



NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY



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GODS AND GODDESSES IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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**1999
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Preface

I would like to give my special thanks to all the lecturers of the English Department who did their best to educate us and especially to GUL CELKAN the chairperson of the English Department who has been very helpful to me in preparing this thesis as well, and to MINE CALISKAN, IRADE SIRINOVA and ROGER SIMPSON for all their help and patience through out my two and a half years.

THANK YOU

What is myth?

Myths are stories that narrate in an imaginative and symbolic manner the total and basic structures upon which a culture rests. Given this emphasis on what is fundamental to cultural meaning and value, the myth may appear to be fantastic and bizarre, because the mythic story cannot be explained in the terms of the ordinary conventions of the culture. In fact, the ordinary conventions of the culture are understood as having their origins in the myth.

The term mythology may describe a certain body of myths, for example, Greek, African, or Scandinavian, or it may refer to the study of myths. The study of myths may take several forms. Some studies aim at a careful understanding of the beings, personages, and actions in a particular cycle of myths. Others seek to understand the reason or necessity for these kinds of stories and their importance in the life of any culture. Studies of this kind might seek to locate in the origin of these stories expressions of the human psychic structure or consider them as a collective societal response to the mystery of life.

Myths often merge into legends, sagas, and tales. Although no absolute differentiation can be made, some lines of distinction can usefully be drawn. Mircea Eliade has emphasized the temporal qualities of myth, holding that mythic time is qualitatively different and discontinuous from ordinary, existential time. The latter is related to mythic time only as an imitation of it.

Legends are traditional stories that, although containing fictional and imaginative elements, have a historical basis and

represent in the popular memory a real happening that was extraordinary enough to be remembered and embellished. Here again the temporal mode of the events and actors is continuous with conventional and ordinary time.

Until the 18th century the term myth was used to refer primarily to myths from the ancient Greeks and Romans, that is, to the ancient pagan myths of the Western world. Since that time the term has been used to classify narratives of this kind from almost every geographical area of the world. Myths may be classified according to the dominant theme expressed in the narrative. Some of the most important themes treated in myths are creation and origins, the birth of gods and divine beings, death and the afterlife, and the renewal and rebirth of the world.

TYPES OF MYTHS

Creation Myths

The creation, or cosmogonic, myth is usually the most important myth of the culture because it relates how the entire world came into being. Not only the beings revealed in the myth but also the qualitative mode of creation becomes a model for all other forms of creation in the culture. Creation may also be seen as the result of violent acts and warfare among the gods.

Myths of the Origin of Deities

Specific deities may appear at the time of creation and are thus part of the narrative of creation myths. The oldest forms of these deities in myths of creation are often symbolized through the expressions of sky and earth. The sky may be a symbol of a father; the earth, a mother.

Myths of Renewal and Rebirth

Whereas modern societies conceive of a time as a linear process moving always into a new and infinite future, in primitive and traditional societies time was understood and experienced as a cyclical rhythm that at various intervals came to the end of a cycle and began again. This understanding of time was no mere abstract formulation.

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN MYTHOLOGIES

Mesopotamian Myths

Religion and mythology undergo successive interpretations throughout the history of Mesopotamian culture. The mythology can be divided into three major periods: BCBCthe protoliterate age; from the 2d dynasty of to the beginnings of the Old Babylonian period (c.19th century BC); and the Old Babylonian period until the end of the Assyrian-Babylonian civilization in the 7th century. In the middle period, the cycle of myths continues fertility motifs but in a muted form. The emphasis in these myths is on the origin, meaning, and authority of the ruler; historically they correspond to the use of collective organization among the city-states of Mesopotamia.

Egyptian Mythology

Ancient Egyptian culture, myth, and religion might be characterized as a duality with rhythmic structures contained within a static unity. Unlike Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt as a civilization did not develop several powerful city-states along two rivers. Egypt had one river of significance, the Nile, and smaller villages grew up alongside its banks. Each of these village communities manifested a mythology, but these mythologies did not create tensions among the communities.

Canaanite Mythology

The biased nature of sources made knowledge of this religion conjectural and vague until the discovery of mythological texts at Ras Shamra, the site of ancient Ugarit, in 1929. The Ras Shamra texts provide much more detail concerning the Canaanite gods and the mythological cycles. Canaanite scribes wrote down many of these texts.

INDO-EUROPEAN MYTHOLOGY

The study of Indo-European mythology was a direct result of the growth of knowledge about the family of Indo-European languages, from Sanskrit to the languages of modern Europe, which developed in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The eclectic comparative study that arose, in which Max Muller is the most important figure, was by and large discredited by the early 20th century; only recently, with the work of Georges Dumézil and his followers, has the Indo-European myth again received intensive scholarly study.

Indian Mythology

The earliest development of Indo-European mythology for which evidence is plentiful comes from the Indian Rig-Veda, compiled probably at the end of the 2d millennium BC by the Aryans, who had overrun northern India (see *Vedas*). At this time the high god was Varuna, the overpowering master of knowledge and magic, presiding over the changing spectacle of the universe. The mythology of India is in constant flux, however, and gods who have but a minor part in the Rig-Veda become important in later Vedic and other literature.

Greek Mythology

Greek mythology expresses neither unity nor consistency. The lack of coherence is due to the several factors that went into the formation of Greek myths and mythological personages. First, the existing fragments of Greek myths cover a period from the 2d millennium BC to the beginnings of the Christian era. These myths and fragments of myths are in many cases parts of total mythological cycles in local communities, but in many cases the entire cycle is not known today. Second, the corpus of Greek mythology contains mythological elements from different cultures and histories.

Roman Mythology

The historical background out of which the myths of Rome emerge is similar in some aspects to that of the Greeks. There, too, the Indo-European elements were superimposed

on the cultures of the indigenous peoples. In later periods cultural religious meanings from Greece, Syria, Iran, and Egypt played a role in Roman mythology. Nonetheless, Roman mythology has a special character and nature that can be delineated. Unlike Greek mythology, which is varied, complex, and rich in poetical and speculative allusions, Roman religion and Roman myths are prosaic, prudent, and precise in a legal and moral sense.

Norse (Germanic and Scandinavian) Mythology

After 1000 BC some form of Indo-European language was spoken by most European cultures. From the middle of the 1st millennium BC, Germanic tribes lived in southern Scandinavia and northern Germany. Their expansions and migrations from the 2d century BC onward are recorded in history. Scandinavian and Germanic mythology have a common origin and structure; they will, therefore, be discussed in their unity. With the exception of the observations made by the Romans Julius Caesar and Tacitus, all of the sources on Germanic mythology are late and Christian. The main body of traditions is contained in the Prose Edda of Snorri Sturluson, an Icelandic historian who is considered the most accurate editor, redactor, and interpreter of the religious and mythological sources of the Old Norse religion.

Celtic Mythology

The Celts originally inhabited an area in southern Germany and Bohemia. By the end of the 5th century BC they had expanded into the Iberian peninsula; in 390 BC they sacked Rome. In the east they went as far as Anatolia. In the west they migrated to Britain in the 5th century BC and Ireland in

the 3d century BC. A great deal may be learned about the Celts from the archaeological materials left behind in the various countries where their culture dominated for several centuries. Most of the written documents of Celtic culture and religion are from Ireland and date from the 12th century AD, when they were written under Christian aegis.

A

ABARIS: In Greek mythology, Abaris was a sage who traveled with a magic arrow given to him by the god Apollo. The golden arrow cured diseases, allowed Abaris to call up oracles, and rendered him invisible. Occasionally, he is depicted riding the arrow. In some accounts Abaris was a Hyperborean priest. The Hyperboreans were believed to live beyond the north wind in a realm of perpetual sunshine. Apollo, the sun god, made the gift of the arrow when he helped Abaris flee from Scythia to avoid a plague. Abaris eventually gave the arrow to Pythagoras of Samos in exchange for lessons in philosophy.

ACHILLES: In Greek mythology, Achilles was the strongest, swiftest, and most competent of the Greek heroes who fought in the Trojan War. He was the son of the nymph Thetis, who dipped him as an infant into the River Styx and thus made every part of his body invulnerable except the heel by which she held him. Knowing that Achilles would die at Troy, Thetis sought to prevent his going by hiding him among the women of the court of King Lycomedes. He was found there by Odysseus, however, and persuaded to join the Greek army before Troy.

According to Homer's *Iliad*, in the tenth year of the Trojan War, Achilles withdrew from the fighting after Agamemnon seized Briseis, his favorite slave girl. He sulked in his tent until the death of his close friend Patroclus stirred him to return to battle. The smith-god Hephaestus forged him a fine set of arms, including a famous shield on which was depicted the whole range of the human condition. Thus equipped, he avenged Patroclus's death in a celebrated duel with the great Trojan hero Hector. After dragging Hector's body seven times around the walls of Troy behind his chariot, Achilles was persuaded to allow the slain Trojan hero a proper funeral. According to other traditions, Achilles died shortly after when wounded in his heel - his one

ACTEON: In Greek mythology, Actaeon was a hunter, the son of Aristaeus. When he unintentionally surprised the goddess Artemis bathing naked in the woods, she changed him into a stag, and his dogs killed him.

Achilles, vase painting



ADONIS: In Greek mythology, Adonis was a handsome young shepherd loved by Aphrodite. The offspring of a love affair between King Cinyras of Cyprus and his daughter Myrrha, Adonis was born from the trunk of the myrrh tree into which his mother had been changed by the gods. Aphrodite left the infant Adonis in the care of Persephone, the queen of the underworld, who also fell in love with him. While hunting, Adonis wounded a wild boar, which turned on him and killed him. Aphrodite pleaded that he be restored to her, but Zeus decided that both goddesses should share him for eternity: Adonis would spend the spring and summer with Aphrodite and the rest of the year with Persephone in the underworld. The anemone, the wild flower that each year blooms briefly and then dies, is said to have sprung from his blood.

