp at them, chiding them with bitter words, hard-hearted they, not knowing the fear of the gods. They will not repay their aged parents the cost their nurture, for might shall be their right: and one man will sack another's city. There will be no favor for the man who keeps his oath or for the just or for the good; but rather men will praise the evil-doer and his violent dealing. Strength will be right and reverence will cease to be; and the wicked will hurt the worthy man, speaking false words against him, and will swear an oath upon them. Envy, foul-mouthed, delighting in evil, with scowling face, will go along with wretched men one and all. And then Aidos [goddess of shame and modesty] and Nemesis [goddess of retribution], with their sweet forms wrapped in white robes, will go from the wide-pathed earth and forsake mankind to join the company of the deathless gods: and bitter sorrows will be left for mortal men, and there will be no help against evil.

### A Fable for Princes

(ll. 202-211) And now I will tell a fable for princes who themselves understand. Thus said the hawk to the nightingale with speckled neck, while he carried her high up among the clouds, gripped fast in his talons, and she, pierced by his crooked talons, cried pitifully. To her he spoke disdainfully: 'Miserable thing, why do you cry out? One far stronger than you now holds you fast, and you must go wherever I take you, songstress as you are. And if I please I will make my meal of you, or let you go. He is a fool who tries to withstand the stronger, for he does not get the mastery and suffers pain besides his shame.' So said the swiftly flying hawk, the long-winged bird.

(ll. 212-224) But you, Perses, listen to right and do not foster violence; for violence is bad for a poor man. Even the prosperous cannot easily bear its burden, but is weighed down under it when he has fallen into delusion. The better path is to go by on the other side towards justice; for Justice beats Outrage when she comes at length to the end of the race. But only when he has suffered does the fool learn this. For Oath keeps pace with wrong judgments. There is a noise when Justice is being dragged in the way where those who devour bribes and give sentence with crooked judgments, take her. And she, wrapped in mist, follows to the city and haunts of the people, weeping, and bringing mischief to men, even to such as have driven her forth in that they did not deal straightly with her.

(ll. 225-237) But they who give straight judgments to strangers and to the men of the land, and go not aside from what is just, their city flourishes, and the people prosper in it: Peace, the nurse of children, is abroad in their land, and all-seeing Zeus never decrees cruel war against them. Neither famine nor disaster ever haunt men who do true justice; but light-heartedly they tend the fields which are all their care. The earth bears them victual in plenty, and on the mountains the oak bears acorns upon the top and bees in the midst. Their wooly sheep are laden with fleeces; their women bear children like their parents. They flourish continually with good things, and do not travel on ships, for the grain-giving earth bears them fruit.

(ll. 238-247) But for those who practice violence and cruel deeds far-seeing Zeus, the son of Cronos, ordains a punishment. Often even a whole city suffers for a bad man who sins and devises presumptuous deeds, and the son of Cronos lays great trouble upon the people, famine and plague together, so that the men perish away, and their women do not bear children, and their houses

become few, through the contriving of Olympian Zeus. And again, at another time, the son of Cronos either destroys their wide army, or their walls, or else makes an end of their ships on the sea.

(ll. 248-264) You princes, mark well this punishment you also; for the deathless gods are near among men and mark all those who oppress their fellows with crooked judgments, and reckon not the anger of the gods. For upon the bounteous earth Zeus has thrice ten thousand spirits, watchers of mortal men, and these keep watch on judgments and deeds of wrong as they roam, clothed in mist, all over the earth. And there is virgin Justice, the daughter of Zeus, who is honored and revered among the gods who dwell on Olympus, and whenever anyone hurts her with lying slander, she sits beside her father, Zeus the son of Cronos, and tells him of men's wicked heart, until the people pay for the mad folly of their princes who, evilly minded, pervert judgment and give sentence crookedly. Keep watch against this, you princes, and make straight your judgments, you who devour bribes; put crooked judgments altogether from your thoughts.

---

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Project Gutenberg.

## 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

---

Prometheus' role as humanity's benefactor (and sometimes creator) sets in motion a chain of events that have lasting and important impacts upon the human characters of Greek myths. It also serves as an etiological explanation for a number of conditions within the human experience. Trace out the lasting implications of his defiance, and address the psychological insights modern audiences gain from reading this myth.

Develop your response using fully-developed paragraphs that include MLA cited evidence from the text.

---

4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.15: Study Questions

---

1. Reflect on the role of the two Strifes in Hesiod's *Works and Days*. What function do they serve to support divine rule? Locate parallels in other myths in previous chapters, such as the biblical Tower of Babel, and explain the rationale of including these lessons within these myths.
  2. In Hesiod's "Ages of Man," trace the different expressions of death and the afterlife experienced by the Ages of Gold, Silver, Bronze, Heroes and Iron. What pattern is noticeable in their deaths?
  3. Reflect on the interpretations of Prometheus by Hesiod and Aeschylus. Identify two or three key similarities between each characterization. Identify two or three significant differences between Hesiod and Aeschylus. How does each author's interpretation reflect a social ideal for their time?
  4. Pandora and Eve represent the first women for Ancient Greeks and Judeo/Christian traditions, yet neither is named until she has transgressed. Discuss the significance, if any, of delaying a foundational character's naming. Both women also represent a significant transition away from the primordial Mother Goddess. How do Zeus and God use these women to achieve their immediate and long-term goals?
  5. Io's episode was added to Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* to deepen the audience's understanding of Zeus and his mechanisms. Consider the effect of her tale upon the audience. What does the drama gain by revealing Io's story?
  6. *Works and Days* and *Prometheus Bound* address the theme of inevitable separation from the divine. Why is the separation necessary? What do humans gain from the separation, and what do they lose? What do the immortals, specifically Zeus and Prometheus, lose and what do they gain?
- 

4.15: Study Questions is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 4.16: Bibliography

Aeschylus. *Prometheus Bound. Four Plays of Aeschylus*. Trans. E. D. A. Morshead. *Project Gutenberg*, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8714/pg8714-images.html](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8714/pg8714-images.html). Accessed 1 December 2023.

Attribution: This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Atsma, Aaron J. “Titans” *Theoi Greek Mythology*, [www.theoi.com/Titan/TitanMenoitios.html](http://www.theoi.com/Titan/TitanMenoitios.html). Accessed 8 November 2023.

Berens, E.M. *A Hand-Book of Mythology: the Mythos and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*. *Project Gutenberg*, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/22381/pg22381-images.html#Nt\\_8](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/22381/pg22381-images.html#Nt_8). Accessed 1 Oct, 2023.

Attribution: This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Blackburn, Thomas C. ed. *December’s Child: A Book of Chumash Oral Narratives*. Collected by J.P Harrington, U of California P, 1984.

Crabbe, Kylie. “The Generation of Iron and the Final Stumbling Block: The Present Time in Hesiod’s Works and Days 106–201 and Barnabas 4.” *Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel*, edited by Andrew B. Perrin et al., Brill, 2021, pp. 142–66. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1sr6k2b.11](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1sr6k2b.11). Accessed 30 Nov. 2023.

Davis, Paul, et al, Eds. *The Bedford Anthology of World Literature: The Ancient World, Beginnings -100 C.E.* Bedford, 2004.

Euripides. *Cyclops*. David Kovacs, ed. *Perseus Digital Library*, Gregory R.Crane, ed, Tufts U. [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0093:card=82](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0093:card=82). Accessed 1 November 2023.

Groeneveld, Emma. “Loki.” *World History Encyclopedia*, 17 November 2017, [www.worldhistory.org/Loki/#google\\_vignette](http://www.worldhistory.org/Loki/#google_vignette). Accessed 23 October 2023.

Harris, Stephen L. and Gloria Platzner. *Classical Mythology: Images & Insights*. 6th ed, McGraw, 2012.

Homer. “Olympos.” *Theoi*, [www.theoi.com/Kosmos/Olympos.html](http://www.theoi.com/Kosmos/Olympos.html). Accessed 1 November 2023.

Hurt, James R. “‘Prometheus Unbound’ and Aeschylean Dramaturgy.” *Keats-Shelley Journal*, vol. 15, 1966, pp. 43–48. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/30209853](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30209853). Accessed 3 Dec. 2023.

*The King James Version of the Bible*. *Project Gutenberg*, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10/pg10-images.html#The\\_First\\_Book\\_of\\_Moses\\_Called\\_Genesis](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10/pg10-images.html#The_First_Book_of_Moses_Called_Genesis). Accessed 14 November 2023.

Attribution: This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Lachs, Samuel Tobias. “The Pandora-Eve Motif in Rabbinic Literature.” *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 67, no. 3, 1974, pp. 341 –45. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/1509228](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1509228). Date accessed 14 Nov. 2023.

Mark, Joshua. “Ancient Egyptian Mythology.” *World History Encyclopedia*, 17 January 2013, [www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian\\_Mythology/](http://www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian_Mythology/). Accessed 26 April 2024.

- . “*Enuma Elish: The Babylonian Epic of Creation*, Full-text.” *World History Encyclopedia*, [www.worldhistory.org/article/225/enuma-elish---the-babylonian-epic-of-creation---fu/](http://www.worldhistory.org/article/225/enuma-elish---the-babylonian-epic-of-creation---fu/). Accessed 23 October 2023.
- Miller, Mary and Karl Taube. *An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya*. Thames and Hudson, 1993.
- Newcomb, Franc Johnson. *Navaho Folk Tales*. U of New Mexico P, 1993.
- Ozolins, Aija. “Dreams and Doctrines: Dual Strands in ‘Frankenstein.’” *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1975, pp. 103–12. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/4238931](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4238931). Accessed 4 Dec. 2023.
- Ovid Naso, Publius. *The Metamorphoses of Publius Ovidius Naso in English Blank Verse Vols. I & II*. Trans by J.J. Howard, Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/28621/pg28621-images.html](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/28621/pg28621-images.html). Accessed 22 October 2023.
- Attribution: This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.
- Plutarch. *Quaestiones Graecae*. Goodwin, Ed. *Perseus Digital Library*, Gregory R. Crane, ed, Tufts U., [data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0007.tlg084b.perseus-eng2:43](http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0007.tlg084b.perseus-eng2:43). Accessed 1 November 2023.
- O’Brien, Joan. “Nammu, Mami, Eve and Pandora: ‘What’s in a Name?’” *The Classical Journal*, vol. 79, no. 1, 1983, pp. 35–45. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/3297042](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3297042). Accessed 13 Nov. 2023.
- Powell, Barry B. *Classical Myth*. 9th ed, Oxford, 2021.
- Reed, A.W. and Roger Hart illustrator. *Maori Legends*. Reed, 1972.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus*. Project Gutenberg, [www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/42324](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/42324). Accessed 26 April 2024.
- Attribution: This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe. “Author’s Preface.” *Prometheus Unbound: a Lyrical Drama in Four Acts*. 1820, U of Pennsylvania, [knarf.english.upenn.edu/PShelley/promtp.html](http://knarf.english.upenn.edu/PShelley/promtp.html). Accessed 2 December 2023.
- Walcot, P. “Greek Attitudes towards Women: The Mythological Evidence.” *Greece & Rome*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1984, pp. 37–47. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/642368](http://www.jstor.org/stable/642368). Accessed 14 Nov. 2023.
- Wickkiser, Bronwen L. “Hesiod and the Fabricated Woman: Poetry and Visual Art in the ‘Theogony.’” *Mnemosyne*, vol. 63, no. 4, 2010, pp. 557–76. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/25801884](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25801884). Accessed 14 Nov. 2023.

---

4.16: Bibliography is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 5: The Feminine Divine

#### 5.1: The Great Goddess

##### 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess

##### 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

##### 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

##### 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

##### 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

##### 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

#### 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

##### 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

#### 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

#### 5.4: The Goddess Divided

##### 5.4.1: Hecate

##### 5.4.2: Hera

##### 5.4.3: Hestia

##### 5.4.4: Artemis

##### 5.4.5: Demeter

#### 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth

##### 5.5.1: Charter

##### 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

##### 5.5.2: Psychological

##### 5.5.3: Feminist

##### 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

#### 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

#### 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

#### 5.8: Study Questions

#### 5.9: Bibliography

---

5: The Feminine Divine is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.1: The Great Goddess

Consider this crossword puzzle clue (*LA Times* December 10, 2023) “Io and Europe, for Jupiter.” Without any hints, our brains might freely associate options based on our study of Greco-Roman myths. Words like, *conquest*, or *victim*, or *mate*, or *partner*, or *prey* might work depending upon the context or our point of reference as the audience. If we narrow our lens as we did in the chapter on Prometheus, we see the tragic aspect of these relationships and how they position women, especially mortal women, in perilous positions as victims of a powerful god and his shrewish wife. But if we widen our lens to extend beyond a single myth, beyond a single place in history, (imagine a dramatic cinematic pan-out here), drawing outward toward the farther reaches of the galaxy, we can visualize the eight (sorry, Pluto) planets with the largest, Jupiter, fixed in the middle of the line. Circling this great ball of gasses are the two moons, Io and Europe.

While this gives us the answer to the puzzle clue, it also provides a very male-centric and heavily ironic cosmogony (the study of the origins of the universe), one which attributes the largest body in the galaxy with elements of masculine potency. To Jupiter’s left is Saturn, the Roman counterpart to Kronos, and not as we’d expect, Jupiter’s mate. To see any female representatives in the galaxy’s planets we have to look closer to the sun, to Venus, the brightest planet in the sky and visible to the naked eye. But even she embodies male ideal of femininity as the embodiment of lustful sexual attraction and love. To see any other female representation, we must pan closer to home, our own Earth, the Roman name for Gaea [gee-AH], or Mother Goddess.

---

5.1: The Great Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess

---

The Mother Goddess is associated with procreative activities, including earthly and cosmic fertility. In the *Theogony*, Hesiod tells of Gaea's birth from the chasm of Chaos, as the first measure of order in the natal universe. To affirm her procreative role, she births Ouranos, the Greek version of the Sky God. The cosmic Mother appears in a number of other traditions, wearing a number of unique names, but functioning in a universal manner. The Mother governs human, animal and agricultural fertility, thus, is often depicted alongside animals in her role as "Mistress of the Animals." In this capacity, she is identified with Artemis, who both protects animals and oversees their subsequent hunting. In her function as agricultural patron, she is identified with Demeter, who governs the harvest that feeds the population. In the natural order of fertility and life, she also governs death and represents the chthonic [THON-ik] elements most often affiliated with the Crone, or Hecate who governs the magical elements that transport the dead to the Underworld (a role later appropriated by Hermes).

---

5.1.1: The Mother Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

Goddess figures first appeared in the Paleolithic era, when nomadic hunters needed the intervention of divine energy to find and capture animals to sustain the tribe. Feminist Theorist Anne Barstow explains that the women's movement of the 1970s argued that women were identified with all that "is bodily, procreative, and finite," and as such they aligned with Nature. Men, conversely, identified with "reason, creativity and transcendence," (10) and while this may offer insight to the rise of male gods in the Olympian pantheon, it also might explain why such a figure found worth in early peoples. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, physiological (biological) needs must be first met—water, food, shelter—before any other need can be met. To assure survival, it would have been practical to appeal to the procreative powers of a divinity who could not only make the animals multiply, but who could also call them to the hunters.

While some theorists question the existence of a Goddess culture, credible archeological evidence—specifically the excavations and discoveries at Çatal Hüyük [cha-tal hay-OOK], a Neolithic site in Anatolia, Turkey (c. 7000 BCE) and frescos found in Delphi—exists to support the theory that early tribes worshiped a Mother Goddess, who would later transform into the Great Goddess, a more awesome and fearsome figure.

The archeological trove of Çatal Hüyük was described by James Mellaart, who spent two years excavating the site, as evidence of a culture that practiced not only Goddess worship but also was likely a matriarchal society. His findings included a majority of female bones ceremoniously buried in the foundations of shrines and a trove of frescos, sculptures and figurines of goddesses, many of which depicted birthing. Most notable was the voluptuous clay figure of a goddess in the act of birth, flanked by two felines (possibly leopards) which Mellaart noted as representation of the goddess as "Mistress of the Animals," but as the figure was located in a grain bin (Mellaart 138), it also links with the goddess as "Mistress of the Harvest" (Barstow 12).

Commonly partnered with bull iconography, a potent symbol of male energy, the female goddess figures at Çatal Hüyük may reflect the socio-political status of women in this Neolithic culture. David Leeming, author of *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*, states, "Deities tend to reflect the political and social realities of those who depict them. Whether or not a dominant goddess in several forms presided over prehistoric Paleolithic and early Neolithic matriarchies is unclear" (Leeming 156). While Mellaart argues strongly for a matriarchal structure in Çatal Hüyük, Ian Hodder who continued excavations at the site argues for a more egalitarian society, one in which gender didn't differentiate or determine status or quality of life (Hodder 83).



Figure 5.1.2.1: At 16.5 centimeters tall, one of the major finds at Çatal Hüyük, "The Seated Woman," represents the feminine connection to nature, procreation, and agriculture. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, Turkey, c. 6000. (CC BY SA 3.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

The question of patriarchy or matriarchy matters to researchers because it serves to support or refute the existence of a goddess cult, and the society of Çatal Hüyük, Mellaart and Barstow argue, reflected a religion created by women, who exercised a measure

of authority over the economy and community. From this vantage point, they fashioned “a religion devoted to the conservation of life in all forms, devoted to the mysteries of birth and nourishment and life after death” (Barstow 15), even as the culture also venerated animistic symbols of power.

Religious scholar Karen Armstrong offers another angle to understand the powerful position a primal goddess figure held within a largely male-hunter-centric society. She reasons underlying and unspoken enmity of feminine to be at the core, ironically. The goddess depicted in the Seated Woman figurine of Çatal Hüyük “gives birth eternally, but her partner, the bull, must die. Hunters risked their lives to support women and children. The guilt and anxiety induced by hunting, combined with the frustration resulting from ritual celibacy, could have been projected onto the image of a powerful woman, who demands endless bloodshed.” Though they provided the meat for the community, the hunters would have also been acutely aware that women provided renewable life through birth, and were thus more essential than the dispensable hunters. The Great Mother then became the basis for continuity of life, “a life that required the ceaseless sacrifice of men and animals” (Armstrong *Myth* 39).

Incarnations of the Mother Goddess varied depending on the seasonal and circumstantial needs of the tribe or culture, likely evolving along with the needs of the people. While evidence of the Mother Goddess is scant due to lack of very early written records from pre-literate societies, figurines suggest her ongoing importance both as an object of veneration and, perhaps, as an instructional object. The famous Venus of Willendorf is noted for its anatomical correctness, leading researchers to believe she may have served to teach women about childbearing or initiation into womanhood.



Figure 5.1.2.1: The Venus of Willendorf, c. 26,000 BC (the Gravettian period); limestone with ochre coloring; Naturhistorisches Museum (Vienna, Austria) (CC BY 2.5, via [Wikimedia](#))

Religious scholar, Mircea Eliade, describes the coalescence between birth and death as a cosmic reunification. A wide variety of myths, including Native American, refer to a primordial time when Mother Earth birthed people in the same fashion she births flora. This generates for people a sense of “mystical solidarity with [their] native soil. . . . the religious experience of autochthony;” the sense of kinship with a place, one that transcends a familial or genetic connection. As such, dying people yearn to “return to Mother Earth, to be buried in [their] native soil” (140-41). Birth, he continues, is intrinsically woven into the continuum. Representative effigies of birth goddesses, such as Eileithyia [eye-LYE-thee-ah] (daughter of Zeus and Hera), are often depicted kneeling on the ground reflective of the ancient birthing practices of primitive people. By kneeling during birth, a woman symbolically connects herself, her child and the act of birth with the “Great Genetrix,” who will guide her through the mysteries of birth, life, and death, offering protection via sympathetic magic (141-42).