AEACUS: In Greek mythology, Aeacus was a just king who in life ruled the island of Aegina but in the afterlife was a judge of the dead in Hades. He was the son of the nymph Aegina and of Zeus, ruler of heaven. When Hera, Zeus' wife, discovered her husband's infidelity, she took revenge by visiting a deadly plague on an island whose misfortune it was to be called Aegina, the name of her rival.

AEGEUS: In Greek mythology, Aegeus was king of Athens and father of the hero Theseus by Aethra. He later married the sorceress Medea, who bore him a second son, Medus, and fled after attempting to trick Aegeus into murdering Theseus. Bent on heroic exploits, Theseus sailed for Crete in a ship with black sails to confront the Minotaur. If he prevailed, he promised Aegeus, the sails of his homebound vessel would be white. He forgot his promise, however, and Aegeus, watching from the Acropolis, assumed his son had died in the Cretan labyrinth. He killed himself by leaping into the sea, which came to be called the Aegean.

AEGIS: In Greek mythology, the aegis was a shield associated with Zeus, who was called "the aegis bearer," and with the goddess Athena. Homer described the aegis as a shaggy

breastplate bordered with serpents. The tasseled aegis of Athena, constructed of goatskin, was set with the fearful head of Medusa, the gorgon.

AEGISTHUS: The mythological figure of Aegisthus is a key character in classical Greek tragedy. The son of Thyestes, who raped his daughter, Pelopia, Aegisthus was suckled by a goat (his name means "goat strength") and raised by Atreus, whom he later killed. While Atreus's son Agamemnon was away fighting the Trojan War, Aegisthus became the lover of his wife, Clytemnestra. Together they murdered Agamemnon as soon as he returned from Troy, and in revenge his children, Orestes and Electra killed them.

AENEAS: In the *Aeneid* of Vergil, Aeneas was the Trojan hero whose descendants founded Rome. When the Greeks destroyed Troy, many survivors fled the burning city. Among the refugees were Aeneas, his wife and small son, and his aged father, Anchises. His wife was lost in the confusion, but Aeneas, leading his son and carrying his aged father on his back, made his way to safety. With a band of fugitives Aeneas set sail to find a new beginning but was shipwrecked at Carthage, where he stayed with Queen Dido. The *Aeneid* describes the wanderings of the Trojans who after many adventures finally reached the shores of Italy.

AEOLUS: In Greek mythology, Aeolus was the god of the winds and ruler of the Aeolian Islands. According to Homer, he gave Odysseus favorable winds for his homeward voyage and a bag in which the contrary winds were confined.

AGAMEMNON. In Greek mythology, Agamemnon, a son of Atreus, was the commander in chief of the Greeks in the Trojan War. He was the king of Mycenae and a brother of Menelaus, whose kidnapped wife, Helen of Troy, was the immediate cause of the conflict. On his way to Troy, Agamemnon agreed to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia in order to ensure a fair wind for his ships. Upon Agamemnon's return from the war, his wife Clytemnestra, who had betrayed him with Aegisthus, resolved

to avenge her daughter's sacrifice. When her husband was at ease in the bath, she and her lover murdered him. His son Orestes later avenged Agamemnon's death.

AGANIPPE: In Greek mythology, Aganippe, daughter of the river-god Permessus, was a nymph. Her fountain on the slopes of Mount Helicon was sacred to the muses. It was believed that mortals who drank of its waters would receive poetic powers.

AGAVE: According to Greek myth, Agave was the daughter of Cadmus and the aunt of the god Dionysus. Her son, Pentheus, succeeded Cadmus as the king of Thebes. When Dionysus (identified with the Roman Bacchus) came to Thebes, Agave rejected his worship, in which his followers engaged in wild ritual dancing and tore apart live fawns. Pentheus imprisoned him. Dionysus took revenge by causing Agave to tear her son to pieces in a bacchanalian frenzy.

AGLAIA: The daughter of Zeus and Eurynome, Aglaia ("brilliance") was one of the three Charites, or Graces, the goddesses who embodied beauty and charm in classical mythology. The others were Euphrosyne ("joy") and Thalia ("bloom" or "flowering"). Their names and number differ in variant accounts. Probably based on very early spirits of vegetation, they had no cult of importance in classical times and are best known as popular figures in art. Aglaia is sometimes identified as the wife of Hephaestus.

AJAX: In Greek mythology, Ajax (or Aias) was the name of two heroes, both of whom fought in the Trojan War. Ajax of Salamis, sometimes called the Greater Ajax, was the son of King Telamon, an old comrade of Hercules. Although characterized by Homer as slow-witted, Ajax of Salamis was nevertheless one of the best fighters among the Greeks and was famed for his steadfast courage in the face of adversity. After the death of Achilles, whose armor had been claimed by both Ajax and Odysseus and was finally awarded to Odysseus, Ajax's resentment drove him mad, and he eventually killed himself.

Ajax of Locris, or the Lesser Ajax, was also a good fighter, but Homer frequently mentions his ill-mannered and violent behavior. Shipwrecked on his way home to Greece after the war, Ajax of Locris managed to swim ashore with the aid of the sea-god Poseidon. Later, however, he boasted that he had saved himself without divine assistance, and for this impertinence Poseidon caused him to fall into the sea and drown.

ALCESTIS: In Greek mythology, Alcestis was the daughter of Pelias and the devoted wife of Admetus. When Admetus lay dying, Apollo asked the Fates to spare him. It was agreed that he could live if a surrogate were found. Only Alcestis volunteered. In one version of the myth, as Alcestis took her husband's place, Persephone, impressed by her devotion, rescued her from death. In another, Hercules grappled with Hades for her life and rescued her.

ALCINOUS: In Greek mythology, Alcinous, a grandson of the god Poseidon, was king of the Phaeacians. He was the husband of Arete and the father of Nausicaa. In the *Odyssey* (books 6, 7, and 8) he inhabits the island of Scheria (possibly Corcyra) and offers shelter to Odysseus, who has been driven ashore by a storm. In the legend of the Argonauts, Alcinous lives on the island of Drepane, where Jason and Medea seek his aid in their flight from Colchis.

ALCMAEON: In Greek legend, Alcmaeon led the Epigoni, sons of the Seven against Thebes. His father, Amphiaraus, was a part of the expedition. Alcmaeon learned that his mother, Eriphyle, had been bribed to urge the war that brought death to his father, who, as he lay dying, exhorted Alcmaeon to avenge Eriphyle's deceit. Alcmaeon killed his mother, but in punishment the Furies drove him mad.

ALCMENE: In Greek mythology, Alcmene was the daughter of King Electryon of Argos, wife of Amphitryon, and mother, by Zeus, of Heracles (see Hercules). Zeus came to her in the guise of her husband, and she gave birth to two sons simultaneously: Heracles from Zeus and Iphicles from Amphitryon. According to

Hesiod, Zeus chose Alcmene because she was incorruptible. When she died, he sent Hermes to bring her to the Isles of the Blest, where she married Rhadamanthys. Alcmene was worshiped in a sacred grove in Thebes and had an altar in the temple of Heracles in Athens mad. He was worshiped at Thebes after his death.

AMAZONS: In Greek mythology, the Amazons were a race of women warriors who lived in Anatolia and fought with the Trojans against the Greeks in the Trojan War. At that time, their queen was Penthesileia, who was eventually killed by the Greek hero Achilles. Legend had it that the Amazons dealt with men for only two reasons, procreation and battle, and that they reared only their female young. A number of Greek heroes fought against the Amazons: Hercules had to obtain the girdle of Queen Hippolyte as one of his Twelve Labors; Theseus abducted Queen Hippolyte, who bore him a son, Hippolytus, and who led her tribe in an invasion of Attica; Bellerophon had to fight them and escaped with his life, presumably riding Pegasus; Dionysus conquered them as part of his exploits. Artists as being in battle frequently depicted the Amazons with men.

AMBROSIA: In Greek mythology, ambrosia was the food of the gods. Fragrant and pleasant tasting, it preserved their immortality and conferred the qualities of divinity--beauty and strength--upon mortals who ate it. The drink of the gods was called nectar; but sometimes it was also called ambrosia.

AMPHIARAUS: In Greek mythology, Amphiaraus was a seer and hero who took part in the Calydonian boar hunt, the voyage of the Argonauts (see Jason, mythology), and the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. Amphiaraus foresaw his own death in the war with Thebes, but he was bound by a vow to his greedy wife, Eriphyle, to become the seventh champion. He instructed his young sons Alcmaeon and Amphilochus to avenge his death by killing Eriphyle, which the former did. Just as Amphiaraus was about to die, Zeus intervened, opening the earth with his thunderbolt to swallow up Amphiaraus and his

charioteer, Baton. The spot became an oracular shrine. Amphiaraus also had a temple at Oropus.

AMPHION: In Greek mythology, Amphion is the son of Zeus and Antiope. With his twin brother, Zethus, he was left on a mountain to die, but a shepherd found and reared the boys. Zethus became a great hunter and Amphion a fine musician. Hermes taught him and gave him a golden lyre. Reunited with Antiope, the brothers built the city of Thebes. Zephyrus brought the stones, and the tunes from Amphion's lyre moved them into place. Amphion married Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, who bore him six sons and six daughters (the Niobids). She angered the gods, and they slew all her children (though in one version of the myth, Chloris alone escapes). Zeus turned Niobe to stone. Amphion killed himself.

AMPHITRITE: In Greek mythology, Amphitrite is the goddess of the sea, wife of the god Poseidon, and one of the Nereids (see nymphs), the 50 daughters of Nereus and Doris. Poseidon carried her off when he saw her dancing with her sisters on the isle of Naxos. In a variant account Poseidon first chose her sister Thetis, but it was prophesied that any child born to Thetis and a god would become powerful enough to overthrow them. When he turned his attentions to Amphitrite, she hid from him until he sent a dolphin to find her. Amphitrite had no separate cult. She is identified with Salacia, the Roman goddess of the salt sea.

AMPHITRYON: In Greek mythology, Amphitryon was the son of Alcaeus, king of Tiryns. His wife, Alcmene, asked him to avenge the death of her eight brothers. While Amphitryon was away on this mission, Zeus, disguised as Amphitryon, visited Alcmene and made her pregnant. When Amphitryon returned, he also made Alcmene pregnant. She gave birth to twin sons - Iphicles, the son of Amphitryon, and Hercules, the son of Zeus.

ANCHISES: In Greek mythology, Anchises was the father of Aeneas, whose descendants founded Rome. A handsome young man, Anchises was seduced by Aphrodite who, disguised as a

shepherdess, bore his son Aeneas. During the Trojan War, Aeneas carried the aged Anchises to safety; they were refugees first in Carthage, then in Italy. Their adventures are described in Virgil's *Aeneid*.

ANDROMACHE: In Greek legend, Andromache was the wife of Hector, the Trojan hero killed during the Trojan War. When Andromache learned that Hector was dead, she tried to throw herself down from the city walls in grief. She was taken captive, however, and made the concubine of Neoptolemus, one of the victorious Greek warriors.

ANDROMEDA: In Greek mythology, Andromeda was an Ethiopian princess, daughter of King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia. When Cassiopeia boasted that Andromeda was more beautiful than the sea-goddesses called Nereids, Poseidon, god of the sea and father of the Nereids, sent a sea monster to ravage Ethiopia. Only the sacrifice of Andromeda could persuade Poseidon to call off the monster, so Andromeda was chained naked to a sea cliff. The hero Perseus saw her plight, rescued her, and killed the monster. Thereupon, Poseidon turned the dead monster into the sea's first coral. Perseus married Andromeda, and they eventually became king and queen of the Greek City of Tiryns.

ANTAEUS: In Greek mythology, Antaeus was a giant whose strength was renewed by contact with the earth. He was invincible until Hercules discovered that he could overcome Antaeus by lifting him off the ground.

ANTIGONE: Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus, king of Thebes in Greek legend, was also the heroine of one of the greatest dramas of Sophocles. According to the legend, when Oedipus blinded himself after his marriage to his mother was revealed to him, Antigone shared her father's exile near Athens. After his death, she returned to Thebes and attempted, with her sister Ismene, to reconcile her quarreling brothers Eteocles and Polynices. Both brothers were killed, but her Uncle Creon, now king, forbade the burial of Polynices because he had betrayed

Thebes. When Antigone secretly buried her brother against the edict of her uncle, she herself was buried alive.

ANTIOPE: In Greek mythology, Antiope, a Theban princess, was seduced by the god Zeus, in the form of a satyr. Fleeing to Sicyon to escape the wrath of her father, she bore twin sons, Amphion and Zethus, both of whom were to become rulers of Thebes. Amphion was a master musician who built the wall around Thebes by charming the heavy stones into place with his lyre playing. Zethus was renowned as a warrior and married Thebe, for whom Thebes was named.

APHRODITE: In Greek mythology, Aphrodite was the beautiful and voluptuous goddess of love; the Romans as Venus knew her. Aphrodite is variously described as being the daughter of Zeus and Dione and as having been born from the foam of the sea. She had many lovers, among them Adonis and the war-god Ares, but she was the wife of the smith-god Hephaestus, who was both ugly and lame. She was the mother of Eros, who became her male counterpart.

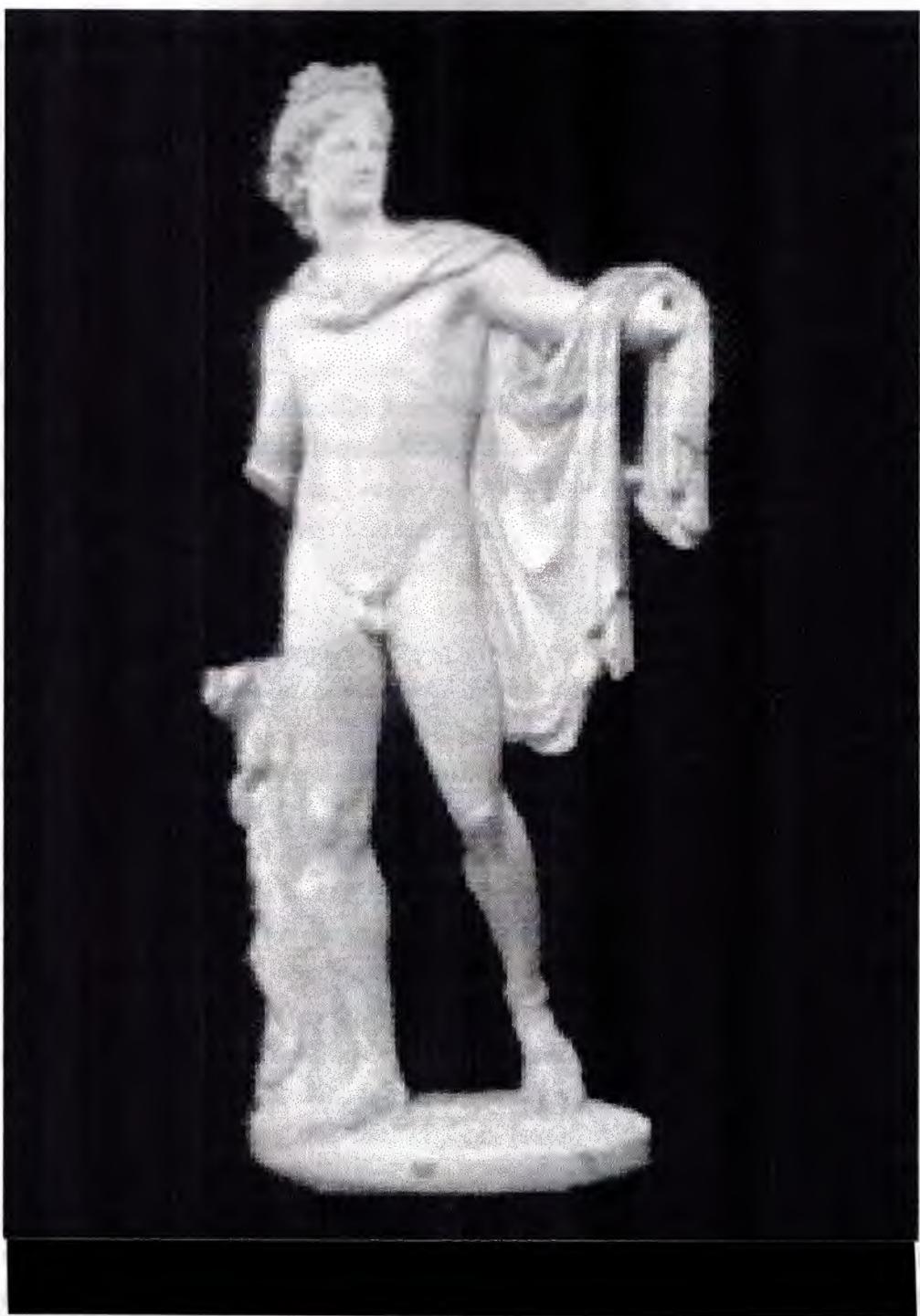
One important myth in which Aphrodite plays a major role is the so-called Judgment of Paris, in which the young Trojan prince was asked to choose the fairest of the goddesses. He selected Aphrodite and, in doing so, infuriated the other two contestants, the regal Hera, wife of the chief god Zeus, and the warlike Athena. Aphrodite rewarded Paris by helping him abduct Helen of Troy, the action that provoked the Trojan War. As the war neared its end, Aphrodite managed to rescue Paris from the grasp of Menelaus. She also did what she could to assist the escape of her son Aeneas, whose father Anchises had been another of her lovers.

APOLLO: In Greek mythology, Apollo and his twin sister, Artemis, were the children of Zeus and Leto and were born on the island of Delos. Hence, Apollo was often called the Delian god, and Delos long remained a center of his worship. He was also identified closely with Delphi, in central Greece, where he killed the serpent Python and founded the most renowned

Botticelli: The Birth of Venus



Apollo (mythology)



center for prophecy in the ancient world, the shrine of the Delphic Oracle. Areas of special concern to Apollo were prophecy, medicine, the fine arts, archery, beauty, flocks and herds, law, courage, and wisdom. Associated with him were the tripod, omphalos (a beehive-shaped stone at Delphi, designating that spot as the center or navel of the Earth), lyre, bow and arrows, laurel wreath, palm tree, wolf, hawk, crow, and fawn. Although Apollo was not Greek in origin, he became, next to Zeus, the god most revered by the Greeks and the god who best embodied the Greek spirit. Later he became confused with the sun-god Helios and was considered the god of light. Of Apollo's many loves, one of the best known was Daphne, who fled his embraces and was turned into his tree, the laurel. From that time on, Apollo wore a laurel wreath. Laurel wreaths became the prize awarded in athletic and musical competitions. Asclepius, a son of Apollo, became the god of medicine; another son, Linus, was a renowned music teacher.

ARACHNE: In Greek mythology, Arachne was a woman of Lydia who was so skilled in weaving that she presumed to challenge the goddess Athena to a contest. After seeing the perfection of Arachne's work, Athena changed her into a spider.

ARES: In Greek mythology, Ares, the son of Zeus and brother of Eris, was the god of war. Although he was not greatly admired among the Olympian gods, he was loved by Aphrodite, by whom he became the father of several children. In Homer's Iliad, Ares is depicted as a warrior god who exults in bloodshed and violence. Called variously the avenger, the slayer, and the curse, Ares used a spear as his emblem. The vulture and the dog were sacred to him. In the Trojan War, he favored the Trojans.

ARETHUSA. In Greek mythology, Arethusa was a woodland nymph and one of the attendants of Artemis. Alpheus, a river god, saw her bathing in a stream and tried to embrace her. As she fled under the sea, she called on Artemis for help and was changed into a fountain. It was believed that Alpheus, in the

form of a river, flowed underground to Sicily, where he was united with her in the fountain of Arethusa in Syracuse.