Likewise, the mythological practices and beliefs of the Paleolithic people allowed them to mature into a new era of human development, the Neolithic, where they came to understand that death, while terrible and terrifying, was still an essential element of human experience and transformation. In consideration of the power of death, it too became an aspect of the Mother Goddess, foretelling her transformation into the Great Goddess.

This transformation hinged largely upon the agricultural revolution that also marked the entry into the Neolithic age, a revolution which is, consequently, due to the efforts of women. Egyptologists cite the beginnings of agriculture in the Near East approximately at 8000 BCE, and the tasks involved in farming, cultivation and harvesting fell to the hands of women while the

tribal men chased protein on the plains and savannas. Women passed along the knowledge they gained to each subsequent generation, and with the knowledge, a certain degree of reverence for women's wisdom also generated. By 4500-4000 BCE in the earliest prehistoric era in ancient Egypt, the Badarian, the graves of women were notably larger than men. Where most ancient cultures revered a Mother (Earth) Goddess alongside a Sky God, the Ancient Egyptians venerated Nut [nOOt], the goddess who held up the heavens with the arc of her body (Lesko 6).

---

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

The Sky Goddess Nut [nOOt], the goddess who held up the heavens with the arc of her body (Lesko 6), was often affiliated with the sacred cow, an image that hardly feels important or complementary to modern humans. However, if we apply Lens theory, focusing on what the people of ancient southern Egypt would have valued, we see that as an agrarian society, now fixed in place, they depended upon herding alongside farming to feed their people. Cattle in particular provided an unending supply of milk, a substance that can be cultured into a variety of uses, making these creatures incredibly valuable. At a time when tempestuous weather gods would destroy an entire wheat crop, cows provided a dependable means of survival. Cows, along with dogs that guarded against intruders, and sheep that also provided milk were so treasured that upon their death, they were wrapped in shrouds and buried in graves (8).

The mothering qualities of cows whose milk sustains both their young and human young draws parallels to a divine mother or fertility goddess, but we can further the link by turning our lens to the night sky of the ancient world, a sky undisturbed by light pollution. The white swath of the Milky Way would've painted the sky in a nightly show. An Ancient Egyptian might have asked, "what produces so much whiteness, so like milk?" For a herding culture, the answer would be obvious: a celestial cow. Yet, even primitive people wouldn't have been so literal. Elizabeth and Paul Barber, in their essential book, *When They Severed Earth from Sky*, using lens theory to explain how early human minds shaped myths, cite "The Analogy Principle" to explain that ancient people used analogy much like we do to explain phenomena but after a while, the comparative words "like" or "as" are often dropped, so the night sky transforms from "a sky like the milk from a celestial cow" to "a celestial cow's milk" (Barber and Barber 34-40).

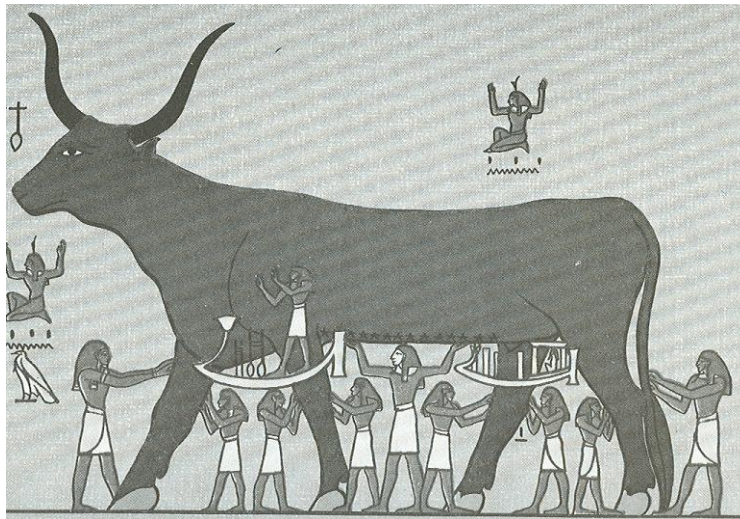


Figure 5.1.3.1: The Sky goddess Nut, represented as the Celestial Cow, who holds up the heavens, represented by the stars on her underbelly which connect to form the Milky Way. The sun and moon are carried in the boats that sail near her front and rear legs. (From *The Gods of the Egyptians* Volume 1 by E. A. Wallis Budge, circa 1904. Public Domain [Wikimedia](#))

Sustaining human life and the ability to procreate rapidly forever tied cows to Nut, especially as the need for a greater workforce grew alongside the success of the agricultural revolution, leading to the need to venerate the appropriate fertility deities. But life is always accompanied by the eventuality of death, and the Mother Goddess is intrinsically linked with chthonic aspects. The earliest female deities, as mentioned before, intertwined both life and death, evidenced by female figurines found within graves. Prehistorian Elise Baumgartel and author Barbara Lesko cite the emergence of seedlings from the earth as rationale for the chthonic qualities. If seeds planted could return with new life, the force that generated such life must come from an earthly goddess. Using analogy, we can discern "that people felt the grave was a conduit for communicating with deities of fecundity" (Lesko 10). Rather than viewing death with abject fear, early people likely saw it as a necessary component for renewal, and the goddess a chief factor in that process.



Figure 5.1.3.1: The goddess Mehet-Weret [me-HET-where-et], the embodiment of the Great Flood, predates Nut and is considered the first being brought into existence. In Ancient Egypt two elements ruled the wellbeing and survival of humans, the sun which produced the long dry summer months and water, which came as floods rather than rain, and which brought renewed life to the Fertile Crescent. Lesko explains that the Egyptians saw the world of the dead in the sky; therefore, “the earth represented life, and the sky was the domain of the dead. The watery abyss on earth engendered life, and the sky goddess received the dead . . . placing Mehet-Weret in heaven vacated space below, so that the theologians could hand it over to a male deity” (Lesko 24). (CC BY [Wikimedia](#))

---

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death



Figure 5.1.4.1: The Twin Goddess figurine may represent the dual aspects of the Great Goddess, the Mother and the Daughter, a precursor to Demeter and Persephone (Mellaart 140). Twin goddess marble statuette, height 17.2 cm, from Çatal Hüyük, 6000-5500 BC. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara. (CC BY SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

By integrating the cycle of death into her many attributes, the Mother Goddess shifts into a more potent deity, often referred to as the Great Goddess (Her latter name), a shift which unintentionally initiates the birth of the male pantheon and their ascension to power, at her expense. Some researchers, such as David Leeming hold the Goddess responsible for the shift to a male-centric mythology, citing as evidence the descent of the Sumerian goddess Inanna to the underworld where she confronts death, her sister Ereshkigal. Leeming distills this episode into a single outcome: “In the Dumuzi myth Inanna has already entered the process in which the goddess will lose power to the god” (Leeming 156). In oversimplifying the actions of Inanna, the brave and willful self-sacrifice of Dumuzi, and the resulting benefit to her people, Leeming’s quick reduction falls into the historical pattern of diminishing the potency of the feminine divine to uphold the “right to rule” for the subsequent male generation to come. He even subtly retitles the epic to “the Dumuzi myth,” rather than the accepted title, “The Descent of Inanna.”

Other authorities, such as Karen Armstrong, trace the transformation of the Mother Goddess through Her Paleolithic and Neolithic appearances, calling her “more powerful than the Sky God,” and recognizing her specter in various incarnations including the Syrian goddess Asherah, spouse of El, the High God, or as Anat, El’s daughter; also in Sumer in Mesopotamia, as Inanna and later in Babylonia as Ishtar; in Egypt as Isis; and in Greece where her power was separated across three or more goddesses, she became Hera, Demeter and Aphrodite. Stressing the intentions of the myths and the role they served for their people, Armstrong believes the myths weren’t meant to be read literally, rather metaphorically as etiological explanations for “a reality that was too complex and elusive to express in any other way . . . to articulate their sense of the powerful but unseen forces that surrounded them. During this time, Armstrong notes, the Mother Goddess merged with the version the hunting tribes venerated, the Great Mother, maintaining and intensifying her more intimidating aspects (*God* 5 and *Myth* 46-47):

Anat, for example, is a ruthless warrior, and often depicted wading through an ocean of blood; Demeter is described as furious and vengeful, and even Aphrodite, goddess of love, exacts fearful revenge . . . [Myths] were not pastoral idylls, and the Mother Goddess was not a gentle, consoling deity because agriculture was not experienced as a peaceful, contemplative occupation. It was a constant battle, a desperate struggle, against sterility, drought, famine and the violent forces of nature which were also manifestations of sacred power. The sexual imagery of planting did not mean that people experienced agriculture as a romantic love affair with nature. Human reproduction was itself highly dangerous for mother and child. (Armstrong *Myth* 46-47)

Child and maternal mortality rates in a pre-modern world were terribly high, leading to further energies directed at praising a Great Mother who could ensure the safe carriage and growth of a baby who might contribute to either the farming or hunting necessary to ensure the survival of the agricultural workforce.

Rituals born out of these beliefs are described in a number of cultural myths, including the Babylonian *Enuma Elish* and the Canaanite myth of Baal-Habad. *Enuma Elish* was ritually recited on the fourth day of the New Year, and in its telling the audience experiences the creation of the world from a primordial chaos, likely similar to the marshy swamps of Mesopotamia, to the seismic flooding exemplified by the war between Tia'mat and Marduk. Tia'mat is the manifestation of a generative Great Mother who is both terrifying and awesome, one who births an army of monsters to fend off those who seek to organize and subdue her mighty waters. The fearsome power of water was well known to these people who, like the Ancient Egyptians, regularly witnessed mighty flooding that either could feed or destroy a crop.



Figure 5.1.4.1: This bronze figure of Anat, sister and consort of Baal, dates from the early 2nd millennium BC (Middle Bronze Age (MB I/II A)). (From the Walters Art Museum, Public Domain [Wikimedia](#))

Early cultures regularly traded their myths along with goods, and this myth very likely inspired those of Canaan, specifically the character Baal-Habad, the storm and fertility god, who appears often in the Bible as an antagonist (Armstrong *God* 8). Similar to the “Descent of Inanna,” Baal experiences death, but unlike the goddess Inanna, his story does not end with an auspicious return and rebirth. Instead, upon his death he descends into the realm of Mot, the divine embodiment “of death and sterility.” Learning of his son’s death, El, the High God, abandons his ceremonial throne and takes on mourning garb, a simple sackcloth, and then tears

his cheeks as an expression of his sadness. As powerful as he is, he cannot save his own son. Instead, Baal's sister and consort, Anat, departs to seek her lover's everlasting spirit, "desiring him as a cow her calf or a ewe her lamb" (qtd. In Armstrong *God* 8). After recovering his body, and honoring him with a funerary feast, she attacks Mot in spectacular fashion. Cutting him in half first, she then "winnows, burns and grinds him like corn before sowing him in the ground." The final measure, sowing his remains, is akin to actions of Inanna, Ishtar and Isis, who seek out their dead mates to regenerate the land. Anat, however, finds a measure of victory as Baal is reanimated and returned whole to Anat. Her victory over Mot is celebrated annually in ritual to memorialize her act. Armstrong summarizes:

"This apotheosis of wholeness and harmony, symbolized by the union of the sexes, was celebrated by means of ritual sex in ancient Canaan. By imitating the gods in this way, men and women would share their struggle against sterility and ensure the creativity and fertility of the world. The death of the god, the quest of the goddess and the triumphant return to the divine sphere were constant religious themes in many cultures and would recur in very different themes in many cultures" (*God* 10-11).

The representation of the questing goddess and the passive god in need of rescue emerged as a theme after the Neolithic age. Rather than being rooted in place like the mortal women of the agricultural Neolithic era, the female divinities sought purposeful restoration, often fighting with death as they brought subsistence to humanity. Unlike cavalier, ego-centric, adventure-seeking characters, like Gilgamesh, the Great Mother represents an honorable ideal, as a heroine who seeks to amend and support humankind (Armstrong *Myth* 48).

Across the Mediterranean Sea, near the close of the Neolithic and the dawn of the Bronze Age, Indo-Europeans invaded the land that would become Greece, bringing their beliefs with them. The wide area referenced in Greek myths includes the Hellas, the mountainous peninsula on the southeastern edge of Europe, and the lands east of the Mediterranean, along with the Asiatic coasts and the Aegean Islands, a region both fertile and promising to invaders. A later wave brought the Danaans, named from the myth of Danaus, the King of Libya, whose fifty daughters are credited with bringing agriculture and the fertility rites of Demeter from their home in the Middle East. Piecing together the fragments from Apollonius of Rhodes and other sources and archeological evidence from caves, highlights the presence and importance of a mother goddess in the region. Discoveries of goddess figures, temples, and images span as far north-west as Medjugorje, Illyria, as far south as Luxor, Egypt, and as far east as Assour, Syria, with approximately thirty-six locations spread across the wider Mediterranean (Markale 192). Findings in caves near Delphi suggest versions of goddess veneration there dating from 4000 BCE, and by 1400 BCE evidence points to Gaea as the primary deity at the temple. Her reign there lasted until Apollo appeared approximately 700 BCE, and his cult rose in her place (Leeming 161).



Figure 5.1.4.1: A number of goddess figures from the pre-Greek Cycladic culture (named for the Cycladic islands) and the Minoan (named for King Minos) have been found in burial sites from 3000-2000 BCE (Leeming 161). This very large marble female figure, carved in canonical type, can justifiably be classed as a statue. Distinguished by clear outlines, perfect proportions and plasticity of forms, it suggests latent movement, indicated by the higher left hip and corresponding shoulder, culminating in the slight inclination of the head to the right which infuses the figure with an air of mystery, establishing it as the distant precursor of the monumental sculptures of Archaic times. There is no doubt that this is the work of a gifted artist who managed to express in marble the awe inspired by the Great Goddess, who is often shrouded in mystery. It is likely a cult statue, based on its height of 1.4 meters, which stood in one of her unknown shrines. Probably from Keros, EC II, 2800-2300 BC. Goulandris Foundation Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens, Coll. no. 724. (CC BY, via [Wikimedia](#))



Figure 5.1.4.1: Artemis of Ephesus, in alabaster, 2nd century AD. Though commonly associated with chastity, Artemis embodied fertility aspects, even as early as her service as midwife for her own twin's birth. As one of the descendants of the Great Goddess, she is sculpted with an abundance of breast (symbols of fertility and nurturing) and clothed with miniature animals and insects in affiliation with her protector role as Mistress of the Animals (Harris and Platzner 138). Two deers flank the statue as symbols of her role as divine huntress. Each symbol combines to emphasize her role as supporter of life (Ephesus Archaeological Museum). (CC BY, via [Wikimedia](#))

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

Of the many symbols associated with the Great Goddess, perhaps the most pervasive is the serpent, a creature which possesses the ability to travel between layers in the earth seeming to exist between the realm of the living and the realm of the dead. As an animal that often hibernates—another connection to death and rebirth—and then returns in the spring to molt its skin, it further secures its place within the symbolic mysteries of the Goddess, a manifestation of the Goddess' chthonic [thON-iK] (inhabiting, or belonging to the underworld) ability. In pre-Christian cultures, the serpent was associated with wisdom, and was commonly used as a temple guardian. Within the Greek pantheon, several goddesses are affiliated with the serpent, including Athene and Salus, the daughter of Asclepius.



Figure 5.1.5.1: Knossos Snake Goddess. The Minoan civilization, a pre-Greek culture, venerated snake goddesses, similar to ancient Indian, Egyptian, Kongolese, and Aztec cultures. This goddess figure emphasizes her mothering function, signified by her bare breasts, and her chthonic functions, reflected in the snakes she has mastered. The snakes further identify with the mysteries of the Mother Goddess and her secret wisdom of life, death, and rebirth. (Archaeological Museum of Heraklion CC BY 4.0 [Wikimedia](#))



Figure 5.1.5.1: Salus, the goddess of health, is often associated with a serpent, which symbolizes the healing arts. As the daughter of Asclepius, the god of medicine, and granddaughter of Apollo, she retains the affiliation with restoration (rebirth) and the serpent of the Great Goddess and reunites the male elements of medicine within her female form. In this statue she is depicted feeding the serpent to affirm her nurturing nature, while the sleeping Eros by her side represents the practice of resting in the temple of Asclepius for healing. (Photo by A. Murray 2023, CC BY)

A number of other indigenous cultures also venerated the serpent as a benevolent, or creative spirit. The Aboriginal First Nations people of Australia credit the Rainbow Serpent as a creative entity, responsible for carving up the deep gulches, the high mountains, and rivers. As one version of the myth relates, the Rainbow Serpent offered shelter (in its mouth) to two young men of his tribe. Then it did what snakes do and ate them. When the other tribal members became aware of the two missing men, and realized what the serpent had done, they tracked down the mighty snake, cutting into the rainbowed skin, and releasing the two men who had been transformed into colorful parrots. As an etiological tale, this explains both regional landscape features as well as the existence of a variety of the multi-colored birds that populate the country. But it also highlights the powers of life, death, and transformation also seen in the Great Goddess.

Similar to the earthly chthonic qualities of the serpent, birds are another common symbol of the Goddess. Throughout the Neolithic period, images of Goddess figures portrayed with birds, wings, or with bird heads and wings proliferated between 7000-3500 BCE. The Egyptian goddess Isis is depicted as winged, especially in her quest to restore Osiris where she is depicted beating her wings over his dead body to revivify him. The connection with birds not only aligns with rebirth, but also with the Goddess' ability to travel between the upper and underworlds as well as mediate between humans and the divine (Young 25-26,41).



Figure 5.1.5.1: This modern statue of Athene incorporates many latent symbols of the Great Goddess, including the wings on Nike, held in Athene's hand, the coiled serpents on her breast plate, even her platform of acanthus leaves which connect to another symbol of the Goddess, trees, which are often represented as stumps, pillars or columns. Trees affiliate the Goddess with the Tree of Life, the World Tree, or sacred trees, all symbolizing immortality or rebirth, as well as a connection to the underworld through their roots. This statue's phallic spear, however, reminds us that though Athene may look feminine, she orients with a masculine warrior mindset. Vienna, Austria, Parliament Building. (CC BY, via [Wikimedia](#))

The moon, as mentioned before, is consistently associated with the Great Goddess, and with women in general, as its twenty-nine-and-a-half-day cycle neatly aligns with the menstrual-fertility cycle, giving rise to the term "moon time." Cycles of the moon further symbolize the stages of womanhood—maiden, mother, crone—along with the moon's waxing, waning and disappearance from the night sky, followed by a welcome return, or rebirth. The pattern also mirrors the many pre-Greek myths that tell of lunar goddesses on quests to redeem, return, and reanimate their dead loved ones. The moon is also credited in some systems as being the source or creative inspiration, giving birth to greater understanding of the world, the creation, or the human experience; in essence, its brilliant light against the dark night reassured early humans that a benevolent and nurturing deity watched over them.

The crescent horns of the moon are another link between the celestial aspects of the Goddess and her agricultural functions, especially those of Ancient Egypt, where the sky goddess was depicted as a cow. The crescent moon symbolizes the horns of Nut and reaffirmed the link between the heavenly cow and the earthly cow which both light the night and support life. Isis, along with Hathor and the Sumerian goddess Ishtar and her Phoenician counterpart, Astarte, all have cow goddess associations related to the value of cattle within early agrarian cultures. The association is carried into Greek mythology in the story of Europa, a mortal princess captured by Zeus disguised as a bull. Her transportation across the continent may have reflected a version of cow goddess or Great Goddess worship spread across differing civilizations (Harris and Platzner 142); similarly, the tragic tale of Io may offer another etiological explanation of the retreat of the cow goddess as her tribes were chased or conquered by warrior cultures.