ARGUS: In Greek mythology, Argus was a monster with 100 eyes, also called Panoptes ("all-seeing"). It guarded Io, a mortal maiden loved by Zeus whom he changed into a heifer. Argus was also the name of the old dog of Odysseus that recognized its master on his return to Ithaca after an absence of 19 years.

ARIADNE: In Greek mythology, Ariadne was the daughter of Minos, the king of Crete. She fell in love with Theseus and helped him slay the monstrous Minotaur by providing Theseus with a thread to find his way out of the labyrinth in which the monster was confined. Theseus took Ariadne with him when he sailed for Athens but soon abandoned her, leaving her asleep on the island of Naxos. There, Dionysus, the god of wine, wooed and later wed her.

ARISTAEUS: In Greek mythology, Aristaeus, the son of Apollo and Cyrene, was a guardian of herds and a beekeeper. He fell in love with Eurydice, wife of Orpheus, and tried to seduce her. As she fled from Aristaeus, his bees pursued her; she accidentally stepped on a snake and died of its bite. Thereafter, all his bees died.

Aristaeus consulted Proteus, a seer, and on his advice offered sacrifices and funeral honors to Eurydice, and new swarms of bees were then generated. Aristaeus spent his last days teaching the skill of beekeeping.

ARTEMIS: In Greek mythology, Artemis was goddess of the hunt--the mistress of wild things--and the protectress of youth and women. In contrast to the voluptuous Aphrodite, Artemis was associated with chaste love; she is usually depicted as lean and athletic and is frequently accompanied by a deer. She was the twin sister of Apollo and the daughter of Zeus and Leto. Artemis was also identified with the Moon, and for that reason she was later identified with the moon-goddess Selene. Another of her names was Cynthia, bestowed because she was assumed

to have been born on Mount Cynthus on the island of Delos. To the Romans she was Diana.

In her role as protectress of women, Artemis was often called upon to ensure a painless and swift death, and women who died in such a manner were said to have been slain by one of her silver arrows. Among her most ardent male admirers was Hippolytus, son of the Athenian hero Theseus.

ASCLEPIUS: In Greek mythology, Asclepius, son of Apollo, the god of healing, was a famous physician. His mother, Coronis, a princess of Thessaly, died when he was an infant. Apollo entrusted the child's education to Chiron, a centaur, who taught Asclepius the healing arts. Asclepius became so skilled in surgery and the use of medicinal plants that he could even restore the dead to life. Hades became alarmed at this and complained to Zeus, who killed Asclepius with a thunderbolt. The most famous shrine of Asclepius was at Epidaurus. His staff is often used as a symbol for the medical profession (see caduceus).

ASTRAEA: In Greek and Roman mythology, Astraea ("starry") was the daughter of Zeus and Themis, sister of the Moerae and Horae. Sometimes she is called Dike. Like her mother, Astraea was the goddess of justice. During the Golden Age, when the deities dwelled among humankind, she lived on Earth. But as wickedness took hold, as men began fashioning instruments of war, the gods abandoned these habitations. Astraea, the last to leave, was placed among the constellations of the zodiac as Virgo, the virgin.

ATALANTA: In Greek mythology, Atalanta was a princess famed for her swiftness in running. Warned against marriage by the oracle at Delphi, she nevertheless challenged each of her suitors to a footrace. If Atalanta won, the suitor would forfeit his life, and if he won, she would marry him. None outraced her. Then Melanion (in another version, Hippomenes) sought the help of Aphrodite, who gave him three golden apples. As Melanion and Atalanta raced, he dropped the apples one at a time, and Atalanta paused to retrieve them. She lost the race

and married Melanion. Later they were changed into lions by Zeus.

ATE: In Greek mythology, Ate was the goddess of discord, mischief, and infatuation, the personification of moral blindness. The Romans called her Discordia. The daughter of Zeus and Eris, she tricked Zeus into taking a hasty oath that made the Greek hero Heracles (see Hercules) subjects to Eurystheus, the ruler of Mycenae. Zeus cast Ate out of Olympus, so she stayed on Earth, causing trouble. It was Ate who wrote "For the fairest" on a golden apple and rolled it into a gathering of goddesses, ultimately causing the Trojan War. Ate was followed by the Litai (ones who pray), lame, wrinkled daughters of Zeus who repaired the harm she did.

ATHENA: In Greek mythology, Athena was the patron goddess of Athens and an important member of the Olympic pantheon. Born fully armed and from the forehead of the chief god, Zeus, Athena was her father's favorite child. He entrusted her both with the aegis, his breastplate, and with his terrible thunderbolt.

Athena's role as a goddess was varied. On the one hand, she was a major warrior figure, and most images depict her dressed in armor and holding a spear. In the Iliad, Homer describes her as a fierce battle goddess who continually intervened on the side of the Greeks in the Trojan War. On the other hand she took an interest in handicrafts and agriculture, and the olive tree, which she is said to have created, was sacred to her. She was also noted for her wisdom and good sense; this explains her close association with the owl, an ancient symbol of wisdom and reason.

ATLAS: In Greek mythology, Atlas was a Titan who bore the weight of the sky on his shoulders as a punishment for warring against Zeus. After the Titans were defeated by the Olympian gods, Atlas was sentenced to support the sky on his shoulders. He was the father of the Hesperides, who guarded the golden apples.

Athena



ATREUS: In Greek mythology, Atreus, the son of Pelops and the father of Agamemnon and Menelaus, was king of Mycenae. He banished his brother Thyestes for contesting his right to rule. When Atreus discovered that Aerope, his wife, and Thyestes had been lovers, he lured Thyestes home. Atreus then murdered two of his brother's sons, boiled them in a cauldron, and served their flesh to Thyestes at a feast. When Atreus told his brother what he had eaten, Thyestes regurgitated the meal and pronounced an irrevocable curse on Atreus and his house. Later, Aegisthus, a son of Thyestes who had been spared, killed his uncle in revenge and presented the kingdom to his father.

ATTIS: The mythical consort of the great mother goddess (called Cybele in classical mythology), Attis was a beautiful youth born of Nana, daughter of the river Sangarius, and the hermaphroditic Agdistis. Cybele fell in love with Attis, and on the eve of his marriage to another she jealously put him into a frenzy in which he castrated himself and bled to death. Repentant, Cybele prevailed upon Zeus to grant that Attis's body would never decay, so every spring he was reborn only to die again each winter.

AUGEAS: In Greek mythology, Augeas was the king of Elis. He had a herd of 3,000 oxen whose stalls had not been cleaned for 30 years. One of the labors assigned to Hercules was to clean the Augean Stables. He accomplished the task in one day by diverting the waters of the Alpheus and Peneus rivers through the stalls.



BAUBO: In early Greek mythology, Baubo was an obscene female demon, probably originating in Asia Minor. Eventually she came to have a part in the Eleusinian mysteries, the ancient rites that honored Demeter and her daughter Persephone. According to one account, Baubo was an elderly nurse in the home of Celeus at Eleusis. Searching for Persephone, Demeter came to the house disguised as an old woman. Baubo cheered her and brought her mint-flavored barley water, the drink served at the Eleusinian rituals. Some sources say Baubo won a smile from Demeter with a vulgar gesture; others attribute that act to the servant Iambus.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON: In Greek mythology, Baucis and Philemon were a poor elderly couple in Phrygia who offered hospitality to Zeus and Hermes. The gods were disguised as wanderers, and richer folk had refused them food or shelter. Zeus saved the old couple from the flood he sent to destroy the town and offered to grant one wish. They requested never to be parted, in life or death. When they died at the same moment, Philemon became an oak and Baucis a linden tree, with their branches entwined.

BELLEROPHON: In Greek mythology, Bellerophon was a descendant of Sisyphus, the founder of Corinth. While he was visiting King Proteus in Argos, the king's wife Stheneboea, or Anteia, tried to seduce Bellerophon, but he refused her advances. Angered, the queen accused Bellerophon of improper conduct. King Proteus then sent Bellerophon with a message to his father-in-law, Iobates of Lycia; the message was to kill the bearer of the note. Upon Bellerophon's arrival, Iobates imposed a series of tests on him, each designed to kill him. First, he was asked to subdue the chimera, a lion-goat-serpent monster, but Bellerophon killed it with the aid of the winged horse Pegasus. Next, he encountered a wild tribe called the Solymi, but defeated it. These tests were followed by several other difficult missions, all of which he accomplished. Impressed by Bellerophon's invincibility, Iobates allowed him to marry his daughter Philonoe; they had three children, one of whom,

Laodamia, was loved by Zeus. Later, Bellerophon tried to ride to Mount Olympus on Pegasus, but Zeus caused Pegasus to crash, throwing off Bellerophon, who was lame. In the Iliad, Homer says that Bellerophon then "wandered away, shunning the paths of men."

BOREAS: In Greek mythology, Boreas was a personification of the north wind, the son of Eos and Astraeus. When his wooing of the Athenian princess Oreithyia was unsuccessful, Boreas carried her away in a great gust of wind. Their twin sons, Calais and Zetes, called the Boreades, accompanied Jason and the Argonauts. Athens held the Boreasmos festival in honor of Boreas.

BRIAREUS: In Greek mythology, Briareus is one of the three hecatoncheires, the "hundred-handed" offspring of Uranus and Gaea. With his brothers Cottus and Gyes he aided the gods in the war against the Titans. According to one legend, his brothers were cast into Tartarus, lowest region of the Underworld, when they revolted against Zeus. Briareus was their guard. Briareus opposed Zeus in another account and was buried under Mount Etna. In the Iliad, Briareus is rushed to the aid of Zeus when Athena, Hera, and Poseidon threaten the god. Mortals also knew Briareus as Obriareus by the gods and Aegaeon.

CADMUS: In Greek legend, Cadmus was the founder of Thebes. He had been sent by his father, King Agenor of Phoenicia, to find his abducted sister, Europa. Unable to find her, Cadmus consulted the Delphic oracle who directed him to establish a new city. Cadmus then sent his servants in search of water for libations in honor of his protecting goddess, Athena. When a serpent killed the servants, Athena ordered Cadmus to kill the serpent and to sow its teeth in the earth. From the sown teeth armed warriors sprang up, fighting each other until all but five were slain. These five joined Cadmus in founding Thebes, and were regarded as ancestors by the city's noble families.