Other iconography associated with the Goddess includes birds, vessels or storage jars, the double ax, seeds and fruit which neatly align with life and rebirth. Birds or their symbol, wings, establish a connection between the terrestrial earth and the sky deities, including those that live in the heavens like the Olympians. Several of the Olympian goddesses hold birds as sacred, such as Hera's peacock and cuckoo, both of which figure into her myths; and Athene's owl, which further aligns with wisdom or insight. Vessels, like Pandora's jar, represent the Goddess's womb, an object of veneration and fear in its capacity to create and retract life. The

vessel is often represented as a chalice and appears in *Beowulf*, when Queen Wealtheow serves the hero with her wine chalice and ensures the contract between them that will protect her people and, specifically, her young sons. In the Arthurian legends, the holy chalice is the feminine representation of rebirth and salvation for the kingdom.



Figure 5.1.5.1: This drawing of the motif on a gold ring from Mycenae depicts Demeter handing three poppies to Kore, with a labrys (double-headed ax) central in the image. The labrys symbolizes the Goddess's deathly aspects, while the poppies have several symbolic associations with Demeter. The flowers and their seeds, which grow within corn fields—the primary crop belonging to Demeter—are also known for their scarlet color, which guarantees resurrection after death, and the seeds carry tranquilizing effects. Thus Kore's acceptance of the three flowers portends her annual winter descent (Graves 73). (Acropolis Museum, Greece. CC BY 1.0 [Wikimedia](#))



Figure 5.1.5.1: The Delphic Omphalos, or “world’s navel,” carries dual meanings for the Ancient Greeks. This example was found near Delphi, where Apollo’s temple commemorates his triumph over the serpent Python, a distant avatar of the Goddess. Thus, the temple and the Omphalos signify the birthplace of the Greek world, and the defeat of the ancient Goddess by the emerging male warrior cultures. Greek tradition also assigns the original Omphalos as the stone Kronos swallowed in place of infant Zeus (Markale 31, 204) (Harris and Platzner 228). Robert Graves believes the stone might have depicted “the raised white mound of tightly-packed ash, enclosed live charcoal, which was the easiest means of preserving fire without smoke. Later, it became pictorially identified with the lime-whitened mound under which the harvest corn-doll was hidden, to be removed sprouting in the spring; and the mound of sea-shells, or quartz, or white marble, underneath which dead kings were buried” (Graves XXV-XXVI). (CC BY SA 4.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

Fruit and seeds also connect to another significant function of the Goddess as Creatrix: sacred sexual rites. Persephone’s fate was rendered when she consumed the seeds of the pomegranate, “the fruit of Hell” which was laid as bait by Hades, and in doing so she became “of Hades.” No longer the virgin child of a virgin mother—consuming the fruit carries sexual connotations—she became trapped between worlds, a harbinger of spring and the bride of death, and an analog of the Goddess.



Figure 5.1.5.1: The knowing smile of The Kore with Pomegranate, displayed in the Acropolis Museum in Athens, emphasizes her mastery of the fruit, often referred to as a “bloody fruit” for its sanguine color. The connections with blood distinguished the fruit as “an appropriate offering for the dead who craved life, that is, blood,” as well as a common votive offering to Athene whose early shrines emphasized her fertility aspects (Young 59). (Photo by A. Murray 2005, CC BY)

The link between sacred sex and agricultural procreation was further sanctified by the hierogamy (*hieros gamos*), the sacred marriage. Karen Armstrong explains,

Human sexuality . . . was regarded as essentially the same as the divine force that fructified the earth. In early Neolithic mythology, the harvest was seen as the fruit of the hierogamy, a sacred marriage: the soil was female; the seeds divine semen; and the rain the sexual congress of heaven and earth. It was common for men and women to engage in ritual sex when they planted their crops. Their own intercourse, itself a sacred act, would activate the creative energies of the soil, just as the farmer’s spade or plough was a sacred phallus that opened the womb of the earth and made it big with the seed. (Armstrong *Myth* 43-44)

Such practices of sacred sex continued throughout the sixth century BCE and are referenced in the Bible, much to the disgust of prophets Ezekiel and Hosea. Armstrong notes that in the temple in Jerusalem rituals involving sacred prostitutes were enacted to praise the fertility goddess, Asherah, of Canaan (44). Sex in this regard was not a lascivious or wanton expression, rather the human attempt to act their part in a necessary ceremony to sustain their fragile existence.

---

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

---

Throughout the bodies of literature that examine mythology, researchers are fond of identifying individual Olympian goddesses as the “Greek” Great Goddess. Karen Armstrong identifies Artemis, “Mistress of the Animals,” as an incarnation of the Great Goddess, for her demands of blood sacrifice if the divine rules of hunting are breached. Robert Graves furthers this position, citing her triple titles, “Maiden Goddess,” “Moon Goddess,” and “Goddess of the Hunt,” as credible evidence of her connection to the Great Goddess.

Other researchers point to Aphrodite, Hera, or Hecate as the Great Mother Goddess. Aphrodite, according to the *Theogony*, was born from the union of Ouranos’ severed genitals and the sea foam, in a version of parthenogenetic birth (conception and birth without intercourse, or without a father). Hera, as queen of Olympus and patron of marriage and married women, also appears as a candidate. Archeological evidence supports this; several of the oldest and largest temples from the Mycenaean era were dedicated to Hera. Hecate, as an elder goddess, also regularly emerges as an incarnation of the Great Goddess.

If we draw connections between each of these goddesses, looking carefully at what they represent, we find that they exemplify the three functions of the Great Goddess: life, death, and rebirth or metamorphosis.

Artemis maintained her earliest purview of birthing and midwifery, when moments after her own birth, she served as midwife to deliver her twin, Apollo, forever connecting her to the start of life, the most fragile period of existence and the one most in need of a powerful patron. As a goddess who bartered for the ability to remain a virgin and to never surrender her autonomy to a husband, she also represents the first phase of the Great Goddess, maidenhood. As goddess of the moon, her connection to the Great Goddess is further affirmed since the moon’s waxing and waning align with the three phases of womanhood—maiden, woman, and crone—and the moon’s passage through the three functions of the Great Goddess, with the full moon representing pregnancy and the promise of life, the absence of the moon representing death, and the return of the new moon representing rebirth.

Aphrodite represents the crux between maidenhood and womanhood. As the embodiment of sensual love, she serves to initiate women into the experience of sexual awareness and the threshold of motherhood. Motherhood unites life and rebirth, and was viewed as especially potent in early cultures that may not have understood the role of males in procreation.

Hera, in addition to her role as marriage patron, also has earlier roots as an earth goddess, similar to Demeter. Bringing fertility to fields is mirrored in her marriage role, where she blesses families with children, reassuring comfort that life is sustainable.

Hecate, the arcane retired goddess, represents the mysteries of death. Prior to Hades’ abduction of Persephone, and Hermes’ appointment as soul transporter, it was Hecate who oversaw death rites and who escorted shades (souls of the dead) safely to the underworld. After Persephone was anointed Queen of the Underworld, Hecate’s purview was transitioned into magic and witchcraft. But both goddesses portray the pre-Hellenic desire for rebirth; Hecate’s chthonic ability to travel between the two spheres and Persephone’s annual springtime return (rebirth) from Hades reinforced this belief and offers an antidote to the subconscious fear of the permanence of death.

---

5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

Beyond the three duties of life, death and rebirth the most formidable power of the Great Mother Goddess is **parthenogenesis**, the ability to procreate without a male and without intercourse. Within the Greek pantheon, Gaea and Hera both reproduce through parthenogenesis; though in some versions, Hera's son Hephaestus is said to be Zeus' son. In the *Theogony*, Gaea and Eros—divine love—precede all other gods. But Hesiod's focus is on Gaea, who embodies the complex mysteries of the universe including the upper and lower levels of the earth, the tension of light and darkness, and the spark of life and the silence of death. The Divine Creation embodies fear because the cosmic womb captures both birth and death.

Similar to other creation stories, Gaea's parthenogenetic creation begins with division and differentiation, much like the early stage of human conception, but on a much grander stage. Inspired by the life force of Eros, she employs her divine Creatrix ability to birth Ouranos, the Sky God of the Greeks and in doing so, sheds the masculine elements of her primordial self. His birth is followed by more spectacular births: the mountains and the sea and other varieties of life until her lands are filled with the noisy and colorful sentience of her unaided labor. Each of these births offers a benefit to the world, laying the essential natural elements for the coming human race. Hesiod, like other tellers of creation myths, speaks in broad and brief language about the act for there were no human witnesses to: the original genesis. But who amongst us has not stood on a mountain top, or at the edge of the ocean, or over a spectacular vista unmarred by the interruption of human structures and not felt awe. Within that awe, we're struck by the miraculous energy that created and ordered such landscapes. Further, witnessing the devastation caused by a fire, an earthquake or a volcanic eruption reminds us that the very powerful cosmic energy that grants glorious life can just as quickly annihilate it. Questions about the autonomy and the will of such forces plagued early people—as with moderns who still wrestle with these questions—as they sought to understand the nature of Gaea.

Jungian psychologists would identify the Collective Unconscious at work during the composition of creation myths, citing the parallels between differing cultures' envisioned genesis. Freud, Jung's early mentor, identified the tensivity between life and death as Eros, "life force" and Thanatos, "death drive." The human condition is to be constantly at war between the pull of life-affirming choices and life-destroying choices, those manifested as mindless aggression, compulsivity, and reckless self-destruction. Naming this drive after the god of death, Thanatos, is apt. Humans, separated from the life-affirming influence of Eros, seek to return to the comfort of the womb within the stillness of the grave. Archeological evidence from graves of numerous primitive cultures, where bodies are placed into the fetal position, confirms the belief between death and the return to the womb.

To early Greeks, Gaea's power encompassed the uncontrolled, unmanageable womb that could both grant and extract life. Yet, the influence of Eros, the life force that accompanied Gaea's original creations, tempers the philosophical fears of nihilistic destruction by directing divine, and human, energy toward sexual union. Her inexorable separation from her maleness then transfers the creative act, which previously was absent of sexual or pleasurable impulse, toward the erotic.

This new erotic tension between masculine and feminine forces mirrors that between the life force of Eros and the death drive of Thanatos and features thematically, not only in mythology, but in the wider body of literature that examines the human experience; ultimately, there are only two subjects at the core of literature: sex and death.

Like the planets in our solar system are held in the gravitational thrall of the Sun, so too is the dynamic of male and female energies, and the continuum of creation and destruction they enact. The cycle plays out in the subsequent heroic episodes of myth, "as god or heroes who desire erotic reunion with the feminine force while pursuing ego-preserving or power-enhancing goals, often at the expense of the women and children in their lives; or as heroes who strive to attain the immortal condition of the male sky gods only to find that they must descend to the (feminine) Underworld in order to make the attempt" (Harris and Platzner 145).

The orchestration of Gaea's universe unleashes the various tensions and attractions that make human and immortal existence interesting and frightening, beguiling and repellent. It underscores the challenges between light and darkness, good and evil, divine and mortal, progenitor and offspring, and male and female.

---

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

In mediating between the newly differentiated male aspect, Ouranos, and her own procreative powers, Gaea leads the world into a new stage of development. When she consummates her marriage to Ouranos, Gaea co-produces more complex and problematic immortals, the brilliant Titans and the monstrous Cyclopes and Hecatonchires. However, alone, her facility with spontaneous creation must have been rather intimidating to the newly established male-centric pantheon which was a reflection of the hunter-warrior culture that authorized it. To mitigate such a mighty power as parthenogenesis, not to mention life, death and vegetative rebirth, Gaea would soon be subdued, and later retired, her depleted powers and duties reassigned to her daughter, Rhea.

Once bound in union to Ouranos, he seizes control over Gaea's creative autonomy. Fearing usurpation, he captures each of their children and forces them back inside her womb, deep within the earth. By keeping her in a state of prolonged pregnancy, he usurps her power, and though he cannot give birth, he succeeds in paralyzing her ability.

The only power that Ouranos underestimates, however, is the bond of loyalty between mother and child. It is this blindspot, coupled with his equally blinding desire to couple with the divine feminine, that draws his attention away from his own fear of usurpation. Gaea, much like her female divine progeny, bears a natal attachment with her children, one that Ouranos has neglected to form or to notice. Conspiring with her most devious child, Kronos, she arranges for him to castrate Ouranos while they are coupled in sex. To assure Ouranos cannot cure the dismemberment, Kronos flings the genitals into the ocean, finalizing the usurpation Ouranos fought so dearly to avoid.



Figure 5.2.1.1: Pentheus being torn by maenads. The scene from Euripides' *Bacchae* represents **sparagmos**, a ritualized dismemberment of a consort or god once he fulfills his duties of fertilizing the land through union with the goddess. In many mythic versions, the king or god is replaced by a bull or a stag which is slaughtered, then consumed raw by the maenads in a practice known as omophagia (this act isn't substantiated in historical records, and likely only exists in myth). The castration of Ouranos is a form of sparagmos. Roman fresco from the northern wall of the triclinium in the *Casa dei Vettii* (VI 15,1) in Pompeii. (Public Domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

Division of the goddess's functions were a symbolic stand-in for regime change, due to martial conquest by Indo-European tribes and the introduction of their male warrior pantheon. This appropriation of land and peoples left less room and tolerance for prior belief systems, especially those in direct opposition to masculine rule. The all-powerful Goddess, while fearsome, didn't mirror the appearance of those who were mighty enough to defeat her forces, yet, destroying Her effigies—if she really was all-powerful—could be equally calamitous to a new regime.



Figure 5.3.1: The Gorgon, like the Harpies and Furies, were early manifestations of the “*Femme Fatale*,” the deadly woman, and one of the ways the feminine power of the Goddess was diminished. Maintaining the avian wings—a sacred symbol of the Great Goddess—these monstrous females also retained the chthonic aspects of the Goddess, but were stripped of the potential for rebirth and renewal. Positive associations, and avian attributes, were given to Olympian goddesses who worked within the auspices of the Pantheon, including Athene, whose epithet, “owl-eyed” implied her wisdom and watchfulness, abilities that more often worked *for* the patriarchy (Young 59). (Dr.K., CC BY-SA 3.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.4: The Goddess Divided

---

A good deal of Greek myths, Robert Graves argues, “is politico-religious history,” (xxix) composed to memorialize invasions, conquests, and regime changes. Yet, Elizabeth and Paul Barber reason that early people were reasonably conscious of heresy and the innate risk of offending a deity. With Zeus’ defeat of the serpent monster Typhoeus—an avatar of the Great Goddess—he secures the ascendancy of the patriarchal rule in Olympus.

Zeus is an incarnation of the ancient Sky God, a figure who often served as consort to the Mother Goddess. Early people feared and sacrificed to the Sky God, but he was remote, a supernatural force that could bring death from his lightning strikes, but didn’t transcend that role by offering nurturing and renewal in the manner of the Mother. The ancient Sky Gods, from which Zeus is descended, existed in a liminal space, distant enough to not affect the daily lives of people. This, Karen Armstrong explains, very early understanding, “makes it clear that mythology will not succeed if it concentrates on the supernatural; it will only remain vital if it is primarily concerned with humanity” (Armstrong *Myth* 21). Thus, mythology and likely religion, wouldn’t have endured had it only focused on the spectral masculine powers, which qualified the value of a maternal goddess. However, Ouranos, Kronos, and Zeus’ rule depended upon mastering the properties of the feminine. Yet, rather than tread heavily upon the territory of a goddess who oversees both life and death, ancient peoples, perhaps wisely, transferred her valuable properties to lower-tiered goddesses, those who served directly under Zeus or slightly to his side, and who regularly worked within his agency.

During family succession challenges in the *Theogony*, Hesiod describes the resentment Kronos generated amongst his offspring, a simmering pot of fear and hatred that led to the plot between his wife and her youngest child, Zeus resulting in his primal act of violence: castration of his father, the act that secured his place as leader and allowed him to allocate the dominions. Like a later medieval king, he separated the powers and spread apart the divisions to focus each of his siblings’ energies upon their divergent constituencies.

The divisions worked well for the male powers, but left women in vulnerable places. Having largely lost status and autonomy, women became chattel and subject to rape as a means of conquest and a way for men and gods to establish their legacy through progeny. To further subject women, and reject the sexual ceremonies of the Goddess, the cult of virginity was sanctified to seal discrete male possession. Rape was weaponized within warfare as a means to demoralize the conquered civilizations, a reversal of previous practices: “In ancient Sumer rape had been punishable by death; later Semitic peoples in the Fertile Crescent executed married women who were raped. The old, once sacred mysteries of womanhood were mythologically transformed into negative entities like Harpies, Sirens, and witches” (Leeming 157-58).

The Olympian goddesses were born and assigned the duties of the retired Goddess. On Olympus they would serve under the familial corporate structure, deferring to Zeus in all matters of importance.

---

5.4: The Goddess Divided is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.4.1: Hecate

As the oldest and most mysterious goddess, Hecate [HEK-uh-tee] was an earthly goddess of the night and magic. Her particular duties were linked to the shades (dead souls) of the underworld and with sorcery, magic and witchcraft. To balance those darker elements, another purview of hers benefited farmers: knowledge and command of “the dark secrets of the reproductive earth,” which may have positioned her to witness the abduction and rape of Persephone (Leeming 174), making her an important character in Demeter’s search and recovery of her daughter and the return of spring.



Figure 5.4.1.1: Ancient Greek marble statue of Hecate, 2nd century BC from the Temple of Artemis at Aulis. Hecate was frequently associated with the cult of Artemis and their names are frequently linked. In an anachronistic version of the Sacrifice of Iphigenia, Artemis rescues the girl at the moment of her death and transforms her into Hecate. This statue, which is missing the head and arms, ironically exemplifies the silencing of her ancient symbolic power. New Archaeological Museum of Chalcis, Greece. (Photo by [Deiadameian](#), CC BY Wikimedia)



Figure 5.4.1.1: Hecate, 3rd century AD, Yalvaç. Representing the triple nature of the goddess--night, death, and witchcraft or curses, magic and witchcraft--Hecate is a study of contrasting elements: crossroads, gateways and passages; the night sky and light in darkness/lunar lore, childbirth and childcare (despite being childless herself), spirits of the dead, the sea and the wilderness, and healing and toxic plants. In more modern times, she is claimed as a goddess of witches--as in Shakespeare's *MacBeth*. (Photo by [Dosseman](#) CC BY [Wikimedia](#))

---

5.4.1: Hecate is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.4.2: Hera

Robert Graves tells us that Hera, whose name may have been the ancient Greek word for “lady,” was reputedly born on either the island of Samos or at Argos, was raised in Arcadia by Temenus, son of Pelasgus. Nursed by the Seasons, she retained the quality of seasonal fertility from the Goddess, but the power was distributed also to her sister, Demeter. Her partnership with Zeus began when he sought her out at either Knossos (Cnossos) in Crete, or on Mount Thornax (formerly, Cuckoo Mountain) in Argolis, where his first attempt to woo her proved fruitless. However, when he returned wearing the costume of a forlorn cuckoo, she felt sympathetic toward him and softened. True to his core nature, Zeus revealed himself and ravished her, entrapping her into marriage. Despite a precarious betrothal, their honeymoon was said to have lasted 300 years (Graves 26). Following the initial bliss, Hera was appointed as protectress of marriage and childbirth (a role she would share with their daughter Eileithyia [eye-LYE-thee-ah]). Yet, to diminish her potency in these roles, Zeus regularly and blatantly carried out affairs, always resulting in notable issue (heroes and semi-divine) who further eclipse her greatness. Hera, understandably, became the vengeful persecutor of Zeus’ conquests, like Leda, Semele, Io, Europa and Alcmene, out of an inability to command her own husband’s uncensored libido. The story of this disastrous marriage may have memorialized the vanquishment of Crete and Mycenaean Greece, and the toppling of the Great Goddess and her representative, Hera. Even Hera’s symbol, the cuckoo, is a bird known for nesting in the uninhabited nests of other birds (Graves 27).