CADUCEUS: The caduceus was the wand of Hermes, Greek god of chance and messenger of the Olympian deities. The wand, made of olive wood and gold, was entwined with serpents and surmounted by wings. It possessed magical powers over dreams, waking, and sleep. Hermes placed the wand gently upon the eyes of those who were being summoned to the hereafter, and he carried it as his staff in conducting the dead to the netherworld. The wand originally belonged to Apollo; upon hearing the shepherd's pipe that Hermes played, however, Apollo bargained to exchange the wand for it.

The caduceus has become a widely accepted symbol for the medical profession. The more appropriate symbol would be the staff of Asclepius, who was the Greek god of healing, whereas Hermes was the protector of merchants and thieves, but both symbols have ancient roots. The staff of Asclepius, entwined by a single snake, was part of the crest of the U.S. Surgeon General's office in the early 19th century, but it was replaced in 1871 by the caduceus, perhaps partly because of an aesthetic preference for the latter's symmetry. Both symbols are used today by various medical services.

CALCHAS: In Greek mythology, Calchas, the son of Thestor and Megara, was a great soothsayer who accompanied Agamemnon during the Trojan War. Among his prophesies, Calchas foretold the length of the siege, saw that the fleet could not sail until Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter, Iphigenia,

to Artemis, divined the cause of the plague that had smitten the Greek army, and advised the Greeks to build the wooden horse that led to the fall of Troy. Fulfilling a prophecy, Calchas finally met a superior seer, Mopus, who divined the number of figs on a tree when Calchas could not. He died of chagrin or committed suicide.

CALLIOPE: Calliope is called chief of the nine muses, Greek personifications of the highest aspirations of art and intellect. The daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, they sang and danced at celebrations of gods and heroes. Mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey*, they are first named by Hesiod in the *Theogony*. When the Romans later separated their fields of inspiration, Calliope became the patron of epic poetry. In Western art she is often portrayed with a table and stylus. She arbitrated the dispute between the goddesses Aphrodite and Persephone over Adonis. In most accounts Calliope is the mother of Orpheus, by Apollo or King Oeagrus of Thrace.

CALLISTO: The daughter of Lycaon, Callisto was an Arcadian nymph and a follower of Artemis who was raped by Zeus. When she gave birth to a son, Arcas, Hera (Zeus's wife and queen of the gods) flew into a jealous rage and turned Callisto into a bear. In the most popular account Arcas tried to kill Callisto during a hunt. Zeus intervened, setting mother and son in the sky as constellations, Ursa Major and Minor (Great Bear and Little Bear; see Big Dipper and Little Dipper). Persuaded by Hera, Tethys and Oceanus banned Callisto from their realm. Thus the myth explains why those constellations never dip below the horizon into the sea.

CALYPSO: In Greek mythology, Calypso was a nymph, on whose island Odysseus spent seven years on his way home from Troy. Calypso loved Odysseus so much that she offered him immortality if he would remain with her. Odysseus, however, longed for his home. At the command of Zeus, Calypso helped Odysseus build a raft so that he could continue his journey.

CASSANDRA: In Greek mythology, Cassandra was the daughter of Priam, king of Troy, and Hecuba. Apollo loved her and gave

her the gift of prophecy. When Cassandra spurned Apollo's advances, however, he cursed her so that no one would believe her predictions. She warned the Trojans against the wooden horse, but they would not believe her. When the Greeks captured Troy, Cassandra was raped by Ajax and then enslaved by Agamemnon, with whom she returned to Mycenae. There, her warnings were again ignored, and she and Agamemnon were murdered by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover, Aegisthus.

CASTOR AND POLLUX: In Greek mythology, Castor and Pollux (or Polydeuces) were called the *Dioscuri* (Sons of Zeus) because Zeus, in the form of a swan, fathered them by Leda. They were closely identified with the city of Sparta, Castor as a renowned horseman and Pollux as a boxer. They sailed with the Argonauts, participated in the Calydonian boar hunt, and later helped to rescue their sister Helen of Troy, who had been kidnapped by Theseus and Pirithous. Finally, in a fight with Idas and Lynceus, whose intended brides Castor and Pollux had kidnapped, Pollux killed Lynceus, but Idas killed Castor and was in turn killed by a thunderbolt of Zeus. Pollux, being immortal, was allowed to share his immortality with Castor, thus permitting them to spend alternate days in heaven and in the underworld, Pollux as the Morning Star and Castor as the Evening Star. Another version held that Zeus put both in the heavens as the constellation Gemini. The twins were highly esteemed by the Romans.

CECROPS: In Greek mythology, Cecrops was the first king and founder of Athens. He called the city *Cecropia* and chose Athena as the patron deity. Cecrops was said to have been half man and half serpent.

CENTAUR: In Greek mythology, a centaur was half man and half horse and was said to dwell in the mountains. The offspring of Ixion, centaurs were men from head to waist. Most of them were crude and savage. Chiron, however, one of the best-known centaurs, was versed in the arts of hunting, healing, and prophecy.

CEPHALUS: In Greek mythology, Cephalus was the husband of Procris, who was a daughter of the Athenian king Erechtheus. Procris had a hound called Laelaps that always found his quarry and a javelin that always hit its mark. The hound and the javelin had previously belonged to Artemis, goddess of the hunt; Procris gave both of them to Cephalus. One day while they were hunting, Cephalus threw the javelin and accidentally killed Procris. Cephalus was sentenced to permanent banishment.

CERBERUS: In Greek mythology, Cerberus was the three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to Hades. He had the tail of a snake and had snakes wrapped around his neck. One of the 12 labors of Hercules was to subdue him.

CHAOS: In Greek mythology, Chaos was the unorganized state, or void, from which all things arose. Proceeding from time, Chaos eventually formed a huge egg from which there issued Heaven, Earth, and Eros (love).

CHARON: In Greek mythology, Charon is the boatman who ferries the dead across the river Styx to Hades. Though old and gray, Charon is strong and sturdy. Dressed in a short cloak, he chooses his passengers from among the multitudes of the dead that crowd the shore. Only those properly buried in the world above are chosen, and then only if they have the fare--a silver coin placed in the mouth of the corpse before burial.

CHIRON: Chiron was a centaur, the son of Cronus. Unlike other centaurs, he was wise, civilized, and kindly. Famous for his knowledge of archery, medicine, music, and prophecy, he was selected as the teacher of Achilles, Asclepius, Hercules, and Jason. Accidentally wounded by Hercules, Chiron decided to die because he was in great pain, even though he was immortal. He became the constellation Sagittarius.

CHLORIS: In Greek mythology, Chloris was the goddess of flowers. She is also known as Meliboea. Chloris was one of the 12 children of Amphion and Niobe. When Niobe boasted that her six sons and six daughters were more beautiful than Leto's

children, Leto's son and daughter, Apollo and Artemis, killed all Niobe's offspring except Chloris, who escaped. She married Neleus, king of Pylos, and bore a daughter and 12 sons, including Nestor. According to one of the myths surrounding Hercules, Neleus incurred the hero's wrath and Hercules killed all his sons except Nestor. A different goddess called Chloris was the Roman Flora.

CHRYSEIS: In Greek mythology, Chryseis was the daughter of Chryses, a priest of Apollo. In Homer's Iliad, Chryseis is captured during the Trojan War and given to Agamemnon as his concubine. Agamemnon so rudely rebuffs her father's offer of ransom that Apollo visits a plague upon the Greek army. Reasoning that the Greeks cannot fight the Trojans and the plague as well, Achilles presses Agamemnon to release Chryseis, which he reluctantly agrees to do only if he can have instead Achilles' prize, Briseus. The quarrel rouses the wrath of Achilles, a major theme of the Iliad. Chryseis bore a child by Agamemnon, also called Chryses.

CIRCE: In Greek mythology, Circe was a sorceress who could transform people into lions, wolves, and swine. When Odysseus reached her island, Circe changed his companions into swine. Aided by Hermes, who gave him the moly plant as a charm against Circe's spells, Odysseus forced Circe to restore his companions to human form.

CLIO: In Greek mythology, Clio is one of the nine muses, personifications of the highest aspirations of art and intellect. The daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, they sang and danced at celebrations of gods and heroes. Mentioned by Homer in the Odyssey, they are first named by Hesiod in his Theogony. When the Romans later separated the muses' fields of inspiration, Clio became the patron of history. Her symbols are a wreath of laurel and a scroll. She is often depicted with Cadmus, who is credited with introducing the Phoenician alphabet into Greece. Clio was the mother of Hyacinthus and in some accounts of Orpheus.

CLYTEMNESTRA: In Greek mythology, Clytemnestra, the sister of Helen of Troy and wife of Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, was one of the tragic women in the Trojan War. While Agamemnon was away in the war, Clytemnestra took Aegisthus as her lover, and together they plotted to murder Agamemnon when he returned. Clytemnestra was motivated in part by the desire to avenge her husband's sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenia. When Agamemnon arrived with the captive Trojan princess Cassandra, Clytemnestra pretended to welcome them. Later, as Agamemnon bathed, Clytemnestra murdered him and then together with Aegisthus killed Cassandra. Clytemnestra's daughter Electra persuaded her brother, Orestes, to avenge their father's death by killing his mother and Aegisthus. The most famous depiction of Clytemnestra is in Aeschylus's *Oresteia*.

COMUS: In Greek mythology, Comus was the god of mirth, revelry, and nocturnal entertainments. By the 3d century AD he was conceived as a winged youth robed in white who presided over all festive occasions, including those on Mount Olympus. Late Roman mythology identified Comus as the son of Bacchus and Circe. By then he had become the god of all sensual pleasures, particularly eating, drinking, and laughter.

CORNUCOPIA: The cornucopia, or horn of plenty, is a symbol of abundance. In Greek mythology, the infant Zeus was entrusted to the care of the daughters of King Melisseus and the goat-nymph Amalthea. In gratitude, Zeus broke off one of the goat's horns and gave it to Melisseus's daughters with the promise that it would be everlastingly full of food and drink.

CORYBANT: In Greek mythology, a corybant was one of the beings that might have been the first human forms on Earth. Accounts of their origin vary. Ovid referred to them as people born out of rainwater. They were identified as sons of Cronos and Rhea, Hephaestus, Apollo and Thalia, or Corybas. They are often associated or confused with the Greek Galli, the Cretan Curetes, or the male attendants of the Phrygian goddess

Cybele. Probably of ancient Asian origin, the corybants apparently had a mystic cult characterized by orgiastic rites and a wild dance said to have the power to heal mental disorders.

CREON: In Greek mythology there are several prominent figures called Creon, which means "ruler." Creon who was the brother of Jocasta became king of Thebes after his nephews Eteocles and Polynices killed each other in the battle of the Seven against Thebes. He ordered their sister Antigone buried alive, leading to the suicide of his own son, Haemon, who was Antigone's lover. He was killed by Theseus. Another Creon was king of Corinth and father of Creusa (or Glauce). As Creusa was about to marry Jason, jealous Medea sent her a poisonous robe that burned the flesh from her body. Creon died trying to save his daughter.

CRESSIDA: In the Iliad, Homer mentions Cressida (Briseus) as the daughter of the Trojan soothsayer Calchas, but she has no real place in Greek mythology. The story of her betrayal of Troilus, a Trojan prince to whom she has sworn eternal fidelity, first appears in a medieval account of the Trojan War by Dares Phrygius, and then in the Roman de Troie, a 12th-century poem by Benoit de Sainte-More. In these basic tales Cressida is sent to the Greek camp as part of a prisoner exchange, and there she quickly falls in love with the Greek soldier Diomedes.

CRONUS: In Greek mythology, Cronus was the youngest of the Titans, the 12 children of Uranus (Heaven) and Earth. Cronus became supreme ruler by killing his father. He then married his sister Rhea.

As soon as Rhea bore children, Cronus swallowed them, lest they usurp his power. In this way he temporarily disposed of Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, and Poseidon. When the sixth child, Zeus, was born, Rhea hid him and gave Cronus a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes to swallow. After Zeus grew to manhood, he returned to his father and gave him an emetic, causing Cronus to regurgitate all the children he had swallowed. A 10-year struggle followed between the children of

Cronus, led by Zeus, and the Titans, led by Cronus. Eventually the Titans were defeated, and Cronus was exiled. The poet Hesiod tells the story of Cronus in the Theogony and the Works and Days. Later, the old Roman agrarian god Saturn became identified with Cronus.

CYCLOPS: In Greek mythology, a Cyclops was a one-eyed giant. There are two traditions about the Cyclopes. According to Hesiod they were the three sons of Uranus and Gaea who fashioned thunderbolts for Zeus, the trident for Poseidon, and the cap of invisibility for Hades. According to Homer the Cyclopes were savage shepherds who inhabited caves and rocky caverns. Their leader, Polyphemus, devoured several of Odysseus's crew before the survivors managed to escape death by blinding the monster. The hardships of Odysseus were increased as punishment for blinding Polyphemus.

CYRENE: In Greek mythology, Cyrene was a water nymph, daughter of Hypseus, king of the Lapiths, and Chlidanope, one of the Naiads. According to one version of her legend, Apollo fell in love with Cyrene when he saw her wrestle a lion that had attacked her father's flock in Thessaly. He carried her off to Libya, where he founded a city, named it for her, and made her its queen. By Apollo, Cyrene bore Aristaeus, the beekeeper, and Idmon the seer. By Ares she bore Diomedes of Thrace.



DANAЕ: In Greek mythology, Danae was the daughter of Acrisius, king of Argos, who imprisoned her because of an oracle's prophecy that her son would kill him. Zeus came to her in the form of a shower of gold from the sky, however, and she bore him a son, Perseus. Acrisius then set Danae and Perseus adrift in a chest on the sea. They floated to Seriphos, where King Polydectes later tried to force Danae to marry him. Perseus rescued her, however, and took her back to Argos, where the prophecy was eventually fulfilled.

DANAUS: In Greek mythology, Danaus was the king of Libya; his twin brother, Aegyptus, was the king of Egypt. Danaus had 50 daughters, the Danaids, and Aegyptus had 50 sons. After a quarrel between the brothers, Danaus and his daughters fled to the Greek city of Argos, where they were pursued by Aegyptus and his sons, who wanted to marry their cousins. Though he pretended to give his blessing, Danaus gave each of his daughters a weapon with which to kill her husband on their wedding night. Forty-nine of the daughters did kill their husbands, and as punishment they were placed in Tartarus, in the underworld, and were forced to carry water in sieves forever. Only Hypermnestra spared her husband, and together they became the ancestors of the rulers of Argos, as well as of the heroes Perseus and Hercules.

DAPHNE: In Greek mythology, Daphne was a mountain nymph loved by Apollo. The mortal Leucippus also loved her and disguised himself as a nymph to win her affection. When the nymphs discovered his deceit, they killed him. Apollo continued to pursue Daphne, but her cry for help was heard by her father, a river god, who turned her into a laurel tree. Apollo promised that the tree would be eternally green and took the laurel as his symbol.

DAPHNIS: In Greek mythology, Daphnis was a shepherd, the son of Hermes and a nymph. Taught by Pan to play the pipes after his mother abandoned him in a laurel grove, Daphnis was

credited with inventing bucolic poetry. He was blinded by Echenais, to whom he had promised eternal fidelity, because he had been seduced by the nymph Chimaera while he was drunk. He comforted himself with his music.

DARDANUS: In Greek legend, Dardanus was the son of Zeus. He built Dardania, a city near the southern entrance of the Hellespont in Anatolia, on the slopes of Mount Ida. The city was later known as Troy.

DEIANIRA: In Greek mythology, Deianira, daughter of Althaea and Oeneus, was the second wife of Heracles (see Hercules) and the unwitting cause of his death. On the road to Trachis, Heracles shot the centaur Nessus with a poisoned arrow as he tried to rape Deianira. As he died, Nessus told Deianira his blood would act as a philter (magic potion) that would enable her to keep the love of Heracles. Years later, jealous of Iole, she sent her husband a tunic smeared with the poisoned blood. It burned him fatally. In remorse, Deianira killed herself.

DEIPHOBUS: In Greek legend, Deiphobus was one of the sons of Priam, king of Troy. He appears frequently in the Iliad, taking an active part in the fighting during the Trojan War. Some sources say that next to his brother Hector he was bravest of all the Trojans. According to the Odyssey, Deiphobus defeated Helenus and married Helen of Troy by force after the death of her husband, Paris. She removed all the weapons from his home, and he was killed easily by her ex-husband, Menelaus, and Odysseus. His body disappeared. Virgil related that Aeneas erected a cenotaph (tomb or monument) for Deiphobus on Cape Rhoeteum.

DEIPHONTES: In Greek mythology, Deiphontes was a Heraclid, son of Antimachus. He married Hyrnetho, daughter of King Temenus of Argos, who preferred Deiphontes to his own sons and made him his chief advisor. The sons eventually murdered their father and abducted Hyrnetho, who was pregnant with her fifth child. Deiphontes caught and killed one son, Cerynes, but another, Phalces, so mistreated Hyrnetho that both she

and the unborn child died. The citizens of Argos rejected the sons of Temenus and made Deiphontes their king. Hyrnetho, who was buried in an olive grove, became the object of cult worship.

DEMETER: In Greek mythology, Demeter was the goddess of agriculture. She was the daughter of Cronus and Rhea and was the mother of Persephone. When Persephone was abducted by Hades, ruler of the dead, Demeter in her grief neglected the Earth's crops. Starvation threatened the world until Zeus urged a compromise whereby Persephone spent 6 months with Hades (winter) and 6 months with her mother (summer). Demeter's joy at Persephone's return caused the barren earth to blossom each year. Demeter was honored in the Eleusinian mysteries. In Roman mythology, she was identified with Ceres.

DEMOPHON: In Greek mythology, Demophon, son of Theseus and Phaedra, was joint king of Melos and one of the Greeks in the wooden horse at Troy. As the city fell, he seized the Palladium, wishing to install it in Athena's temple in Athens. He fell in love with Laodice, daughter of the Trojan king, Priam. On his way home to Athens he also loved and deserted Phyllis, daughter of the king of Thrace. When Phyllis committed suicide in the sorrow of waiting for his return, Athena turned her into an almond tree, which did not flower until Demophon returned and embraced it. Another figure named Demophon, the son of Celeus of Eleusis, was nursed by Demeter, who attempted to make him immortal.

DERCETO: In Greek mythology, the Syrian fertility goddess Atargatis is called Derceto. The cult partner of the Philistine god Dagon, she is associated with other nature deities including Ishtar, Cybele, and Rhea. According to one version of her legend, Derceto was so ashamed that her consort and the father of her child was a young priest that she killed her lover and cast herself into a lake. She was transformed into a fish. In art, Derceto is depicted as a beautiful woman with the tail of a fish.

DEUCALION: In Greek mythology, Deucalion was the son of Prometheus. He and his wife, Pyrrha, were saved in an ark from the deluge sent by Zeus as a punishment for human wickedness. When the flood waters subsided, an oracle instructed them to repeople the earth by casting the bones of their mother behind them. Deucalion correctly interpreted the oracle's statement to mean the stones of their common parent, Mother Earth. As they cast the stones behind them, those thrown by Deucalion became men, and those thrown by Pyrrha became women.

DIOMEDES: In Greek mythology Diomedes was the name of two characters: first, a leader of the Greeks during the Trojan War; and second, a Thracian king, owner of the man-eating horses killed during the eighth labor of Hercules.