Figure 5.4.2.1: The hero Herakles survived the wrath of Hera even before his birth. Hera used her influence over childbirth and her connection to the Seasons to delay the hero’s birth, prolonging the pain of his mortal mother, Alcmene, in a projection of her rage against Zeus. In this image, Herakles and Iolas slay the many-headed snake monster, Hydra, an extension of the Goddess and her many attributes. In killing the monster, Herakles honors his father by reenacting Zeus’ slaying of Typhoeus, while pleasing his protector, Athene who smiles proudly over his achievement. Getty Villa, Malibu, California. (Photo by A. Murray 2023, CC BY)

Tracing Hera’s wasted efforts against her husband’s numerous infidelities, she further mirrors the fraught status of women in the patrician Greek family (Leeming 176).

5.4.2: Hera is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.4.3: Hestia

Little is remembered or recorded about Hestia, the goddess of the hearth. She represented the aspects of the Goddess that were the central heart of the home and social structure. Her character is described as supremely virtuous, highly charitable, and serenely peaceful, refusing to take part in any wars, skirmishes, or arguments unlike her siblings. Mythic tradition holds that when two suitors vied for her, Poseidon and Apollo, she swore upon Zeus to remain chaste. The vow, which avoided another conflict in Olympus, so impressed Zeus that he awarded her the first victim of a Greek public sacrifice (Graves XXV, 50), neatly absorbing the Goddess's deathly aspects.

The silence surrounding her character became a part of her persona, as the muted older sibling of an otherwise boisterous set of siblings, each climbing over the others for a share of heavenly space and the attention of their worshippers. Her lack of storyline could be attributed to the Silence Principle, an extension of Lens theory, which stipulates that when certain cultural common knowledge is assumed, thus not spoken of, and sacred knowledge is never spoken. When such knowledge is unspoken for generations, it becomes lost, an experience attributed to the "Lethe Effect" after the Greek River of Forgetfulness (Barber and Barber 17, 19). Hestia's silence led to her being retired from the active pantheon (Leeming 182) and her withdrawal corresponds with the retreat of the Goddess.

---

5.4.3: Hestia is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.4.4: Artemis

The maiden goddess Artemis, a complex and often contrasting representative of animals, untamed nature *and* those who hunt, and of virginity, chastity *and* childbirth, is most commonly aligned with the duties of the Great Goddess. First recognized during the Paleolithic era, Artemis figures appeared throughout the Paleolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze ages. Paleolithic and Neolithic hunters, who were exclusively male, relied on her ability to call the animals to be hunted. And paying homage to her was a complicated affair. She required hunters to abide by strict rituals for hunting, and if those were violated, she commanded blood sacrifice. The risk of hunting for men was high, as hunters were just as likely to be killed by a boar or another predator as they were to successfully kill their prey. Karen Armstrong explains the purpose of such a powerful and tempestuous goddess to a male-centric hunting culture:

This may be due to an unconscious resentment of the female. The goddess of Çatal Hüyük gives birth eternally, but her partner, the bull, must die. Hunters risked their lives to support their women and children. The guilt and anxiety induced by hunting, combined and frustration resulting from ritual celibacy, could have been projected on the the image of a powerful woman, who demands endless bloodshed. The hunters could see that women were the source of new life; it was they—not the expendable males—who ensured the continuity of the tribe. The female thus became an awe-inspiring icon of life itself—a life that required the ceaseless sacrifice of men and animals (Armstrong *Myth* 38-39).

Yet her power was mitigated in the Greek pantheon, not only by her subjugation as daughter of Zeus, but by the separation from the Goddess' solar properties which were expropriated by her twin, Apollo (Markale 77-78).



Figure 5.4.4.1: This limestone statue of Artemis (3rd-1st century), who holds both a quiver of arrows and a fawn, represents her dual aspects of protector and hunter of animals. While the aspects might seem in conflict, they demonstrate the justice of the gods who both govern and take life. (Photo by [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), CC BY [Wikimedia](#))

5.4.4: Artemis is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.4.5: Demeter

More so than her Olympic sisters and their daughters, Demeter [de-MEE-ter] represents the motherly aspects of the Great Goddess, exemplified by her love for her daughter, Kore, “maiden,” whose name later becomes Persephone [per-SEF-oh-nee] after her descent, and her stewardship over the harvest, the extension of the Goddess’s nurturing of humanity.

In most versions of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Zeus is attributed as the father of Kore and her son Iacchus, but there are a few references to Kore being a virgin daughter from a virgin mother. In that tradition, Demeter, rather than Artemis, is the closest parallel to the Great Goddess for no other goddess in the pantheon embodies perfect parthenogenesis. Other stories of the goddess link her to the Titan Iasion (Iasius) with whom she bore another son Plutus. Despite these liaisons, the goddess never partners nor marries, which offers her a sense of independence and freedom from male control. But the dominant versions of her story separate her autonomy and enlist Zeus as the ultimate arbitrator over their child’s destiny, further separating the powers of the Goddess from the females in the pantheon and reminding readers that Greek gods father children, but they do not parent (Harris and Platzner).

Persephone’s dramatic abduction by her uncle, Hades, and Demeter’s painful separation from her daughter serve as the dramatic arc of the myth, a story which clearly serves as an etiological explanation for seasonal changes, and the effect such changes have upon the psyche of humans. The story also recapitulates the generational trauma of mothers separated from their children, such as Gaea’s children being forced back into her womb (the Underworld) by Ouranos, or Rhea’s children being consumed by Kronos. Like her predecessors, Persephone is swallowed into the Underworld of Hades where she is forced into a dreaded marriage to a relative a generation older than her, who also represents the antithesis of her mother. Her mother ensures life and renewal, while Hades houses death.

Unable to stop or reverse the theft of her child, Demeter’s only option is to abandon her duties to the harvest and honor her obligation as mother. Her quest captures elements of the heroic cycle, but the emphasis is consistently on her loss, which she attempts to soothe by nurturing a human child. The child, Dêmophôn, thrives under her godly care and the nightly ritual she performs to grant him immortality; however, when the child’s mother spies on the mysteries of the goddess, she breaks the spell and offends the goddess. Enraged at the separation from yet another child and the violation of her sacred rites, she orders the Elusians to build her a temple where she can properly instruct them in her rituals. The temple becomes her retreat where she refuses to tend the corn harvest for a year, forcing humans into a painful famine that brings them to the edge of catastrophe. When the humans pray to Zeus for relief, he finally intercedes with a compromise that reinforces the patriarchal forced bondage of marriage, an institution that Demeter had avoided for herself, but one from which she cannot save her daughter.

---

5.4.5: Demeter is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth

---

The Homeric Hymn to Demeter offers not only a moving tale of devotion and painful, but necessary, separation between a mother and daughter. While a number of literary theories and mythic classifications would work well in revealing deeper meanings, a few options lend a natural insight.

---

5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.5.1: Charter

Charter theory offers a way of understanding and examining myths through the rituals and practices they inspired. Demeter's chief institution is the Lesser and Greater Eleusinian [el-oo-SIN-ee-un] Mysteries, rituals which recorded, taught and recreated the sacred rules of agriculture. As the name implies, much of the sacred wisdom of the rituals are lost within the silence of the mysteries outside of those initiated into the rites.

The rituals took place twice a year at the Mycenaean city of Eleusis, which means “advent,” and in Athens, and lasted nine days, symbolic of Demeter's initial search for her daughter. Occurring in September and October, months that align with the fall harvest, the celebrations were widely attended and led by officiant priests of Demeter's temples, and included fasting—symbolic of Persephone's fast in Hades—costumes; purification baths in the nearby sea; sacrificing of sows, a sacred animal to Demeter and to the Great Goddess; reenactment of the hierogamy (*hieros gamos*), the sacred marriage, which involved her initiates “working a phallic object up and down a woman's top-boot;” the subsequent trooping out of a [doll representing] the infant (Plutus), the instantaneous product of the hierogamy; and on the sixth day, a song-filled and torchlit procession from Demeter's temple, which likely symbolized Kore's descent into Hades. The highpoint of the Mysteries arrived with the epiphany (the appearance of the goddess) where Demeter granted her initiates with celestial communion, perhaps wisdom that improved the harvest or reassurance about the cycles of life, death and rebirth (Graves 71) (Harris and Platzner 150). Armstrong explains:

Death was fearful, frightening and inevitable, but it was not the end. If you cut a plant, and threw away the dead branch, it gained a new sprout. Agriculture led to a new, if qualified, optimism. The seed had to die, in order to produce grain; pruning was actually helpful to plants, and encouraged new growth. The initiation at Eleusis showed that the confrontation with death led to spiritual regeneration, and was a form of human pruning. It could not bring immortality—only the gods lived forever—but it could enable you to live more fearlessly and therefore more fully here on earth, looking death calmly in the face . . . and to have the courage to change and grow. (Armstrong *Myth* 56-57)

Armstrong's insights neatly situate with the ancient practice of burying a female corn doll each winter, which was unearthed in the spring having magically sprouted. The practice endured throughout the Classical era, and is recorded on vases that illustrate men liberating Persephone from a crown of earth with mattocks (an agricultural tool), symbolically “breaking open Mother Earth's head with axes” (Graves 70).



Figure 5.5.1.1: The character of Triptolemus (“thrice daring”) figures largely in the myths of Demeter and represents one of the worthy humans she bestowed her favor upon. His name evokes the “thrice-plowed fields” from her sexual union with Iasion, an act which recalls the sacred sexual rites believed to assure agricultural fertility. Apollodorus writes: “But for Triptolemus, the elder of Metanira's children, she made a chariot of winged dragons, and gave him wheat, with which, wafted through the sky, he sowed the whole inhabited earth. But Panyasis affirms that Triptolemus was a son of Eleusis, for he says that Demeter came to him. Pherecydes, however, says that he was a son of Ocean and Earth.” Plato credits him with being “a mythological hero of Eleusis, worshiped as the inventor and patron of agriculture.” In this vase, Triptolemus sits in his dragon cart receiving Demeter's water into his bowl of grain, while Persephone stands behind him holding a wreath. By the Triptolemos-painter, c. 470 BCE, Louvre. (Public Domain, via [Wikimedia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triptolemos-painter.jpg))

5.5.1: Charter is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

The Eleusinian Mysteries share many attributes with Athen's festival, the City Dionysia and Dionysian Mysteries. Naturally, as the god of fertility, Dionysus' aspects overlap with Demeter and the kinship wasn't lost on Classical artists, who frequently depicted the two deities together, either in conference or in more romantic poses. But their myths draw a different relationship, a familial one. The affair with Zeus led to the birth of Kore and Iacchus, "the lusty" one. The Eleusinian Mysteries included a reenactment of his birth, where he was called Brimus, after the title given to Demeter, Brimo ("angry one"), which is a curious title for a fairly mild goddess. Yet at least three of her myths reference her wrathful punishments to mortals who offend her. Channeling a righteous temper into a child whose other parent has an unchecked sexual drive might create a being who is both lustful and lusty, one who commands vines to grow and produce grapes, one who celebrates the harvest and inspires song and frenzy, one who is known also a Bacchus (Graves 71).

As with other origin myths, Dionysus, or Bacchus, is commonly attributed to the union of Semele and Zeus, but the ties to Demeter are still noteworthy. His gift of wine is often coupled with Demeter's gift of grain (bread). The vines that are his symbol grow rapidly, signifying new life, just as Demeter's barley and wheat stalks also quickly replenish. Where Demeter's agricultural gifts make human life possible, Dionysus' gift of wine makes life bearable and even enjoyable.

Like the Eleusinian Mysteries, the Dionysian Mysteries also culminated in an epiphany with the god, serving as a contrast to the experience of Semele, who was goaded by Hera into asking Zeus to reveal his true nature to her. However, the epiphany of Zeus, who revealed himself as a bolt of lightning, was too brilliant for the mortal princess' eyes and she was consumed by the vision. The spectacle of true divinity revealed to a mere mortal is unbearable, deadly. The rituals leading to the mysteries offered a safe and systematic pathway to euphoric connection with the god, albeit less spectacular than Semele's blinding revelation, yet more life-affirming to adherents who craved rapture without risk of death (Harris and Platzner 151).



Figure 5.5.1.1.1: "The City Dionysia featured an elaborate procession in which participants carried a statue of Dionysus and replicas of his sacred phallus (symbol of divine virility). The secret rituals through which worshipers were initiated into the Dionysian cult also included a climactic unveiling of an oversized model of the god's penis" (Harris and Platzner 253). (Photo by Carole Raddato, Frankfurt, Germany, CC BY-SA 2.0, via [Wikimedia](#))

5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.5.2: Psychological

Psychological literary theory applies concepts from psychology, psychoanalysis, and human behavior to interpret myths. In the myths of Demeter, reconciliation with death, reassurance of rebirth and renewal, and chthonic aspects are consistent themes and a reflection of the human struggle for meaning, especially under crises that forced them to confront their mortality. Humans, then and now, found consolation by engaging with the perennial forces that championed human existence. Myths, like the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, and the rituals of the Mysteries “were a reminder that often things had to get worse before they could get better, and that survival and creativity required a dedicated struggle” (Armstrong *Myth* 70-71).

In a parallel myth, which may have predated the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the forlorn goddess is approached by Poesideon amongst the herds of Oncus, who wishes to prey upon her grief and seduce her. When she rebuffs him by changing herself into a mare, the rageful god assumes the shape of a stallion and completes the rape. The act results in two children, the horse Arieon (Arion) and a daughter known by the cryptic eponyme, “the Mistress.” Pausanias elaborates on the offspring stating, “Demeter, they say, had by Poseidon a daughter, whose name they are not wont to divulge to the uninitiated, and a horse called Areion” (8.25.7). The mysterious nature of her daughter’s name invites reasonable inquiry as to her role, perhaps as a sacred entity within the temple rites; and her nature, whether she shared the life-giving aspects of Demeter, or the rebirth aspects of Persephone, or whether she possessed the darker, deathwielding essence of the Goddess. If her nature was perceived as a potent threat to the patriarchy, it may have suited the narrative to hide her properties by “unspeaking” her name.

---

5.5.2: Psychological is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.5.3: Feminist

Feminist literary theory focuses on the treatment and existence of women and femininity within a text. Within the myths of Demeter, feminist themes include the embodiment of the triple goddess archetype and the shock of female wrath.

Multiple versions of the triple goddess archetype appear in the myths and mysteries of Demeter. Demeter embodies the three primary functions of the Great Goddess: agricultural goddess, mother goddess, and chthonic goddess who restores her own daughter to life. The triple nature of the Goddess also appears in Kore, “the maiden,” Demeter, “the mother,” and Hekate “the crone” or wise woman. Even the nature of Persephone is tri-fold, reflected in the three goddesses—amongst the twenty-two nymphs, naiads, and goddesses who accompanied her to the meadow—Athene manifests independent, worldly knowledge; Artemis represents athletic indifference to men; and Kore constitutes the innocence of inexperience (Harris and Platzner 152-53).

Robert Graves identifies the kidnapping of Kore as a key component of “the Hellenic trinity of gods forcibly [marrying] the pre-Hellenic Triple goddess,” Zeus forcing a union with Hera; Zeus (or Poseidon) forcibly taking Demeter; and Hades abducting Kore. Not only does this symbolize the conquest of the cults of the Goddess, but also the absorption of her agricultural secrets into the patriarchy of Hellenic Greece. Hence, Demeter’s refusal to release the corn and replenish humankind is emblematic of the last vestige of the Goddess’s powers, one which can be negotiated away by Zeus’ strategic maneuvers, and further compromised by Hades’ trickery.

Demeter, though portrayed as a mild-tempered and benevolent goddess, on three occasions revealed the quickness of her fury. Erysichthon and his company of twenty men dared trespass upon a sacred grove that had been planted for the goddess at Dotium. To add to the insult, they began logging the trees to build a banquet hall. Disguised as a priestess of the grove, Demeter respectfully told the men to stop cutting the trees. Rather than comply, Erysichthon threatened to cut down the woman with his ax, compelling the goddess to reveal herself in her full, radiant form. Finding a fitting punishment for one so rapacious, she cursed him with a perpetual hunger. He returned to his parents’ home, where he ate without ever feeling sated. Having consumed all of their staples, yet still growing leaner as a consequence of the curse, he was turned out into the streets where he was reduced to eating refuse. However, to demonstrate her sense of fairness, she blessed the Cretan, Pandareus, for the theft of Zeus’ golden dog which she perceived as fair retribution for Zeus’ killing Iasion. Upon Pandareus she granted him freedom from ever suffering from a stomach ache.

On a second occasion, she was welcomed into the home of Celeus and Metaneira to wet-nurse their infant, Dêmophôn. Having spent ten days relentlessly seeking her daughter, not eating nor drinking, her thirst was remarkable. Offered a pitcher of barley and mint water, she drank with abandon, and the sight caused their son, Abas to remark, “Oh, how greedily you drink!” With a withering look, the goddess turned him into a lizard. Later, she attempted to restore the offense and reward the family’s hospitality by granting immortality upon their infant, but when Metaneira witnessed the mystery and cried in fear for her son, the goddess revoked her gift of immortality (Graves says the infant instantly died, but the *Homeric Hymn* says he still thrived under the nourishment of the goddess). Comparable to her prior curse, she balanced these events with a blessing: their three remaining sons would be safe, and Triptolemus would benefit with the greatest honors as her agent of sacred agricultural knowledge.

Her third instance of vengeance fell upon the gardener of Hades, Ascalaphus, who reported Persephone’s consumption of the pomegranate seeds to Zeus and Hades, thereby altering the justice of Zeus and the fate of Persephone. In his eagerness to report, he stated, “Having seen the lady Kore pick a pomegranate from a tree in your orchard, and eat seven seeds, I am ready to bear witness that she has tasted the food of the dead!” Hearing this cruel testimony, and facing another outrageous twist of male justice, she punished the informant by thrusting him into a hole covered by a boulder that only Herakles was strong enough to move, a penalty akin to Zeus condemning the opposition Titans into Tartarus. However, she again blessed those who aided her in her search, and who hosted her after Poseidon’s violation, granting them all varieties of grain (Graves 68-69).



Figure 5.5.3.1: When Ascalaphus was eventually freed from his earthly captivity, and rose like a chthonic being, Demeter, or Persephone transformed him into a short-eared owl, a watchful night creature that eats vermin, thereby protecting grain fields. (Image from Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Public domain, via [Wikimedia](#))

Her sense of balance, never allowing a punishment to exceed the offense, and her restorative gifts demonstrate a divine sense of justice more attributed to, but not really evident in the male gods. As a supreme magistrate, Zeus has a protracted pathway toward egalitarian execution of justice, yet Demeter's conduct exhibits an innate capacity to discern between rageful revenge and fair vengeance, between instilling respectful awe and dreadful fear, and between inspiring ethical reverence and self-serving betrayal, all traits which benefit humanity's moral evolution and continuing the traditions of the Great Goddess.

5.5.3: Feminist is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

### 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

---

Often, complex layered themes invite the use of complementary literary analysis, such as Feminist and Psychoanalytic approaches which allow us as readers to study and better understand themes such as the stages of womanhood, from innocence to experience; and female values of independence and self-fulfillment balanced with a mother who consistently and protectively parents her child.

Another significant episode of Demeter's myths involves her brief affair with Iasion, whom she admired at the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia. Infused with the nectar from the feast, the two lovers escaped to a "thrice-plowed" field, one quite ready for seeding. Upon their return to the festivities, Zeus observed the mud on the two and deduced their dalliance. Enraged that another deity should touch Demeter (the irony is rich here), he struck Iasion with a thunderbolt, killing the younger Titan. But from their union, Plutus was born and given the duties of abundance. He is often portrayed with a cornucopia. With this designation, we might see the further erosion of the Goddess's functions as they're absorbed by male figures. Conversely, this transfer of power could be inferred as the gift of a generous goddess who wisely envisions the best person—regardless of gender—to carry out the life-giving mysteries of the Mother.