DIONYSUS: Dionysus was the ancient Greek god of fertility, ritual dance, and mysticism. He also supposedly invented wine making and was considered the patron of poetry, song, and drama.

In Orphic legend Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Persephone; in other legends, of Zeus and Semele. Among the 12 gods on Mount Olympus, he was depicted as a handsome young man often carried in a leopard-drawn chariot. Dressed in fawnskin shirt and holding drinking cup and thyrsus (staff), he was typically accompanied by deer and attended by Pan, satyrs and maenads. Ariadne was his only romantic love.

One legend maintained that Dionysus died at the hands of the Titans, who tore him apart, roasted the pieces, and began to eat them. At that point Zeus intervened, saved some of the pieces, and had Apollo bury them at Delphi. There, it was believed, Dionysus arose from the dead each year and reigned during the three winter months, while Apollo was away. Two celebrations were regularly held in Athens in his honor: the Greater Dionysia, in March, and the Lesser Dionysia, in December.

The Dionysian festivities were often orgiastic; worshippers were sometimes overcome with ecstasy and enthusiasm or religious fervor. The central feature of his worship was called sparagmos: the tearing apart of a live animal, the eating of its flesh, and

the drinking of its blood; participants believed they were in fact partaking of the god's body and blood.

DIRCE: In Greek mythology, Dirce was the second wife of Lycus, regent of Thebes. When Lycus's niece, Antiope, gave birth to twins by Zeus, Lycus left them to die on a mountain and handed Antiope over to his wife. Treating her as a slave, Dirce abused Antiope and threatened to tie her to the horns of a wild bull. In the wilderness Antiope's sons, Amphion and Zethus, survived. They rescued their mother and exacted revenge by tying Dirce to the bull, which killed her. Because she had been a devotee of Dionysus, the god caused water to well up where Dirce was gored. A spring bearing her name still flows near Thebes.



ECHO: In Greek mythology, Echo was a mountain nymph who was given a speech impediment by the jealous goddess Hera. Hera suspected her husband Zeus of amorous attentions to the mountain nymphs. On one occasion Hera was detained by Echo's lengthy conversation until she realized that Echo's purpose was to help Zeus continue his dalliances undisturbed. So she decreed that Echo's speech would henceforth be limited to repeating what others said. Echo then fell in love with Narcissus, but her love was unrequited, and she pined away until only the sound of her voice remained.

ELECTRA: In Greek mythology, Electra was the daughter of Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae who was commander in chief of the Greeks in the Trojan War, and his willful queen, Clytemnestra. Clytemnestra and her lover, Aegisthus, slew Agamemnon shortly after his return from the war, and Electra longed for the day when her brother, Orestes, would avenge their father's death. When Orestes, who had been in hiding since his father's death, returned to Mycenae, he killed both Aegisthus and Clytemnestra with Electra's help. In this he was also aided by his close friend Pylades, whom Electra later married. Eventually, both Orestes and his sister were exonerated by Athena and the Eumenides, or Furies.

ELYSIAN FIELDS: In Greek mythology the Elysian Fields, also known as Elysium or the Isles of the Blessed, were the dwelling place after death of virtuous mortals or those given immortality by divine favor. The poets Homer, Hesiod, and Pindar variously describe this happy land as being on the banks of the river Oceanus at the edge of the Earth. In Vergil, Elysium was part of Hades.

ENDYMION: In Greek mythology, Endymion was a handsome young shepherd. As he lay sleeping on Mount Latmos, Selene, the moon goddess, fell in love with him. When the Olympian gods guessed her secret, Zeus offered Endymion perpetual youth

on the condition that he remain asleep forever. Eternally young, and beloved by the moon, Endymion sleeps on.

EOS: In Greek mythology, Eos, goddess of the dawn, was mother of the west wind Zephyr and of the morning star Eosphorus. Among the handsome young men whom she carried off as her lovers were Orion and Tithonus. Eos asked Zeus to give Tithonus immortality but forgot to include eternal youthfulness with her request. When Tithonus grew old and feeble and talked ceaselessly, Eos tired of him and changed him into a cicada. In Roman mythology, Eos was known as Aurora.

EPIMETHEUS: In Greek mythology, Epimetheus was the son of the Titan Iapetus and Clymene and the brother of Prometheus. Prometheus ("forethinker") warned Epimetheus ("afterthinker") not to accept any gift from the gods, who were angry that humankind had the gift of fire. But Epimetheus took Pandora, the first mortal woman, from Hermes and married her. Hermes had given Pandora a curious nature and a box filled with all the troubles of the world, which she loosed upon humankind. Epimetheus and Pandora later had one daughter, Pyrrha, who married Deucalion, the Greek Noah.

ERATO: In Greek mythology, Erato is one of the nine muses, personifications of the highest aspirations of art and intellect. The daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory), they sang and danced at celebrations of gods and heroes. Mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey*, they are first named individually by Hesiod in his *Theogony*. When the Romans later separated their fields of inspiration, Erato became the patron of love poetry, including erotic poems and bridal songs, and mime. She is usually depicted crowned with roses and myrtle and holding a lyre. Several other, minor figures in Greek myths are also called Erato.

EREBUS: In Greek mythology, Erebus was the mysterious darkness through which the dead passed on their way to Hades. Personified, Erebus was the son of Chaos and the brother of Night (Nyx) by whom he sired Aether (Air) and Day.

ERECHTHEUS: In Greek mythology, Erechtheus was a king of Athens who had been raised by the goddess Athena. When Athens was at war with Eleusis, an oracle told Erechtheus that he had to sacrifice one of his daughters in order to win. He killed his youngest daughter, won the war, and was himself killed either by Zeus or by Poseidon.

ERIS: In Greek mythology, Eris was the goddess of discord and sister of Ares, god of war. She initiated the series of events that led to the Trojan War by tossing an apple marked "for the fairest" among the gods.

EROS: In Greek mythology and philosophy, Eros played many roles. In the Theogony of Hesiod (c.750 BC), Eros impregnated Gaea (mother earth), and their offspring were Uranus (heaven), the sea, and mountains. The Birds of Aristophanes contains another theogony, in which Chaos and darkness first existed. Then night laid an egg in darkness, and Eros was hatched. Finally, Eros fertilized Chaos, who gave birth to ocean, heaven, earth, and all the gods. Among some early Greek philosophers, Eros was love, the force responsible for all creation--if present--and for all destruction--if absent.

As a young, playful god, he was often referred to as a son of Aphrodite and was frequently depicted as causing love by shooting a gold-tipped arrow. Many of his antics are related in the Aeneid of Vergil and in the Metamorphoses of Ovid. In art, he is usually depicted with wings, carrying a bow and wearing a quiver of arrows. In Roman mythology he is known as Cupid or Amor.

EUMOLPLUS: In Greek mythology, Eumolpus was the ancestor of the priestly clan of Eumolpidae, who conducted the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries. In some accounts he is credited with founding those rites with Celeus. His legend, probably the remnant of a local tradition, is very confusing. The son of Poseidon and Chione, Eumolpus was banished from several countries but became, eventually, the king of Thrace. He supported Eleusis in the war against Erechtheus, king of

Gerard: Cupid and Psyche



Athens. In it Eumolpus was defeated and killed. In most accounts he was the father of Ismarus and Ceryx.

EUPHORBUS: In Greek mythology, Euphorbus, son of Panthous and Phrontis, was a Trojan hero in the Trojan War. Either he or Hector killed Prosetilaus, the first Greek to land at Troy. He was the first to wound Patroclus, but he was killed almost immediately by King Menelaus of Sparta. Pythagoras of Samos, the Greek philosopher and mystic, claimed that he was a subsequent incarnation of Euphorbus.

EUPHROSYNE: In Greek mythology, Euphrosyne was one of the three Graces, or Charites, named by the poet Hesiod. Euphrosyne means "joy" or "festivity." Personifying the charm or grace of a fertile garden, Euphrosyne and the other Graces—Aglaia ("brilliance") and Thalia ("bloom")—always appeared together, dancing to Apollo's lyre. Individually they probably evolved from goddesses of fertility and nature.

EUROPA: In Greek mythology, Europa, the daughter of Agenor and sister of Cadmus, was loved by the god Zeus. Disguised as a beautiful white bull, he persuaded Europa to mount his back and then swam to Crete with her. Europa bore three sons by Zeus—Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Sarpedon. Eventually she married Asterius, king of Crete.

EURYNOME: In Greek mythology, Eurynome was the name of the following characters: (1) the mother of Bellerophon; (2) the daughter of Tethys and Oceanus who with Thetis, mother of Achilles, welcomed Hephaestus to the bosom of the sea when Hera cast him down from Olympus; (3) a sea-nymph and the third wife of Zeus; (4) an ancient goddess who, with the Titan Ophion, ruled Olympus before Cronus; and (5) an old and faithful servant in the household of Odysseus.

EUTERPE: In Greek mythology, Euterpe is one of the nine muses, personifications of the highest aspirations of art and intellect. The daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory), they were mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey* and first named

individually by Hesiod in the Theogony. When the Romans later separated their fields of inspiration, Euterpe became the muse of lyric poetry and music, patron of flute players. According to some accounts she invented the flute and other wind instruments. She is depicted on Roman sarcophagi holding a double flute. Euterpe was the mother of Rhesus by Strymon.

F

FATES: In Greek mythology, the three Fates, or Moirai, were the offspring of Zeus and the Titan Themis. Though robed in white, they are described as daughters of the night and equated with the obscure darkness of human destiny. Each had her separate duty to perform: Clotho spun the thread of life; Lachesis fixed the length of the thread as she held it, and Atropos cut the thread with her shears when the span of life was done. In Roman mythology, the Fates were also known as the Parcae.

FURIES: In Greek mythology, the three Furies - Tisiphone, Megaera, and Alecto - were goddesses of vengeance. Their function was to punish crimes that had escaped detection or public justice. Although their usual abode was Hades, they also pursued the living, as in the story of Orestes. In appearance they were ugly, bat-winged, serpent-haired creatures born of the blood of Uranus when he was mutilated by the sickle of Cronus. In the afterlife, the Furies dispensed justice from the netherworld, where, armed with scourges, they meted out the torments of remorse and other punishments. The Furies, also known as Erinyes, were called the Eumenides in later Greek literature.