The episode further illuminates the complicated space occupied by female deities, like Hera, who were expected to abide by the expectations of gender roles by consenting to—or not violently protesting against—marriage, and the fidelity the institution demanded of them, even though their husbands could have numerous public affairs and produce generations of new gods, heroes and demi-gods who largely exist to further aggrandize their fathers. With the exception of Aphrodite, who as the embodiment of sensuality is thereby expected to be sexually free, goddesses are expected to be docile, if not frustrated, wives.

Demeter, however, expresses her independent will to choose her lovers, such as Zeus and Iasion, without the obligation to marry and constrain her volition. Such freedom in a woman reverses the progress of male rule and serves as an echo of the ancient Goddess who took lovers for pleasure, not just procreation. Thus, her violation by Poseidon could be interpreted as the patriarchal punishment of her choice of Iasion over Zeus, or simply, to enjoy sexual relations as a male god would.

---

5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

### Overview, adapted from H.G. Evelyn-White

The early Greek epic—that is, poetry as a natural and popular, and not (as it became later) an artificial and academic literary form—passed through the usual three phases, of development, of maturity, and of decline. The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* falls within the third phase, but the term “decline” which holds negative connotations, is less apt and less descriptive since this particular hymn presents several arguments in its defense.

The term “Homeric” referred to poems written in the style of Homer, but authored by one of a number of anonymous poets between the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, with a few potentially being authored later, between the fourth and second centuries BCE. Ranging in length, complexity and subject matter, most of these hymns were composed for performance at rituals and festivals, primarily as opening acts for longer works, such as those attributed to Homer (Harris and Platzner 155).

The *Hymn to Demeter*, surviving only in the manuscript discovered by Matthiae at Moscow, describes the seizure of Persephone by Hades, the grief of Demeter, her stay at Eleusis, and her vengeance on gods and men by withholding agricultural production and causing famine. In the end Zeus is forced to bring Persephone back from the lower world, but the younger goddess, by the contriving of Hades, still remains partly a captive deity of the lower world. In memory of her sorrows Demeter establishes the Eleusinian mysteries (which, however, were purely agrarian in origin).

This hymn, as a literary work, is one of the finest in the collection. Unique for its focus on the female experience of loss, alienation, and salvation, the work is likely sourced from Attica or Eleusis. It also offers the best record of and insight into the Eleusinian Mysteries. The “thrice-plowed fields,” for instance, refers both to the practice of ritual sex between the “corn maiden” and the sacred king at the autumn planting to secure a bountiful harvest, a rite, Graves tells us, that was only recently retired in the Balkans. Secondly, farming practices in Ancient Attica first required plowing the field in spring, again after the summer harvest, and a third time in the autumn, each time altering the direction of the plow, crossing the previous rows perpendicular to better condition the soil making the earth more receptive for seeding (Graves 70).

Dating of the work is deduced through linguistic and narrative cues. Firstly, it is certainly not later than the beginning of the sixth century, since it makes no mention of Iacchus, even though, historically, the Dionysiac element was introduced at Eleusis at about that period. Further, the insignificance of Triptolemus and Eumolpus (the sons of Celeus, upon whom the goddess awards her mysteries) point to considerable antiquity, and the use of the *digamma* (the sixth letter of the Greek alphabet, which was retired before the Classical period) is still active. All these considerations point to the seventh century as the probable date of the hymn.

### The Homeric Hymn To Demeter

\*Spellings have been updated to American English

(ll. 1-3) I begin to sing of rich-haired Demeter, awful goddess—of her and her trim-ankled daughter whom Aidoneus rapt away, given to him by all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer.

(ll. 4-18) Apart from Demeter, lady of the golden sword and glorious fruits, she was playing with the deep-bosomed daughters of Oceanus and gathering flowers over a soft meadow, roses and crocuses and beautiful violets, irises also and hyacinths and the narcissus, which Earth made to grow at the will of Zeus and to please the Host of Many, to be a snare for the bloom-like girl—a marvelous, radiant flower. It was a thing of awe whether for deathless gods or mortal men to see: from its root grew a hundred blooms, and it smelled most sweetly, so that all wide heaven above and the whole earth and the sea’s salt swell laughed for joy. And the girl was amazed and reached out with both hands to take the lovely toy; but the wide-pathed earth yawned there in the plain of Nysa, and the lord, Host of Many, with his immortal horses sprang out upon her—the Son of Cronos, He who has many names.

(ll. 19-32) He caught her up reluctant on his golden car and bare her away lamenting. Then she cried out shrilly with her voice, calling upon her father, the Son of Cronos, who is most high and excellent. But no one, either of the deathless gods or of mortal men, heard her voice, nor yet the olive-trees bearing rich fruit: only tender-hearted Hecate, bright-coiffed, the daughter of Persaeus, heard the girl from her cave, and the lord Helios, Hyperion’s bright son, as she cried to her father, the Son of Cronos. But he was sitting aloof, apart from the gods, in his temple where many pray, and receiving sweet offerings from mortal men. So he, that Son

of Cronos, of many names, who is Ruler of Many and Host of Many, was bearing her away by leave of Zeus on his immortal chariot—his own brother's child and all unwilling.

(ll. 33-39) And so long as she, the goddess, yet beheld earth and starry heaven and the strong-flowing sea where fishes shoal, and the rays of the sun, and still hoped to see her dear mother and the tribes of the eternal gods, so long hope calmed her great heart for all her trouble and the heights of the mountains and the depths of the sea rang with her immortal voice: and her queenly mother heard her.

(ll. 40-53) Bitter pain seized her heart, and she rent the covering upon her divine hair with her dear hands: her dark cloak she cast down from both her shoulders and sped, like a wild-bird, over the firm land and yielding sea, seeking her child. But no one would tell her the truth, neither god nor mortal men; and of the birds of omen none came with true news for her. Then for nine days queenly Deo wandered over the earth with flaming torches in her hands, so grieved that she never tasted ambrosia and the sweet draught of nectar, nor sprinkled her body with water. But when the tenth enlightening dawn had come, Hecate, with a torch in her hands, met her, and spoke to her and told her news:

(ll. 54-58) 'Queenly Demeter, bringer of seasons and giver of good gifts, what god of heaven or what mortal man has rapt away Persephone and pierced with sorrow your dear heart? For I heard her voice, yet saw not with my eyes who it was. But I tell you truly and shortly all I know.'

(ll. 59-73) So, then, said Hecate. And the daughter of rich-haired Rhea answered her not, but sped swiftly with her, holding flaming torches in her hands. So they came to Helios, who is watchman of both gods and men, and stood in front of his horses: and the bright goddess enquired of him: 'Helios, do you at least regard me, goddess as I am, if ever by word or deed of mine I have cheered your heart and spirit. Through the fruitless air I heard the thrilling cry of my daughter whom I bare, sweet scion of my body and lovely in form, as of one seized violently; though with my eyes I saw nothing. But you—for with your beams you look down from the bright upper air Over all the earth and sea—tell me truly of my dear child, if you have seen her anywhere, what god or mortal man has violently seized her against her will and mine, and so made off.'

(ll. 74-87) So said she. And the Son of Hyperion answered her: 'Queen Demeter, daughter of rich-haired Rhea, I will tell you the truth; for I greatly revere and pity you in your grief for your trim-ankled daughter. None other of the deathless gods is to blame, but only cloud-gathering Zeus who gave her to Hades, her father's brother, to be called his buxom wife. And Hades seized her and took her loudly crying in his chariot down to his realm of mist and gloom. Yet, goddess, cease your loud lament and keep not vain anger unrelentingly: Aidoneus, the Ruler of Many, is no unfitting husband among the deathless gods for your child, being your own brother and born of the same stock: also, for honor, he has that third share which he received when division was made at the first, and is appointed lord of those among whom he dwells.'

(ll. 88-89) So he spake, and called to his horses: and at his chiding they quickly whirled the swift chariot along, like long-winged birds.

(ll. 90-112) But grief yet more terrible and savage came into the heart of Demeter, and thereafter she was so angered with the dark-clouded Son of Cronos that she avoided the gathering of the gods and high Olympus, and went to the towns and rich fields of men, disfiguring her form a long while. And no one of men or deep-bosomed women knew her when they saw her, until she came to the house of wise Celeus who then was lord of fragrant Eleusis. Vexed in her dear heart, she sat near the wayside by the Maiden Well, from which the women of the place used to draw water, in a shady place over which grew an olive shrub. And she was like an ancient woman who is cut off from childbearing and the gifts of garland-loving Aphrodite, like the nurses of king's children who deal justice, or like the house-keepers in their echoing halls. There the daughters of Celeus, son of Eleusis, saw her, as they were coming for easy-drawn water, to carry it in pitchers of bronze to their dear father's house: four were they and like goddesses in the flower of their girlhood, Callidice and Cleisidice and lovely Demo and Callithoe who was the eldest of them all. They knew her not,—for the gods are not easily discerned by mortals—but standing near by her spoke winged words:

(ll. 113-117) 'Old mother, whence and who are you of folk born long ago? Why have you gone away from the city and do not draw near the houses? For there in the shady halls are women of just such age as you, and others younger; and they would welcome you both by word and by deed.'

(ll. 118-144) Thus they said. And she, that queen among goddesses answered them saying: 'Hail, dear children, whosoever you are of woman-kind. I will tell you my story; for it is not unseemly that I should tell you truly what you ask. Doso is my name, for my

stately mother gave it me.

And now I am come from Crete over the sea's wide back,—not willingly; but pirates brought me thence by force of strength against my liking. Afterwards they put in with their swift craft to Thoricus, and there the women landed on the shore in full throng and the men likewise, and they began to make ready a meal by the stern-cables of the ship. But my heart craved not pleasant food, and I fled secretly across the dark country and escaped my masters, that they should not take me unpurchased across the sea, there to win a price for me. And so I wandered and am come here: and I know not at all what land this is or what people are in it. But may all those who dwell on Olympus give you husbands and birth of children as parents desire, so you take pity on me, maidens, and show me this clearly that I may learn, dear children, to the house of what man and woman I may go, to work for them cheerfully at such tasks as belong to a woman of my age. Well could I nurse a new born child, holding him in my arms, or keep house, or spread my masters' bed in a recess of the well-built chamber, or teach the women their work.'

(ll. 145-146) So said the goddess. And straightway the unwed maiden Callidice, goodliest in form of the daughters of Celeus, answered her and said:

(ll. 147-168) 'Mother, what the gods send us, we mortals bear perforce, although we suffer; for they are much stronger than we. But now I will teach you clearly, telling you the names of men who have great power and honor here and are chief among the people, guarding our city's coif of towers by their wisdom and true judgements: there is wise Triptolemus and Dioclus and Polyxeinus and blameless Eumolpus and Dolichus and our own brave father. All these have wives who manage in the house, and no one of them, so soon as she has seen you, would dishonor you and turn you from the house, but they will welcome you; for indeed you are godlike. But if you will, stay here; and we will go to our father's house and tell Metaneira, our deep-bosomed mother, all this matter fully, that she may bid you rather come to our home than search after the houses of others. She has an only son, late-born, who is being nursed in our well-built house, a child of many prayers and welcome: if you could bring him up until he reached the full measure of youth, any one of womankind who should see you would straightway envy you, such gifts would our mother give for his upbringing.'

(ll. 169-183) So she spake: and the goddess bowed her head in assent. And they filled their shining vessels with water and carried them off rejoicing. Quickly they came to their father's great house and straightway told their mother according as they had heard and seen. Then she bade them go with all speed and invite the stranger to come for a measureless hire. As hinds or heifers in spring time, when sated with pasture, bound about a meadow, so they, holding up the folds of their lovely garments, darted down the hollow path, and their hair like a crocus flower streamed about their shoulders. And they found the good goddess near the wayside where they had left her before, and led her to the house of their dear father. And she walked behind, distressed in her dear heart, with her head veiled and wearing a dark cloak which waved about the slender feet of the goddess.

(ll. 184-211) Soon they came to the house of heaven-nurtured Celeus and went through the portico to where their queenly mother sat by a pillar of the close-fitted roof, holding her son, a tender scion, in her bosom. And the girls ran to her. But the goddess walked to the threshold: and her head reached the roof and she filled the doorway with a heavenly radiance. Then awe and reverence and pale fear took hold of Metaneira, and she rose up from her couch before Demeter, and bade her be seated. But Demeter, bringer of seasons and giver of perfect gifts, would not sit upon the bright couch, but stayed silent with lovely eyes cast down until careful Iambe placed a jointed seat for her and threw over it a silvery fleece. Then she sat down and held her veil in her hands before her face. A long time she sat upon the stool without speaking because of her sorrow, and greeted no one by word or by sign, but rested, never smiling, and tasting neither food nor drink, because she pined with longing for her deep-bosomed daughter, until careful Iambe—who pleased her moods in aftertime also—moved the holy lady with many a quip and jest to smile and laugh and cheer her heart. Then Metaneira filled a cup with sweet wine and offered it to her; but she refused it, for she said it was not lawful for her to drink red wine, but bade them mix meal and water with soft mint and give her to drink. And Metaneira mixed the draught and gave it to the goddess as she bade. So the great queen Deo received it to observe the sacrament.

(ll. 212-223) And of them all, well-girded Metaneira first began to speak: 'Hail, lady! For I think you are not meanly but nobly born; truly dignity and grace are conspicuous upon your eyes as in the eyes of kings that deal justice. Yet we mortals bear perforce what the gods send us, though we be grieved; for a yoke is set upon our necks. But now, since you have come here, you shall have what I can bestow: and nurse me this child whom the gods gave me in my old age and beyond my hope, a son much prayed for. If you should bring him up until he reaches the full measure of youth, any one of womankind that sees you will straightway envy you, so great reward would I give for his upbringing.'

(ll. 224-230) Then rich-haired Demeter answered her: 'And to you, also, lady, all hail, and may the gods give you good! Gladly will I take the boy to my breast, as you bid me, and will nurse him. Never, I ween, through any heedlessness of his nurse shall witchcraft hurt him nor yet the Undercutter: for I know a charm far stronger than the Woodcutter, and I know an excellent safeguard against woeful witchcraft.'

(ll. 231-247) When she had so spoken, she took the child in her fragrant bosom with her divine hands: and his mother was glad in her heart. So the goddess nursed in the palace Demophoon, wise Celeus' goodly son whom well-girded Metaneira bore. And the child grew like some immortal being, not fed with food nor nourished at the breast: for by day rich-crowned Demeter would anoint him with ambrosia as if he were the offspring of a god and breathe sweetly upon him as she held him in her bosom. But at night she would hide him like a brand in the heart of the fire, unknown to his dear parents. And it wrought great wonder in these that he grew beyond his age; for he was like the gods face to face. And she would have made him deathless and unageing, had not well-girded Metaneira in her heedlessness kept watch by night from her sweet-smelling chamber and spied. But she wailed and smote her two hips, because she feared for her son and was greatly distraught in her heart; so she lamented and uttered winged words:

(ll. 248-249) 'Demophoon, my son, the strange woman buries you deep in fire and works grief and bitter sorrow for me.'

(ll. 250-255) Thus she spoke, mourning. And the bright goddess, lovely-crowned Demeter, heard her, and was wroth with her. So with her divine hands she snatched from the fire the dear son whom Metaneira had born unhopèd-for in the palace, and cast him from her to the ground; for she was terribly angry in her heart. Forthwith she said to well-girded Metaneira:

(ll. 256-274) 'Witless are you mortals and dull to foresee your lot, whether of good or evil, that comes upon you. For now in your heedlessness you have wrought folly past healing; for—be witness the oath of the gods, the relentless water of Styx—I would have made your dear son deathless and unageing all his days and would have bestowed on him everlasting honor, but now he can in no way escape death and the fates. Yet shall unfailing honor always rest upon him, because he lay upon my knees and slept in my arms. But, as the years move round and when he is in his prime, the sons of the Eleusinians shall ever wage war and dread strife with one another continually. Lo! I am that Demeter who has share of honor and is the greatest help and cause of joy to the undying gods and mortal men. But now, let all the people build me a great temple and an altar below it and beneath the city and its sheer wall upon a rising hillock above Callichorus. And I myself will teach my rites, that hereafter you may reverently perform them and so win the favor of my heart.'

(ll. 275-281) When she had so said, the goddess changed her stature and her looks, thrusting old age away from her: beauty spread round about her and a lovely fragrance was wafted from her sweet-smelling robes, and from the divine body of the goddess a light shone afar, while golden tresses spread down over her shoulders, so that the strong house was filled with brightness as with lightning. And so she went out from the palace.

(ll. 281-291) And straightway Metaneira's knees were loosed and she remained speechless for a long while and did not remember to take up her late-born son from the ground. But his sisters heard his pitiful wailing and sprang down from their well-spread beds: one of them took up the child in her arms and laid him in her bosom, while another revived the fire, and a third rushed with soft feet to bring their mother from her fragrant chamber. And they gathered about the struggling child and washed him, embracing him lovingly; but he was not comforted, because nurses and handmaids much less skilful were holding him now.

(ll. 292-300) All night long they sought to appease the glorious goddess, quaking with fear. But, as soon as dawn began to show, they told powerful Celeus all things without fail, as the lovely-crowned goddess Demeter charged them. So Celeus called the countless people to an assembly and bade them make a goodly temple for rich-haired Demeter and an altar upon the rising hillock. And they obeyed him right speedily and harkened to his voice, doing as he commanded. As for the child, he grew like an immortal being.

(ll. 301-320) Now when they had finished building and had drawn back from their toil, they went every man to his house. But golden-haired Demeter sat there apart from all the blessed gods and stayed, wasting with yearning for her deep-bosomed daughter. Then she caused a most dreadful and cruel year for mankind over the all-nourishing earth: the ground would not make the seed sprout, for rich-crowned Demeter kept it hidden. In the fields the oxen drew many a curved plough in vain, and much white barley was cast upon the land without avail. So she would have destroyed the whole race of man with cruel famine and have robbed them who dwell on Olympus of their glorious right of gifts and sacrifices, had not Zeus perceived and marked this in his heart. First he sent golden-winged Iris to call rich-haired Demeter, lovely in form. So he commanded. And she obeyed the dark-clouded Son of

Cronos, and sped with swift feet across the space between. She came to the stronghold of fragrant Eleusis, and there finding dark-cloaked Demeter in her temple, spake to her and uttered winged words:

(ll. 321-323) 'Demeter, father Zeus, whose wisdom is everlasting, calls you to come join the tribes of the eternal gods: come therefore, and let not the message I bring from Zeus pass unbeyed.'

(ll. 324-333) Thus said Iris imploring her. But Demeter's heart was not moved. Then again the father sent forth all the blessed and eternal gods besides: and they came, one after the other, and kept calling her and offering many very beautiful gifts and whatever right she might be pleased to choose among the deathless gods. Yet no one was able to persuade her mind and will, so wrath was she in her heart; but she stubbornly rejected all their words: for she vowed that she would never set foot on fragrant Olympus nor let fruit spring out of the ground, until she beheld with her eyes her own fair-faced daughter.

(ll. 334-346) Now when all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer heard this, he sent the Slayer of Argus whose wand is of gold to Erebus, so that having won over Hades with soft words, he might lead forth chaste Persephone to the light from the misty gloom to join the gods, and that her mother might see her with her eyes and cease from her anger. And Hermes obeyed, and leaving the house of Olympus, straightway sprang down with speed to the hidden places of the earth. And he found the lord Hades in his house seated upon a couch, and his shy mate with him, much reluctant, because she yearned for her mother. But she was afar off, brooding on her fell design because of the deeds of the blessed gods. And the strong Slayer of Argus drew near and said:

(ll. 347-356) 'Dark-haired Hades, ruler over the departed, father Zeus bids me bring noble Persephone forth from Erebus unto the gods, that her mother may see her with her eyes and cease from her dread anger with the immortals; for now she plans an awful deed, to destroy the weakly tribes of earthborn men by keeping seed hidden beneath the earth, and so she makes an end of the honors of the undying gods. For she keeps fearful anger and does not consort with the gods, but sits aloof in her fragrant temple, dwelling in the rocky hold of Eleusis.'

(ll. 357-359) So he said. And Aidoneus, ruler over the dead, smiled grimly and obeyed the behest of Zeus the king. For he straightway urged wise Persephone, saying:

(ll. 360-369) 'Go now, Persephone, to your dark-robed mother, go, and feel kindly in your heart towards me: be not so exceedingly cast down; for I shall be no unfitting husband for you among the deathless gods, that am own brother to father Zeus. And while you are here, you shall rule all that lives and moves and shall have the greatest rights among the deathless gods: those who defraud you and do not appease your power with offerings, reverently performing rites and paying fit gifts, shall be punished for evermore.'

(ll. 370-383) When he said this, wise Persephone was filled with joy and hastily sprang up for gladness. But he on his part secretly gave her sweet pomegranate seed to eat, taking care for himself that she might not remain continually with grave, dark-robed Demeter. Then Aidoneus the Ruler of Many openly got ready his deathless horses beneath the golden chariot. And she mounted on the chariot, and the strong Slayer of Argos took reins and whip in his dear hands and drove forth from the hall, the horses speeding readily. Swiftly they traversed their long course, and neither the sea nor river-waters nor grassy glens nor mountain-peaks checked the career of the immortal horses, but they clave the deep air above them as they went. And Hermes brought them to the place where rich-crowned Demeter was staying and checked them before her fragrant temple.

(ll. 384-404) And when Demeter saw them, she rushed forth as does a Maenad down some thick-wooded mountain, while Persephone on the other side, when she saw her mother's sweet eyes, left the chariot and horses, and leaped down to run to her, and falling upon her neck, embraced her. But while Demeter was still holding her dear child in her arms, her heart suddenly misgave her for some snare, so that she feared greatly and ceased fondling her daughter and asked of her at once: 'My child, tell me, surely you have not tasted any food while you were below? Speak out and hide nothing, but let us both know. For if you have not, you shall come back from loathly Hades and live with me and your father, the dark-clouded Son of Cronos and be honored by all the deathless gods; but if you have tasted food, you must go back again beneath the secret places of the earth, there to dwell a third part of the seasons every year: yet for the two parts you shall be with me and the other deathless gods. But when the earth shall bloom with the fragrant flowers of spring in every kind, then from the realm of darkness and gloom thou shalt come up once more to be a wonder for gods and mortal men. And now tell me how he rapt you away to the realm of darkness and gloom, and by what trick did the strong Host of Many beguile you?'

(ll. 405-433) Then beautiful Persephone answered her thus: 'Mother, I will tell you all without error. When luck-bringing Hermes came, swift messenger from my father the Son of Cronos and the other Sons of Heaven, bidding me come back from Erebus that

you might see me with your eyes and so cease from your anger and fearful wrath against the gods, I sprang up at once for joy; but he secretly put in my mouth sweet food, a pomegranate seed, and forced me to taste against my will. Also I will tell how he rapt me away by the deep plan of my father, the Son of Cronos, and carried me off beneath the depths of the earth, and will relate the whole matter as you ask. All we were playing in a lovely meadow, Leucippe and Phaeno and Electra and Ianthé, Melita also and Iache with Rhodéa and Callirhoe and Melobosis and Tyche and Ocyrhoe, fair as a flower, Chryseis, Ianeira, Acaste and Admete and Rhodope and Pluto and charming Calypso; Styx too was there and Urania and lovely Galaxaura with Pallas who rouses battles and Artemis delighting in arrows: we were playing and gathering sweet flowers in our hands, soft crocuses mingled with irises and hyacinths, and rose-blooms and lilies, marvelous to see, and the narcissus which the wide earth caused to grow yellow as a crocus. That I plucked in my joy; but the earth parted beneath, and there the strong lord, the Host of Many, sprang forth and in his golden chariot he bore me away, all unwilling, beneath the earth: then I cried with a shrill cry. All this is true, sore though it grieves me to tell the tale.'

(ll. 434-437) So did they turn, with hearts at one, greatly cheer each the other's soul and spirit with many an embrace: their heart had relief from their griefs while each took and gave back joyousness.

(ll. 438-440) Then bright-coiffed Hecate came near to them, and often did she embrace the daughter of holy Demeter: and from that time the lady Hecate was minister and companion to Persephone.

(ll. 441-459) And all-seeing Zeus sent a messenger to them, rich-haired Rhea, to bring dark-cloaked Demeter to join the families of the gods: and he promised to give her what right she should choose among the deathless gods and agreed that her daughter should go down for the third part of the circling year to darkness and gloom, but for the two parts should live with her mother and the other deathless gods. Thus he commanded. And the goddess did not disobey the message of Zeus; swiftly she rushed down from the peaks of Olympus and came to the plain of Rharus, rich, fertile corn-land once, but then in nowise fruitful, for it lay idle and utterly leafless, because the white grain was hidden by design of trim-ankled Demeter. But afterwards, as springtime waxed, it was soon to be waving with long ears of corn, and its rich furrows to be loaded with grain upon the ground, while others would already be bound in sheaves. There first she landed from the fruitless upper air: and glad were the goddesses to see each other and cheered in heart. Then bright-coiffed Rhea said to Demeter:

(ll. 460-469) 'Come, my daughter; for far-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer calls you to join the families of the gods, and has promised to give you what rights you please among the deathless gods, and has agreed that for a third part of the circling year your daughter shall go down to darkness and gloom, but for the two parts shall be with you and the other deathless gods: so has he declared it shall be and has bowed his head in token. But come, my child, obey, and be not too angry unrelentingly with the dark-clouded Son of Cronos; but rather increase forthwith for men the fruit that gives them life.'

(ll. 470-482) So spake Rhea. And rich-crowned Demeter did not refuse but straightway made fruit to spring up from the rich lands, so that the whole wide earth was laden with leaves and flowers. Then she went, and to the kings who deal justice, Triptolemus and Diocles, the horse-driver, and to doughty Eumolpus and Celeus, leader of the people, she showed the conduct of her rites and taught them all her mysteries, to Triptolemus and Polyxeinus and Diocles also,—awful mysteries which no one may in any way transgress or pry into or utter, for deep awe of the gods checks the voice. Happy is he among men upon earth who has seen these mysteries; but he who is uninitiate and who has no part in them, never has lot of like good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom.

(ll. 483-489) But when the bright goddess had taught them all, they went to Olympus to the gathering of the other gods. And there they dwell beside Zeus who delights in thunder, awful and reverend goddesses. Right blessed is he among men on earth whom they freely love: soon they do send Plutus as guest to his great house, Plutus who gives wealth to mortal men.

(ll. 490-495) And now, queen of the land of sweet Eleusis and sea-girt Paros and rocky Antron, lady, giver of good gifts, bringer of seasons, queen Deo, be gracious, you and your daughter all beauteous Persephone, and for my song grant me heart-cheering substance. And now I will remember you and another song also.

---

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter is shared under a [Public Domain](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by H.G. Evelyn-White via Project Gutenberg.

## 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

---

The *Hymn to Demeter* offers a number of analytical opportunities, including Charter, Feminist, and Psychoanalytic. Considering the journey and fate of Persephone, what does she ultimately earn? Does her fate outweigh the costs of separation, including loss of innocence? Which functions of the Great Goddess does she retain or exemplify?

In a multi-paragraph response, apply one or more of the literary themes to develop your response. Use MLA in-text citations to responsibly cite quotations, summaries and paraphrases.

---

5.7: Demeter Reading Response is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.8: Study Questions

---

1. Which of the existent archeological evidence is most compelling to establish belief in a Mother Goddess? What evidence invites questions or doubts of a Goddess culture?
  2. Which cultures venerated a Mother Goddess, and what symbols were affiliated with Her worship? What meaning did these symbols hold?
  3. What are the primary functions of the Mother Goddess? How are these functions later divided amongst the Olympian goddesses (or gods)?
  4. What led to the transition from the Mother Goddess to the Great Goddess?
  5. Consider the serpent of the Great Goddess. In what ways does it reflect the chthonic elements of the Goddess and why is it important to the power of the Goddess? Trace the movement and perception of the serpent from a potent and benevolent icon of the Goddess into a monstrous dragon or terrifying snake. Explain how the metamorphosis aligns with the shift towards a patriarchal system, due to conquests by warrior cultures.
  6. What do the terms chthonic, parthenogenesis, and heirogamy (*heiros gamos*) mean?
  7. What commonalities do Demeter and Dionysus share? In what ways do they compliment each other?
  8. What were the Eleusinian Mysteries, and how did they benefit mankind?
  9. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, what draws Demeter to Eleusis? What blessings does she impart upon the family who hosts her? Which curse does she lay, and why? How does the curse or the blessing relate to her own mourning?
  10. Is the decision meted out by Zeus fair to Demeter and Persephone? Is it fair to Hades?
- 

5.8: Study Questions is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## 5.9: Bibliography

- Apollodorus. *Library*. Sir James Fraser ed. *Perseus Digital Library*, Gregory R. Crane Ed. in Chief, Tufts University, CC BY SA 3.0, p. 1.5, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0022;text=Library;book=1:chapter=5&highlight=triptolemus](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0022;text=Library;book=1:chapter=5&highlight=triptolemus). Accessed 3 February 2024.
- Armstrong, Karen. *A History of God: the 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Knopf, 1993.
- . *A Short History of Myth*. Cannongate, 2005.
- Barber, Elizabeth Wayland and Paul T. Barber. *When They Severed Earth From Sky: How the Human Mind Shapes Myth*. Princeton UP, 2004.
- Barstow, Anne. "The Uses of Archeology for Women's History: James Mellaart's Work on the Neolithic Goddess at Çatal Hüyük." *Feminist Studies*, Oct. 1978, Vol. 4 No 3, pp. 7-18. JSTOR, Stable URL: [www.jstor.org/stable/3177535](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3177535). Accessed 2 January 2023.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred & the Profane: the Nature of Religion*. Trans. By Willard R. Trask, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1957.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." *Psychoanalysis & History*, vol. 17, no. 2, July 2015, pp. 151–204. EBSCOhost, DOI:doi-org.lbcc.idm.oclc.org/10.3366/pah.2015.0169. Date accessed 18 January 2024.
- Graves, Robert. *The Greek Myths*. Penguin, 2012.
- Harris, Stephen L, and Gloria Platzner. *Classical Mythology: Insights and Images*. 6th ed, McGraw Hill, 2012.
- Hodder, Ian. "Women and Men at Çatalhöyük." *Scientific American*, vol. 290, no. 1, 2004, pp. 76–83. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/26172657](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26172657). Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.
- Hesiod. "The Homeric Hymn to Demeter." *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homerica*. Trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White, 1914. *Project Gutenberg*, updated 12 January, 2020, Public Domain, [www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/348/pg348-images.html#chap01](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/348/pg348-images.html#chap01). Accessed 28 January 2025.
- Attribution: This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this ebook.
- Leeming, David. *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*. Oxford UP, 2005.
- Lesko, Barbara S. *The Great Goddesses of Egypt*. U of Oklahoma P, Norman, 1999.
- Markale, Jean. *The Great Goddess: Reverence of the Divine Feminine from the Paleolithic to the Present*. Trans by Jody Gladding, Inner Traditions, 1997.
- Mellaart, James. *Çatal Hüyük: A Neolithic Town in Anatolia*. Ed. Sir Mortimer Wheeler, McGraw-Hill, 1967, CCO 1.0 Universal, [www.archive.org/details/Catal-huyuk.ANeolithicTownInAnatolia/page/n3/mode/2up](http://www.archive.org/details/Catal-huyuk.ANeolithicTownInAnatolia/page/n3/mode/2up). Accessed 8 January 2024.
- Pausanias. *Pausanias Description of Greece with an English Translation*. Trans. W.H.S. Jones, Litt.D., and H.A. Ormerod, M.A., 4 Volumes. Cambridge, Harvard UP, William Heinemann Ltd, 1918. *Perseus Digital Library*, Gregory R. Crane Ed. in Chief, Tufts University, CC BY SA 3.0, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0160%3Abook%3D8%3Achapter%3D25%3Asection%3D7](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0160%3Abook%3D8%3Achapter%3D25%3Asection%3D7). Accessed 2 February 2024.
- Plato. *Laws*. *Perseus Digital Library*, Gregory R. Crane Ed. in Chief, Tufts University, CC BY SA 3.0, sect. 6.782b, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0166:book=6:section=782b&highlight=triptolemus](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0166:book=6:section=782b&highlight=triptolemus).

Accessed 3 February 2024.

Tedlock, Barbara. *The Woman in the Shaman's Body*. Bantam, 2005.

Young, Serinity. *Women Who Fly: Goddesses, Witches, Mystics, and Other Airborne Females*, Oxford UP, 2018. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, [ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=5205558](https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lbcc/detail.action?docID=5205558). Accessed 12 January 2024.

---

5.9: Bibliography is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 6: New Page

---

6: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 7: New Page

---

7: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 8: New Page

---

8: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 9: New Page



Coming soon, bear with us

---

9: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 10: New Page

---

10: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 11: New Page

---

11: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

### 12: New Page

---

12: New Page is shared under a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

# Index

## A

### abducting

5.5.3: Feminist

### achilles

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

### Acropolis Museum

1.13: Bibliography

### Adam

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-

Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### Adam and Eve

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### Aeetes

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Aeneas

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Aeneid

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### Aeschylean dramaturgy

4.16: Bibliography

### Aeschylus

3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

4.15: Study Questions

4.16: Bibliography

### Aeson

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### afterlife

4.15: Study Questions

### agamemnon

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

2.2.2: The Unconscious

### Age

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Age of Bronze

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Age of Gold

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Age of Heroes

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Age of Iron

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Age of Silver

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Ages of Man

2.3: Group Activity

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

4.15: Study Questions

### Aglaea

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### agrarian society

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

### agriculture

5.4.1: Hecate

5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

### Aidoneus

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

### Aidos

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

### Akitu

3.2.1: Enūma eliš

### Alcmene

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### alexander the great

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### Alexandria

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### Allegorical Theories

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

### allegory

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

2.1.1.1: Allegory

### amorous pursuits

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

### Amphidromia

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

### Amphitrite

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Anatolia

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

### Anchises

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### ancient civilizations

5.9: Bibliography

### ancient cultures

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

3.9: Bibliography

### ancient Egypt

2.2.7: Feminist

3.8: Study Questions

### ancient Greece

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

1.8: Temples and Churches

1.13: Bibliography

4.16: Bibliography

### Ancient Greek architecture

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

### ancient Greek drama

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

### Ancient Greek temple

1.8: Temples and Churches

### Ancient Greek topography

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

### ancient Greek women

1.12: Study Questions

### ancient literature

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

### Ancient Mesopotamia

3.8: Study Questions

### Ancient Myths

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

### ancient philosophy

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

### ancient religions

3.9: Bibliography

### ancient rituals

5.8: Study Questions

### ancient texts

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

2.4: Bibliography

3.9: Bibliography

4.16: Bibliography

### androgyny

3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

### anima

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

### Anima and Animus

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

### animals

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

### animistic pantheon

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

### animosity

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

### animus

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

### Anne Barstow

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

### Anpu/Anubis

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

### anthropological studies

5.9: Bibliography

### Anthropological Theories

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

### anthropomorphic

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

### Aphrodite

2.2.7: Feminist

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

### Apollo

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

### Apollo and Artemis

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

### Apple of Discord

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

Apsu

- 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
- 3.2.1.1: Summary
- 3.2.1.2: Commentary

archaeological excavation

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

archaeological sites

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

archaeology

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction
- 2.4: Bibliography
- 5.9: Bibliography

Archaic Period

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.12: Study Questions

archeological evidence

- 5.8: Study Questions

archeology

- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

archetypal patterns

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

archetypes

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal
- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

architecture

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

Ares

- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Argeiphontes

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

Arges

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Argus

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

Ariadne

- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

Arieon

- 5.5.2: Psychological

Arion

- 5.5.2: Psychological

Aristophanes

- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

aristotle

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

art

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

Artemis

- 1.13: Bibliography
- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.4.1: Hecate
- 5.4.4: Artemis

Artemis of Ephesus

- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

Asgard

- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

Asherah,

- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

Assyrian

- 3.2.1.2: Commentary

Assyrian Creation Epic

- 3.2.1.1: Summary

Athena

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

Athene

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 2.2.3: Neurological
- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.2.5: Odysseus
- 4.2.6: Zeus
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

Athene's birth

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

Athenian family

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

Athens

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction
- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 1.13: Bibliography

Athens foundation myth

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

Atlas

- 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos
- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

Atropos

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Atum (Ra)

- 3.2.2.1: Commentary

audience effect

- 4.15: Study Questions

autobiographical influences

- 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

autochthony

- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

Autolycus

- 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

B

Babel

- 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)

Babylonia

- 3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia

Babylonian

- 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
- 3.2.1.1: Summary
- 3.2.1.2: Commentary
- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

Babylonian creation

- 3.9: Bibliography

Babylonian Epic of Creation

- 4.16: Bibliography

Bacchus

- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

Baldr

- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

Banishment

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

battle

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

belief systems

- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

benefactor

- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

Bible

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)
- 3.8: Study Questions
- 3.9: Bibliography

Biblical creation

- 3.8: Study Questions

Biblical creation accounts

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

Biblical Creation Epic

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis
- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)
- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

Biblical interpretations

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

Biblical mythology

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

biblical scholarship

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

Biblical Story

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

Biblical Tower of Babel

- 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel

Blood Moon

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

blood sacrifice

- 5.4.4: Artemis

brain

- 2.2.3: Neurological

brain functions

- 2.2.3: Neurological

brain patterns

- 2.2.3: Neurological

Briareos

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Brimus

- 5.5.1: Charter
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

Bronislav Malinowski

- 2.1.2.1: Charter

Brontes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Bronze Age

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 5.4.4: Artemis

## Byzantine period

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## C

### Callicrates

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

### Calliope

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

### Calypso

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### cannibalism

4.2.6: Zeus

### Carl Gustav Jung

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

### carl jung

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

2.4: Bibliography

### Carol Christ

2.2.7: Feminist

### castration

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### causation

2.1.1.2: Etiology

### Ceremonial myths

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

### Chaos

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### chaotic forces

3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod

### character aspects

2.1.1.1: Allegory

### character development

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

### Charter myths

2.1.2.1: Charter

### Charter Theory

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

2.1.2.1: Charter

5.5.1: Charter

5.7: Demeter Reading Response

### Chastity

5.4.4: Artemis

### childbirth

5.4.4: Artemis

### childrearing

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

### chorus

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

### Chrysaor

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### chthonic

1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths

5: The Feminine Divine

5.1.1: The Mother Goddess

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

5.4.1: Hecate

5.5.2: Psychological

### chthonic elements

5.8: Study Questions

### Chumash folklore

4.16: Bibliography

### Chumash myths

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

### City Dionysia

1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

1.12: Study Questions

5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

### Classical Athens

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

### classical literature

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

4.16: Bibliography

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

### classical mythology

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

2.4: Bibliography

### Classical Period

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

1.12: Study Questions

### classical research

1.13: Bibliography

### Clio

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

### Clotho

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Clymene

3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind

### Clytemnestra

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

### Coeus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### cognitive imperative

2.2.3: Neurological

### collective unconscious

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

2.2.2: The Unconscious

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### commonalities

3.8: Study Questions

### comparative mythology

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

### Competition

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

### Compression

2.2.3: Neurological

### conflict

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

### conscious

2.2.1.2.1: The Ego

### consequences

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### Constantinople

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### constellations

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### corn doll

5.5.1: Charter

### cosmic atonement

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### cosmic energy

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### cosmogony

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

3.8: Study Questions

5.1: The Great Goddess

### cosmology

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

3.8: Study Questions

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

### Cottus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### cow goddess

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

### Coyote

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

### creation

3.2.1.2: Commentary

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### creation epics

3.8: Study Questions

### creation myth

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

### creation myths

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### Creation Story

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

### creator

4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

### Creatrix

2.2.7: Feminist

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### Crete

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Crius

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Cronos

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### crossroads

5.4.1: Hecate

### cuckoo

5.4.2: Hera

### cultural anthropology

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

### cultural assimilation

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### cultural beliefs

2.1.2.1: Charter

### cultural context

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

cultural history

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

cultural perspective

2.2.4: Lens

cultural studies

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece  
2.2.4: Lens

cultural transition

5.8: Study Questions

cuneiform

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

curse and blessing

5.8: Study Questions

customs

2.1.2.1: Charter

Cyclopes

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

Cynopolea

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Cyprogenes

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Cytherea

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

D

Dêmosphôn

5.4.5: Demeter  
5.5.3: Feminist  
5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

dark age

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

darkness

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

David Leeming

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants  
5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

Death

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
4.15: Study Questions  
5: The Feminine Divine

deceit

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
4.2.6: Zeus

defiance

4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

deities

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

Delphic Omphalos

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

Demeter

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
5: The Feminine Divine  
5.1.1: The Mother Goddess  
5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death  
5.4.1: Hecate  
5.5.1: Charter  
5.5.1.1: Demeter’s Connection with Dionysus  
5.5.2: Psychological  
5.5.3: Feminist  
5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind  
5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter  
5.8: Study Questions

democracy

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

Democracy in Athens

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

Demogorgon (Eternity)

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

Deo

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

Destinies

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

destruction and creation

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

devotion

5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter’s Myth

Dione

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Dionysian Mysteries

5.5.1.1: Demeter’s Connection with Dionysus

Dionysus

1.12: Study Questions  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
5.5.1.1: Demeter’s Connection with Dionysus  
5.8: Study Questions

discord

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

divination

2.2.2: The Unconscious

divine conflict

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus’ Tyranny

divine epiphany

5.5.1.1: Demeter’s Connection with Dionysus

divine families

3.6.2: Hesiod’s Vision

divine feminine

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

divine imperfection

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

divine justice

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

divine offspring

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

divine punishment

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden  
4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)  
4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus’ Tyranny  
4.12.1: Io’s Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

divine rule

4.15: Study Questions

division

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

domesticity

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

Doom

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Dorian invasion

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

dowry

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

drama

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

dreams

2.2.2: The Unconscious  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

dual aspects

5.4.4: Artemis

Dumuzi

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

E

Ea

3.2.1: Enūma eliš  
3.2.1.1: Summary

early authors

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

Earth

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus  
5.1: The Great Goddess

East Pediment

1.13: Bibliography

eBooks

4.16: Bibliography

Echidna

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

Echo and Narcissus

2.1.1.3: Nature

Eden

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)  
4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

ego

2.2.1.2.1: The Ego

Egypt

3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia

Egyptian creation

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth  
3.2.2.1: Commentary  
3.6.4: Birth of the Gods  
3.8: Study Questions

Egyptian legends

3.9: Bibliography

Egyptian sky goddess

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth  
5: The Feminine Divine  
5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

Eileithuia

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

## Eileithyia

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants
- 5.4.2: Hera

## Elder Titans family tree

- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

## Electra

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Electra Complex

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

## Eleusinian Mysteries

- 5.5.1: Charter
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter
- 5.8: Study Questions

## Eleusis

- 5.5.1: Charter
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

## Elise Baumgartel

- 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

## Elizabeth Barber

- 2.2.3: Neurological
- 2.2.4: Lens
- 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided

## Elizabeth Wayland Barber

- 2.2.4: Lens

## Enki

- 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
- 3.2.1.1: Summary

## Enkidu

- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

## Enuma elish

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis
- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.8: Study Questions
- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind
- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

## envy

- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

## Eos

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Epaphus

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

## epic poetry

- 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod

## epigraphy

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## Epimetheus

- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus
- 3.6.7: The First Woman
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

## Erato

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

## Erebus

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

## Ereshkigal

- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

## Erichthonius

- 1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths

## Erinyes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Eris

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

## Eros

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

## Erysichthon

- 5.5.3: Feminist

## Etemenanki

- 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel

## ethical conduct

- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## ethical dilemma

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

## ethics

- 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

## etiological explanation

- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

## etiology

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology
- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## Etiology Theory

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## etymology

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory

## Euhemerism

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## Euhemerism theory

- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism

## Euhemerus

- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism

## Euphrates

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

## Europa

- 5.1: The Great Goddess

## Euterpe

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

## Eve

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden
- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)
- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization
- 4.15: Study Questions

## explanatory myths

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology

## F

### fairy tales

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

### Fall of Man

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### familial bonds

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

### family conflicts

- 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

### family structure

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## farming advice

- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

## fate

- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind

## Fates

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## father archetype

- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

## female characters

- 2.2.7: Feminist

## female divinity

- 5.9: Bibliography

## female experience

- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

## female representation

- 5.1: The Great Goddess

## feminine power

- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## feminism

- 5.9: Bibliography

## Feminist analysis

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

## feminist criticism

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.5.3: Feminist
- 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

## feminist interpretation

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

## feminist literary criticism

- 3.8: Study Questions

## feminist studies

- 2.4: Bibliography

## feminist theory

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.5.3: Feminist

## femme fatal

- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## Femme Fatale

- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## fertility

- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## Fertility myths

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

## festival

- 1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

## festivals

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 1.13: Bibliography

## fire

- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

## fire theft

- 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## Firmament

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

## Fitzgerald translation

- 4.2.6: Zeus

## folklore

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 1.12: Study Questions

## folklore definition

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## Forbidden Fruit

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

## Fortunate Fall

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

## foundational character naming

- 4.15: Study Questions

## Frankenstein

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 4.16: Bibliography

## Free Will

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

## Freud

- 2.2.1: Psychological Theories
- 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic
- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

## Freudian

- 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

## Freudian theory

- 2.2.7: Feminist

## friendship

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Furies

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## G

## gadfly

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## gadfly curse

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

## Gaea

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory
- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 4.2.6: Zeus
- 5: The Feminine Divine
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess
- 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

## garden of Eden

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

## gender dynamics

- 2.2.7: Feminist

## gender roles

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family
- 5.4.4: Artemis

## genealogy

- 1.13: Bibliography

## Genesis

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis
- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)
- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)
- 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel
- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

## Geometric Age

- 1.12: Study Questions

## Geometric period

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## Geryones

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Giants

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## gift of fire

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology

## Gihon

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

## Gilgamesh

4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

## God

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

- 4.15: Study Questions

## goddess

- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess
- 5.4.1: Hecate
- 5.4.4: Artemis
- 5.9: Bibliography

## goddess culture

- 5.8: Study Questions

## goddess of agriculture

- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

## goddess of discord

- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

## Goddess of the Hunt

- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

## Goddess symbolism

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## goddess symbols

- 5.8: Study Questions

## goddess worship

- 5.4.4: Artemis
- 5.8: Study Questions

## goddesses

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## gods

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 3.8: Study Questions

## Gold Age

- 4.15: Study Questions

## golden apple

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

## Golden Calf

- 2.2.4: Lens

## Gorgon

- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

## grain

- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## Great Goddess

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5: The Feminine Divine
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided
- 5.4.1: Hecate
- 5.4.2: Hera
- 5.4.3: Hestia
- 5.4.4: Artemis
- 5.5.3: Feminist
- 5.8: Study Questions

## Great Goddess functions

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

## Great Mother Goddess

- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

## Greek alphabet

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## Greek art

- 1.13: Bibliography

## Greek children

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## Greek civilization

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## Greek cosmology

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology

## Greek Creation

- 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

## Greek culture

- 3.9: Bibliography

## Greek epic

- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

## Greek Giants

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

## Greek gods

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

## Greek history

- 1.13: Bibliography

## Greek mythology

- 1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae
- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 1.13: Bibliography
- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths
- 2.4: Bibliography
- 4.2.5: Odysseus
- 4.2.6: Zeus
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt
- 4.16: Bibliography
- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response
- 5.8: Study Questions

## Greek mythology family tree

- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

## Greek myths

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 3.9: Bibliography
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt
- 5.9: Bibliography

## Greek myths vs. Roman myths

- 1.12: Study Questions

## Greek Pantheon

- 2.2.7: Feminist

## Greek Philosophers

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## Greek philosophy

- 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

## Greek temple

- 1.8: Temples and Churches

## Greek theatre

- 1.13: Bibliography

## Gyes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## H

### Hades

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter
- 5.8: Study Questions

### Harmonia

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Harpies

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

### Harris and Platzner

- 2.2.3: Neurological
- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess
- 5.4.5: Demeter

### Harry Potter

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### Heart of Darkness

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

### Heaven

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Hebe

- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Hecate

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess
- 5.4.1: Hecate
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

### Hecatonchires

- 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### Hedwig and the Angry Inch

- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

### hierogamy

- 5.8: Study Questions

### Hekate/Hecate

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

### Helen

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### Helios

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory

### Helios Circe

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Helios

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Hellenistic Period

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.12: Study Questions

### Hephaestus

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

### Hephaistos

- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

### Hera

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess
- 5.4.2: Hera

### Heracles

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Heraeum

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

### Herakles

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 5.4.2: Hera

### Herakles/Hercules

- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

### Herbert James Draper

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### Hercules

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

### Hermes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

### Hero's Journey

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### heroes

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 4.15: Study Questions

### heroic archetype

- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

### heroic deeds

- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

### heroic epics

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### Heroic Journey

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### heroic myths

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### Hesiod

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 2.1.1.2: Etiology
- 2.3: Group Activity
- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony
- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses
- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.7: The First Woman
- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans
- 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt
- 3.8: Study Questions
- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 4.16: Bibliography
- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess

### Hesiod vs. Aeschylus

- 4.15: Study Questions

### Hesiod's brother

- 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

### Hesiod's pessimism

- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

### Hesiod's Theogony

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis
- 3.8: Study Questions

### Hestia

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.4.3: Hestia

### Hiddekel

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

### hierogamy

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.5.1: Charter

### hieroglyphs

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### hieros gamos

- 5.5.1: Charter

### historical analysis

- 3.9: Bibliography
- 5.9: Bibliography

### historical basis Classical myth

- 1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

### historical parallels

- 3.8: Study Questions

### historical significance

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

### Historical Theory

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

### history of religion

- 2.4: Bibliography

### homer

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism
- 2.2.7: Feminist

### Homer and Hesiod

- 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod

**Homeric Hymn to Demeter**

- 2.1.2.1: Charter
- 5.4.5: Demeter
- 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter’s Myth
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter
- 5.8: Study Questions

**Homeric Hymns**

- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

**Homeric poems**

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

**homosexuality**

- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato’s Symposium

**Horus**

- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

**household dynamics**

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

**human brain**

- 2.2.3: Neurological

**human experience**

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

**human gains**

- 4.15: Study Questions

**human history**

- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

**human psyche**

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

**humans**

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

**Humbaba**

- 4.8: Humanity’s Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

**Hunahpu**

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**Hunahpu and Xbalanque**

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**hunting**

- 5.4.4: Artemis

**Hydra**

- 5.4.2: Hera

**Hymn to Demeter**

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

**Hyperion**

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**I**

**Iacchus**

- 5.4.5: Demeter
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter’s Connection with Dionysus

**Ian Hodder**

- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

**Iapetus**

- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

**Iasion**

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.4.5: Demeter
- 5.5.3: Feminist
- 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

**Ictinus**

- 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

**Iliad**

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism
- 2.2.2: The Unconscious
- 4.2.5: Odysseus
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

**Image of God**

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

**immortal gains**

- 4.15: Study Questions

**immortality**

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

**importance of story**

- 3.8: Study Questions

**Inachus**

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus’ Tyranny

**Inanna**

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

**individualism**

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

**individuation**

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

**influence**

- 1.12: Study Questions
- 3.8: Study Questions

**Innocence**

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

**innocence and knowledge**

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

**interdisciplinary study**

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

**Internalist theories**

- 2.2: Internalist Theories

**Io**

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus’ Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io’s Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 5.1: The Great Goddess

**Iocasta**

- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

**Ionian migration**

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

**Iphigenia**

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

**Iris**

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**Iron Age**

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 4.15: Study Questions

**Ishtar**

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 4.8: Humanity’s Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

**Isis**

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

**J**

**Jacob Jordaens**

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

**James Fraser**

- 2.1.2.3: Ritual

**James Mellaart**

- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

**John Milton**

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

**Joseph Campbell**

- 2.2.2: The Unconscious
- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell
- 2.4: Bibliography

**Joseph Conrad**

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

**Journey and fate**

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

**Jove and Juno**

- 2.1.1.3: Nature

**JSTOR**

- 4.16: Bibliography

**Judeo/Christian God**

- 2.2.7: Feminist

**Jung**

- 2.2.1: Psychological Theories
- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

**Jungian**

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal
- 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

**Jungian Archetypal**

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal
- 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego
- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

**Jungian archetypes**

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**Jungian psychology**

- 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego
- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

**Jupiter**

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 5.1: The Great Goddess

**justice**

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**K**

**Karen Armstrong**

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants
- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided
- 5.5.2: Psychological

**Karen Horney**

- 2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

**Khepera**

- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

**King James Version**

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

**King Peleus**

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

**Knossos Snake Goddess**

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

**Kore**

5: The Feminine Divine  
5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess  
5.4.5: Demeter  
5.5.1: Charter  
5.5.3: Feminist  
5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

**Kronos**

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
4.2.6: Zeus  
4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity  
5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage  
5.4: The Goddess Divided

**L**

**labrys**

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

**Lachesis**

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**Laertes**

4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

**Land**

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

**leadership**

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

**legend**

1.12: Study Questions

**legend definition**

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

**legends**

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

**lens**

2.2.4: Lens

**lens theory**

2.2.4: Lens  
2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

**Lesko**

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

**Lethe Effect**

5.4.3: Hestia

**Leto**

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**life**

5: The Feminine Divine

**light**

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

**Lillith**

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

**literary analysis**

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal  
2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens  
3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt  
4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus  
4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)  
4.16: Bibliography

**literary imperialism**

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

**literary theories**

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths  
5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth

**literary theory**

2.2.4: Lens  
2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens  
2.4: Bibliography

**literature**

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

**Loki**

2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow  
4.2.1: Loki (Norse)  
4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

**Lullu**

3.2.1: Enūma eliš  
3.2.1.1: Summary

**lunar lore**

5.4.1: Hecate

**M**

**MAGIC**

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore  
5.4.1: Hecate

**Maia**

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**maiden**

5.4.4: Artemis

**Maiden Goddess**

5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

**major deities**

3.8: Study Questions

**major events**

3.8: Study Questions

**Maori legends**

3.9: Bibliography  
4.16: Bibliography

**Maori mythology**

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

**Marduk**

3.2.1: Enūma eliš  
3.2.1.1: Summary  
5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

**marital discord**

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

**Markale**

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

**marriage**

2.2.7: Feminist

**marriage arrangements**

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

**marriage customs**

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

**martial conquest**

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

**Mary Shelley**

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

**masculine language**

2.2.7: Feminist

**masculine rule**

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

**Maslow**

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

**Maui**

4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

**Mayan deity**

2.1.2.3: Ritual

**Mayan Hero Twins**

4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**Mayan mythology**

4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**Medea**

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**Medusa**

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus  
2.2.7: Feminist  
3.6.4: Birth of the Gods  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**Melia**

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

**Melpomene**

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

**Menelaos**

4.2.5: Odysseus

**Menoetius**

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY  
4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

**mesolithic**

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

**Mesopotamian influences**

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

**Metamorphoses**

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

**Metamorphosis**

4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind

**Metaneira**

5.5.3: Feminist  
5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

**Metis**

2.2.3: Neurological  
2.2.7: Feminist  
3.6.9: The Children of Zeus  
3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

**Midgard**

4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

**Minoan civilization**

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

**Minoan culture**

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

**Minoan era**

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

**Minoan Snake Goddess**

5: The Feminine Divine  
5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

**Minos**

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

**minotaur**

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

**miraculous birth**

4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)  
4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

**miraculous births**

1.12: Study Questions

## Mircea Eliade

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

## misogyny

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

## Mistress of the Animals

5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

## Mnemosyne

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## modern audiences

4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

## Moerea (Fates)

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Monetius

3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus

## monogamy

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## Monomyth

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## monuments

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

1.13: Bibliography

## Moon Goddess

5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess

## moons

5.1: The Great Goddess

## moral lessons

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## morality

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

## Morford and Lenardon

2.1.2.1: Charter

## Morpheus

2.2.2: The Unconscious

## mortal suffering

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## mother archetype

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

## Mother Goddess

2.2.7: Feminist

4.15: Study Questions

5: The Feminine Divine

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

5.8: Study Questions

## motifs

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## Mount Thornax

5.4.2: Hera

## Muses

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

3.8: Study Questions

## Mycenaean civilization

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## Mycenaean culture

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

## myth

1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

## myth analysis

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

2.2.4: Lens

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## myth definition

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## myth parallels

4.15: Study Questions

## myth research

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## mythic heritage

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## mythographer

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## mythography

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

## mythological monsters

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

## mythology

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

1.12: Study Questions

1.13: Bibliography

2: Literary Criticism for Myths

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

2.4: Bibliography

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

3.9: Bibliography

4.16: Bibliography

5.1: The Great Goddess

5.9: Bibliography

## mythology adaptation

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## mythology and colonization

4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## mythology and politics

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

## mythology and psychology

2.4: Bibliography

## mythology comparison

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## mythology in education

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

## mythology influence

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## mythology interpretation

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## mythology literary theory

2: Literary Criticism for Myths

## Mythology study questions

1.12: Study Questions

## mythology theory

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## myths

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## Myths and Rituals

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

# N

## narratology

2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## Native American

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## Native American folklore

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## nature

5.4.4: Artemis

## Nature Theory

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

2.1.1.3: Nature

## Nausithous and Nausinous

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Navajo tradition

4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## Near East cultures

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

## Near Eastern

3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia

## Neil Gaiman

4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

## Nemean Lion

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Nemesis

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

## neolithic

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

5.9: Bibliography

## Neolithic era

2.2.7: Feminist

5.4.4: Artemis

## Nepthys

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

## Nereus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Neurological

2.2.4: Lens

## neurological science

2.2.3: Neurological

## neurological theory

2.2.3: Neurological

2.2.4: Lens

2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

## New Historicism

1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae

## night

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

5.4.1: Hecate

## Nile

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## Nilus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Norman Cantor

3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony

## Norse gods

4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

## Norse mythology

4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

## nuclear family

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## Nut

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

5: The Feminine Divine

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

## Nymphs

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Nyx

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

## O

### Oceanus

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound  
(Aeschylus)

### Odin

4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

### Odysseus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.2.5: Odysseus

### Odysseus' father

4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

### Odyssey

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### Oedipal Conflict

2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

### oedipus

2.2.2: The Unconscious

### Oedipus Complex

2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

### Oedipus Rex

2.2.2: The Unconscious

### offspring

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

### Old Testament

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

### olive tree

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

### Olympian family

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

### Olympian goddesses

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

5.8: Study Questions

### Olympian gods

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

### Olympians

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

### Olympic Games

1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### omophagia

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### Omphalos

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)

### oral narratives

4.16: Bibliography

### oral tales

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

### oral tradition

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

### Orestes

2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

### origin myths

4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

### origin of man

3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

### Original Sin

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### Origins of Love

3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

### Osiris

3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

### Ottoman Turks

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### Ouranos

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

4.2.6: Zeus

5.1.1: The Mother Goddess

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### ovid

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

2.1.1.3: Nature

4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind

4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

4.16: Bibliography

## P

### paleolithic

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

2.2.7: Feminist

5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

### Paleolithic Era

5.4.4: Artemis

### Panathenaea

1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths

1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia

1.12: Study Questions

### Pandareus

5.5.3: Feminist

### Pandora

3.6.7: The First Woman

3.8: Study Questions

4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

4.15: Study Questions

### Pandora and Eve

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

### Pandora's jar

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

### Panthea

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

### Paradise Lost

4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth-Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

### parenting

5.4.5: Demeter

### parthenogenesis

5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

5.8: Study Questions

### Parthenon

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

1.8: Temples and Churches

1.12: Study Questions

1.13: Bibliography

3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

### Parthenon pediment

3.8: Study Questions

### patriarchal narratives

5.1: The Great Goddess

### patriarchal shift

5.8: Study Questions

### patriarchal society

2.2.7: Feminist

### patriarchal themes

4.2.6: Zeus

### patriarchy

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess

### patricide

4.2.6: Zeus

### patron city

1.12: Study Questions

### Paul Barber

2.2.3: Neurological

2.2.4: Lens

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

5.4: The Goddess Divided

### Pausanias

1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

### Pegasus

3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Pelasgus

5.4.2: Hera

### Peleus

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Peloponnesian Wars

1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

### Penelope

4.2.5: Odysseus

### Pentheus

5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### Percey Bysshe Shelley

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

### Percy Bysshe Shelley

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

### Perseis

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Persephone

2.1.2.1: Charter

2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus

5: The Feminine Divine

5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

5.4.1: Hecate

5.4.5: Demeter

5.5.1: Charter

5.5.2: Psychological

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

5.7: Demeter Reading Response

5.8: Study Questions

### Perses

3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

## Perseus

- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell
- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Persian Wars

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

## Peter Paul Reubens

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

## pets in ancient Greece

- 1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## Pheidais

- 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos

## Philommedes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## philosophical analysis

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## philosophy

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## Pison

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

## planets

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths
- 5.1: The Great Goddess

## Plants

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

## Plato

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths
- 2.1.1: Allegorical Theories
- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

## Plato's Symposium

- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

## Pleiades

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology

## plot points

- 3.8: Study Questions

## Plutarch

- 4.16: Bibliography

## Plutus

- 5.4.5: Demeter
- 5.5.1: Charter
- 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

## Poesideon

- 5.5.2: Psychological

## political conquests

- 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

## politics

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## Polyhymnia

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

## Polyphemus

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

## pomegranate

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## Poseidon

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.2.5: Odysseus

## positioning

- 3.8: Study Questions

## positive trickery

- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## pottery

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## prehistoric periods

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## preservation

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## professor consultation

- 2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

## Project Gutenberg

- 3.9: Bibliography
- 4.16: Bibliography

## Prometheus

- 2.1.1.2: Etiology
- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony
- 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4: Separation from the Divine
- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin
- 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity
- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt
- 4.15: Study Questions

## Prometheus Bound

- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind
- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.15: Study Questions
- 4.16: Bibliography

## Prometheus gains

- 4.15: Study Questions

## Prometheus the Firebringer

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## Prometheus Unbound

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

## prophecy

- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

## prophetic foresight

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

## Prose Edda

- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

## Psyche

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory
- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## psychoanalysis

- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess
- 5.9: Bibliography

## psychoanalytic approach

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

## Psychoanalytical Criticism

- 5.5.2: Psychological
- 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind

## psychological

- 5.5.2: Psychological

## psychological insights

- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt

## psychological lessons

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## psychology

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

## Punic Wars

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

## punishment

- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

## Pythagoras

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

## Pytho

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Q

## Quingu

- 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
- 3.2.1.1: Summary

## R

## Rabbinical texts

- 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

## Rainbow Serpent

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## rape

- 5.4: The Goddess Divided
- 5.5.2: Psychological

## Rape of the Sabine women

- 2.1.2.3: Ritual

## Reading response

- 1.11: Reading Response Prompt

## Rebirth

- 5: The Feminine Divine

## religion

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 2.4: Bibliography
- 5.9: Bibliography

## religious festival

- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## religious history

- 2.2.7: Feminist

## religious narratives

- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

## religious texts

- 3.9: Bibliography

## restoration

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## Rhea

- 3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## rights and freedoms

- 1.12: Study Questions

## ritual

- 1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## Ritual Theory

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths
- 2.1.2.3: Ritual

## rituals

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece
- 2.1.2.1: Charter
- 5.4.4: Artemis

## rivers of Eden

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

## Robert Graves

- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided
- 5.5.3: Feminist

## Roman Civil Wars

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece

## Roman gods

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## Roman mythology

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## Roman Period

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 1.12: Study Questions

## Roman values

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## Romantic literature

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

## Romantic poets

- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

## Romulus

- 2.1.2.3: Ritual

# S

## sacred marriage

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## sacred texts

- 5.9: Bibliography

## sacrifice

- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 5.4.4: Artemis

## sacrifices

- 1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

## saga

- 1.12: Study Questions

## sagas

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## Salus

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## Scamander

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## sculptures

- 3.8: Study Questions

## Scythian precipice

- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

## Sea

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

## sea nymphs

- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

## seasonal shifts

- 2.1.2.1: Charter

## Seasons

- 5.4.2: Hera

## Seated Woman figurine

- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

## Selene

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## self

- 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego

## Semele

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## separation

- 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth

## Separation and loss

- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response

## separation from the divine

- 4.15: Study Questions

## Separation, Initiation, Return

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## Serpent

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)
- 5: The Feminine Divine
- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## serpent symbolism

- 5.8: Study Questions

## Set

- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

## Shadow self

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

## Shamash

- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization

## Shinar

- 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)

## Shu

- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

## sibling rivalry

- 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

## Sif

- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)

## Sigmund Freud

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal
- 2.4: Bibliography

## significant themes

- 3.8: Study Questions

## Silence

- 2.2.4: Lens
- 5.4.3: Hestia

## Silver Age

- 4.15: Study Questions

## Sirens

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

## Sisyphus

- 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

## Sky Father

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods

## Sky God

- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided

## social archaeology

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction

## social commentary

- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

## social ideals

- 4.15: Study Questions

## social institutions

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths
- 2.1.2.1: Charter

## Socrates

- 1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece
- 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium

## Sol

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory

## Sophocles

- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

## sorcery

- 5.4.1: Hecate

## South Pacific mythology

- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## sparagmos

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

## Sphinx

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## spiritual ancestors

- 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)

## Star Wars

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## Stephen King

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

## Steropes

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

## Stoicism

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## stone tools

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## Story Criticism

- 2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

## storytelling

- 2.2.3: Neurological

## strife

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS
- 4.15: Study Questions

## student advice

- 2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

## student writing advice

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

## Subconscious

- 2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal

## Sumerian civilization

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## sun story

- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)

## supernatural beings

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

## survival

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

## symbolism

- 2.1.1.1: Allegory
- 2.4: Bibliography
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

## T

### Tartarus

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Tefnut

- 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth

### Temenus

- 5.4.2: Hera

### temple vs. church

- 1.8: Temples and Churches

### temptation

- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible)

### Terpsichore

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

### Tethys

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### textual examples

- 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

### Thalia

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

### Thanatos

- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### Thaumas

- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### The Golden Bough

- 2.1.2.3: Ritual

### The Implied Spider

- 2.2.4: Lens

### The Lord of the Rings

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### the Mistress

- 5.5.2: Psychological

### The Odyssey

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### The Princess Bride

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### The Shadow

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow

### Theia

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Themis

- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY

### Theogony

- 1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore
- 2.1.1.2: Etiology
- 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony
- 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod
- 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision
- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses
- 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods
- 3.6.7: The First Woman
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess

### Theogony structure

- 3.8: Study Questions

### Theseus

- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell

### Thetis

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

### Tia'mat

- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

### Tiamat

- 3.2.1: Enūma eliš
- 3.2.1.1: Summary
- 3.2.1.2: Commentary

### Titanomachy

- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin

### Titans

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans
- 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)
- 4.16: Bibliography
- 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

### tone

- 3.8: Study Questions

### topography

- 1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction
- 1.12: Study Questions
- 1.13: Bibliography

### Tower of Babel

- 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel
- 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1)
- 4.15: Study Questions

### tradition

- 2.1.2.1: Charter

### tragedy

- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny
- 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

### tree of knowledge

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)
- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden

### tree of life

- 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224)

### trees

- 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

### trickster

- 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology
- 4.2.1: Loki (Norse)
- 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American)
- 4.2.6: Zeus

### trickster archetype

- 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology
- 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific)
- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)
- 4.2.6: Zeus
- 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

### trickster characters

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### tricksters

- 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)
- 4.2.6: Zeus

### Triple goddess

- 5.5.3: Feminist

### triple nature

- 5.4.1: Hecate

### Triptolemus

- 5.5.1: Charter

### Trojan Cycle

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### trojan war

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)
- 4.2.5: Odysseus
- 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

### Troy

- 2.1.2.2: Euhemerism

### twin goddess

- 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death

### Typheon

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

### tyranny

- 1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History (to CE 1453)

## U

### Ulysses

- 4.2.5: Odysseus

### unconscious

- 2.2.1.2.1: The Ego
- 2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus
- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

### unconscious mind

- 2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow
- 2.2.2: The Unconscious

### underworld

- 5.4.1: Hecate

### Urania

- 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

### Ushabi of Neferibresaneith

- 3.2.2.1: Commentary

### usurpation

- 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage

## V

### Venus

- 5.1: The Great Goddess

### Venus of Willendorf

- 2.2.7: Feminist
- 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants

### vessel

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

### violence

- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife

### Virgil

- 1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

### virgin

- 5.4.5: Demeter

### Virgin Mary

- 2.2.7: Feminist

### virginity

- 5.4.4: Artemis

### volanic

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

### volcanic imagery

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

### vow of chastity

- 5.4.3: Hestia

## W

### war

- 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

### water

- 3.2.1.2: Commentary

## Waters

3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3)

## Wayland Barber

2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens

## Wendy Doniger

2.2.4: Lens

## Western literature

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

## When They Severed Earth from Sky

5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess

## wine

5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

## witchcraft

5.4.1: Hecate

## witches

5.4.1: Hecate

## womb envy

2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic

## women in history

5.9: Bibliography

## women in mythology

4.16: Bibliography

## women's roles

1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family

## working class grievances

3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

## Works and Days

1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore

2.3: Group Activity

3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.15: Study Questions

## world history

3.9: Bibliography

## world's navel

5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess

## writing systems

1.13: Bibliography

## X

### Xbalanque

4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

### Xenophanes

2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths

2.1.1: Allegorical Theories

### Xibalba

4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan)

### Xipe Totec

2.1.2.3: Ritual

## Y

### Yahweh

3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis

## Z

### Zeus

1.6: Comparisons (and Contrasts) Within Greek and Roman Myths

1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece

1.12: Study Questions

2.2.3: Neurological

3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses

3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos)

3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans

3.6.9: The Children of Zeus

3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt

4: Separation from the Divine

4.2.6: Zeus

4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods

4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity

4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus)

4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS

4.15: Study Questions

5.4.5: Demeter

5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus

5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter

5.8: Study Questions

### Zeus and Hera

2.1.1.3: Nature

### Zeus gains

4.15: Study Questions

### Zeus transformation

4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny

### Zeus' wrath

4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion

### Ziggurat

3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel



## Detailed Licensing

### Overview

**Title:** [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#)

**Webpages:** 139

**Applicable Restrictions:** Noncommercial

#### All licenses found:

- [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#): 88.5% (123 pages)
- [Public Domain](#): 5% (7 pages)
- [CC BY 4.0](#): 2.9% (4 pages)
- [Undeclared](#): 1.4% (2 pages)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 1.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)

### By Page

- [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [Front Matter](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [InfoPage](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [Table of Contents](#) - [Undeclared](#)
    - [Licensing](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [About this Project](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History \(to CE 1453\)](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 1.0](#)
    - [1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.6: Comparisons \(and Contrasts\) Within Greek and Roman Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.8: Temples and Churches](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.11: Reading Response Prompt](#) - [CC BY 4.0](#)
    - [1.12: Study Questions](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.13: Bibliography](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [2: Literary Criticism for Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.1.1: Allegorical Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.1: Allegory](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.2: Etiology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.3: Nature](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.1.2: Anthropological Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.1: Charter](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.2: Euhemerism](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.3: Ritual](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [2.2: Internalist Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.1: Psychological Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.1: The Ego](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.2: The Unconscious](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.3: Neurological](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.4: Lens](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 2.2.7: Feminist - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 2.3: Group Activity - CC BY 4.0
- 2.4: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3: Creation in the Ancient World--The Route to Hesiod's Theogony - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.2.1: Enūma eliš - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.1.1: Summary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.1.2: Commentary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.2.1: Commentary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3) - Public Domain
    - 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224) - Public Domain
  - 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.7: The First Woman - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY - Public Domain
  - 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt - CC BY 4.0
  - 3.8: Study Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.9: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4: Separation from the Divine - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.1: Loki (Norse) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.5: Odysseus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.6: Zeus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible) - Public Domain
  - 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization - CC BY-NC-SA 3.0
  - 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity - CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
  - 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus) - Public Domain
  - 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS - Public Domain
  - 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.15: Study Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.16: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5: The Feminine Divine - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 5.1: The Great Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.1: Hecate - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.2: Hera - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.3: Hestia - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.4: Artemis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.5: Demeter - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.1: Charter - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.2: Psychological - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.3: Feminist - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter - *Public Domain*
- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.8: Study Questions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.9: Bibliography - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 7: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 11: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- Back Matter - *CC BY 4.0*
  - Index - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Glossary - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Detailed Licensing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Detailed Licensing - *Undeclared*

## Detailed Licensing

### Overview

**Title:** [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#)

**Webpages:** 139

**Applicable Restrictions:** Noncommercial

#### All licenses found:

- [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#): 88.5% (123 pages)
- [Public Domain](#): 5% (7 pages)
- [CC BY 4.0](#): 2.9% (4 pages)
- [Undeclared](#): 1.4% (2 pages)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 1.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)
- [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#): 0.7% (1 page)

### By Page

- [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [Front Matter](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [Temples of the Gods: An Introduction to Classical Mythology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [InfoPage](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [Table of Contents](#) - [Undeclared](#)
    - [Licensing](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [About this Project](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [1: The World of Ancient Greece and Mycenae](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.1: A Timeline of Ancient Greece](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.2: A Condensed Outline of Greek History \(to CE 1453\)](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.3: The Topography and Monuments of Athens- A Brief Introduction](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 1.0](#)
    - [1.4: Ancient Greek Models of Marriage and Family](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.5: Myth, Legend and Folklore](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.6: Comparisons \(and Contrasts\) Within Greek and Roman Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.7: The Function of Myth in Ancient Greece](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.8: Temples and Churches](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.9: Socio-Political Value of Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.10: Communal Rituals--The Panathenaea and the City Dionysia](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.11: Reading Response Prompt](#) - [CC BY 4.0](#)
    - [1.12: Study Questions](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [1.13: Bibliography](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
  - [2: Literary Criticism for Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [2.1: Externalist Categories of Myths](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.1.1: Allegorical Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.1: Allegory](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.2: Etiology](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.1.3: Nature](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.1.2: Anthropological Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.1: Charter](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.2: Euhemerism](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.1.2.3: Ritual](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
    - [2.2: Internalist Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.1: Psychological Theories](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.2.1.1: Freudian Psychoanalytic](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
        - [2.2.1.2: Jungian Archetypal](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.1: The Ego](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.2: The Shadow](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
          - [2.2.1.2.3: The Anima and Animus](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.2: The Unconscious](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.3: Neurological](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.4: Lens](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
      - [2.2.5: Combining Neurological and Lens](#) - [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

- 2.2.6: Heroic Journey--Joseph Campbell - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 2.2.7: Feminist - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 2.3: Group Activity - CC BY 4.0
- 2.4: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 3: Creation in the Ancient World--The Route to Hesiod's Theogony - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.1: The Ancient Greek View of the Cosmos - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.2: Ancient Near Eastern Mythology, Egypt and Babylonia - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.2.1: Enūma eliš - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.1.1: Summary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.1.2: Commentary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.2.2: The Egyptian Creation Myth - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
      - 3.2.2.1: Commentary - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.3: Biblical Creation in Genesis - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.3.1: The First Book of Moses--Called Genesis (1-1-2-3) - Public Domain
    - 3.3.2: The Second Account of Creation from Genesis (2-4-224) - Public Domain
  - 3.4: Ziggurats and The Tower of Babel - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.4.1: From Genesis (11-1) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.5: The Origins of Love, from Plato's Symposium - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.6: Hesiod- Introduction to The Theogony - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.1: Homer and Hesiod - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.2: Hesiod's Vision - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.3: Hymn to the Muses - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.4: Birth of the Gods - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.5: Zeus and Kronos (Cronos) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.6: Atlas and Prometheus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.7: The First Woman - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.8: The Battle with the Titans - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.9: The Children of Zeus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 3.6.10: THE THEOGONY - Public Domain
  - 3.7: The Theogony Reading Response Prompt - CC BY 4.0
  - 3.8: Study Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 3.9: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4: Separation from the Divine - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.1: Prometheus, Architect of Humankind - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.2: The Trickster Motif in World Mythology - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.1: Loki (Norse) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.2: Coyote (Native American) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.3: Maui (South Pacific) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.4: Hunahpu and Xbalanque (Mayan) - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.5: Odysseus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.6: Zeus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.7: Hermes and Autolycus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.2.8: Trickster Conclusion - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.3: The Promethean Family of Origin - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.4: Prometheus, Guardian and Defender of Mankind - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.5: Pandora, Curse of the Gods - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.6: The Biblical Analog to the Pandora Myth- Adam, Eve, and the Loss of Eden - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.7: The Fall of Humanity (Genesis 2-21-3-24. The King James Version of the Bible) - Public Domain
- 4.8: Humanity's Estrangement from Nature as the Cost of Civilization - CC BY-NC-SA 3.0
- 4.9: The Dual Natures of Strife - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.10: The Five Ages of Humanity - CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
- 4.11: The Inevitable Evolution of Prometheus - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.12: Io--a Tragic Mortal Victim to Zeus' Tyranny - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 4.12.1: Io's Tale, from Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus) - Public Domain
- 4.13: HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS - Public Domain
- 4.14: Separation Reading Response Prompt - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.15: Study Questions - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 4.16: Bibliography - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- 5: The Feminine Divine - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
  - 5.1: The Great Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.1: The Mother Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.2: Çatal Hüyük--Ancient Remnants - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.3: Nut, The Egyptian Sky Goddess - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
    - 5.1.4: Intertwining Life and Death - CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

- 5.1.5: Symbols Associated with the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.1.6: Three Provinces of the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.2: Gaea--the Greek Great Mother Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.2.1: Gaea in Marriage - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.3: Subjugation of the Great Goddess - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.4: The Goddess Divided - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.1: Hecate - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.2: Hera - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.3: Hestia - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.4: Artemis - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.4.5: Demeter - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.5: Applying Literary Theories to Demeter's Myth - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.1: Charter - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
    - 5.5.1.1: Demeter's Connection with Dionysus - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.2: Psychological - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.3: Feminist - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - 5.5.4: Convergence of Feminist and Psychoanalytic Theories--Insights of the Female Mind - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.6: The Homeric Hymn to Demeter - *Public Domain*
- 5.7: Demeter Reading Response - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.8: Study Questions - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 5.9: Bibliography - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 6: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 7: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 8: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 9: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 10: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 11: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- 12: New Page - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
- Back Matter - *CC BY 4.0*
  - Index - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Glossary - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Detailed Licensing - *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*
  - Detailed Licensing - *Undeclared*