GAEA: In Greek mythology, Gaea (or Gaia) was the goddess of Earth and the daughter of Chaos. She was regarded as the mother of all creation, preceding Zeus and the other Olympian gods. She gave birth to Uranus, the sky, and with Uranus she produced the Titans. Other offspring followed, of whom some were such frightful monsters, like the Cyclops, that Uranus decided to imprison them in the depths of the Earth. Gaea took vengeance by instigating Uranus's castration. In Roman mythology, she was identified with Tellus and Terra.

GALATEA: In Greek mythology, Galatea was a nymph, noted for her great beauty, who was loved by the Cyclops Polyphemus. Another Galatea was a statue loved by Pygmalion, king of Cyprus. He prayed to Aphrodite that the statue might be given life. His prayer was answered, and Pygmalion and Galatea were married.

GANYMEDE: In Greek mythology, Ganymede was a handsome youth who became the cupbearer of Zeus (Jupiter), the father of the gods. According to Homer's *Iliad*, Ganymede was the son of Tros, king of Troy. Zeus was captivated by his beauty and sent an eagle to snatch him up and carry him to Mount Olympus, the home of the gods. In exchange for the boy he gave Tros a team of divine horses. In later tradition Ganymede was identified with the Constellation Aquarius and became a symbol of homosexual love. A moon of the planet Jupiter was named for him because of his connection with the god.

GLAUCUS: In Greek mythology, Glaucus was the name of the following characters: (1) a sea-god who loved Scylla before her transformation into a monster; (2) a son of Minos who as a child fell into a honeypot and was smothered; (3) the father of Bellerophon; (4) a brother of the seer Laocoon; and (5) a Trojan ally who exchanged armor with Diomedes.

GOLDEN FLEECE: In Greek mythology the Golden Fleece was the treasure wrested from a dragon in Colchis by Jason and the Argonauts, after Medea had drugged the dragon. Jason and Medea then fled, carrying the fleece on Jason's ship, the Argo. Some ancient writers, for example, Strabo, believed that this fleece was covered with alluvial gold. Others held that what Jason sought was not gold, but amber. Apollonius of Rhodes thought it was a ram's fleece used as a priest's costume, or the sign of Aries the Ram, or some other sacred cult object. After the Argo's return this prize was spread on the bridal couch of Jason and Medea, thus sanctifying their royal union.

GORDIAN knot: In Greek legend, the Gordian knot was an intricate knot tied by Gordius, king of Phrygia. An oracle foretold that he who untied the knot would rule all of Asia. Alexander the Great cut the knot with his sword. Thus "cutting the Gordian knot" came to mean solving a difficult problem by forceful action.

GORGON: In early Greek mythology, the Gorgon was a monster of the underworld. In later tradition the Gorgons were the three daughters of sea-god Phorcys and Ceto: Stheno, Euryale, and Medusa. They had writhing snakes for hair and were so ugly that the sight of them turned beholders into stone. Medusa, who was mortal, was killed by Perseus.

GRACES: In Greek mythology the Graces (Charites) were beautiful sister goddesses, most often represented as three in number. Their names are synonymous with their attributes: Aglaia ("brilliance"), Euphrosyne ("joy"), and Thalia ("bloom"). Their charm and winning manner made them welcome as the companions of the muses and the attendants of Aphrodite, Eros, and Dionysus. They presided over banquets, social gatherings, and polite entertainments. Their gentleness and agreeable dispositions enhanced the joys of life.

H

HADES: In Greek mythology, Hades, also known as Pluto, was the god of the underworld. The son of Cronus and Rhea, he ruled over the souls of the dead with the aid of his wife, Persephone. Later, Hades became better known as a place, the underworld itself--the world of the dead, separated from the world of the living by the rivers Styx, Acheron, Lethe, Cocytus, and Phlegethon. New arrivals were ferried across the Styx by Charon; unwelcome visitors were deterred from entering Hades by the multiheaded dog, Cerberus. The judges of the dead decided whether a soul would go to the Elysian Fields, for the virtuous; or to Tartarus, a place of punishment; or to the Asphodel Meadows, for those neither virtuous nor evil. In the Greek Old Testament, Hades, a translation of the Hebrew Sheol, refers to the place of departed souls.

HALCYONE: In Greek mythology, Halcyone was the daughter of Aeolus and the wife of Ceyx, the king of Thessaly. When Ceyx sailed to Ionia to consult the oracle of Apollo, he was shipwrecked and drowned. The gods informed Halcyone of his death in a dream, and when she awoke she went down to the seashore and found the body of her husband. So great was her grief that she drowned herself. The gods in pity changed the couple into kingfishers, or halcyons, and calmed the winds during their breeding season. Hence "halcyon days" refers to a period of peace and tranquility.

HARMONIA: In Greek mythology, Harmonia was the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite (or Zeus and the Pleiad Electra, in the Samothrace account). She was married to Cadmus on the Acropolis at Thebes with all the gods in attendance. Among Harmonia's wedding gifts were a jeweled robe and a necklace made by Hephaestus and imbued with the power to stir up strife for anyone who wore them. After altering the history of Thebes and causing many to die, notably Amphiarous, Eriphlye, and Phegeus and their sons, the lethal gifts were deposited in the

shrine at Delphi. Harmonia and Cadmus were turned into snakes.

HARPY: In Greek mythology, a harpy was a monster with the head of a woman and the body of a vulture. Three harpies, daughters of Electra (a daughter of Oceanus), are frequently named: Aello, Podarge, and Ocypete. Filthy, hungry creatures, they were sent by Zeus to snatch the food of Phineus, the king of Thrace, in punishment for predicting the future too accurately. According to another version of the story, they were sent because Phineus had mistreated his children.

HEBE: In Greek mythology, Hebe was the goddess of eternal youth who served the Olympian gods the ambrosia that kept them forever young. She was the daughter of Zeus and Hera and the wife of Hercules after he attained immortality. Her cult was popular because it was believed that she could restore youthful beauty to the aged. In Rome, where she was identified as Juventas, she was the patron of young manhood.

HECATE: In Greek mythology, Hecate was a goddess of the underworld and an attendant of Persephone. She was the only descendant of the Titans to retain her powers after the defeat of the Titans by Zeus, whose special favor she enjoyed. Accompanied by baying hounds, Hecate was a terrifying figure who represented the powers of darkness and evil. She was considered the patron deity of witches and sorceresses, and secret rites associated with magic were performed at crossroads under a full moon to appease her. In later mythology, she was sometimes considered a fertility goddess who sent up crops to men from under the earth. In art, she was represented with three faces.

HECATONCHEIRES: In Greek mythology, the three hecatoncheires were Titans, children of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaea (Earth), born with 50 heads and 100 arms and hands. They were called Cottus, Briareus (also known as Obriareus by the gods and Aegaeon by mortals), and Gyes. In most versions of their legend the brothers were imprisoned for a period in

Tartarus, the lowest region of the Underworld, and allied themselves with Zeus when the other Titans attacked the gods. Briareus appears briefly as a character in the first book of Homer's *Iliad*. In Roman mythology, the brothers were known as the centimani. An alternate Greek spelling is "hekatoncheiroi."

HECTOR: In Greek mythology, Hector, the eldest son of Hecuba and Priam and the husband of Andromache, led the Trojan forces in the Trojan War. Hector is a main character of Homer's *Iliad*, which depicts him as a noble, compassionate, and brave warrior. In the tenth year of the war Hector killed Patroclus, whose friend Achilles swore to avenge him. After killing Hector, Achilles trampled on his body, and each day for 12 days he dragged it by the heels three times around the walls of Troy before finally giving it up to Priam. The Trojans burned Hector's body with great honor after 9 days of mourning.

HECUBA: In Greek mythology, Hecuba was the queen of Troy, the wife of Priam, and the mother of 19 children, including Hector, Paris, Cassandra, and Helenus. During the Trojan War she sent her youngest son, Polydorus, to Polymnestor, king of Thrace, for safety. When Troy fell to the Greeks, Hecuba was awarded to Odysseus as a slave. While accompanying Odysseus on his homeward journey, she discovered the corpse of Polydorus and avenged his murder by Polymnestor by killing two of the latter's children and tearing out his eyes. She was eventually turned into a fiery-eyed dog.

HELEN OF TROY: In Greek mythology, Helen of Troy was the most beautiful woman in Greece and the major cause of the Trojan War. Helen was the daughter of Zeus and Leda, whom Zeus raped after taking the guise of a swan. Helen's sister was Clytemnestra, the wife of Agamemnon; her brothers were the Dioscuri, or Divine Twins, Castor and Pollux. While still a girl, Helen was carried off by the Athenian hero Theseus, but the Dioscuri rescued her unharmed. Later, she was sought after by almost every prince in Greece, but she finally married Menelaus, king of Sparta, who was the richest of the suitors.

Helen and Menelaus had one child, a daughter, Hermione. Their marriage was threatened when Paris, a Trojan prince, became enamored of Helen. Taking advantage of Menelaus's absence from the palace, Paris abducted Helen and left for Troy. Immediately, a great expedition against Troy was organized under the leadership of Agamemnon, Menelaus's brother, and ten years of bitter fighting ensued. After Troy's defeat, Helen was restored to her husband.

There are many variations to the story of Helen owing to the fact that in earlier times she was a cult divinity and the focus of many local tales. She is often considered to be the daughter of Nemesis, since she caused such misfortune. The 7th-century poet Stesichorus popularized a version that Helen never went to Troy but was detained in Egypt: the Helen who went to Troy was not a real person but merely a phantom; Menelaus then reunited with his wife after the Greek victory at Troy. Euripides based his play *Helen* on this story.

HELENUS: In Greek mythology, Helenus was the only son of Priam and Hecuba to survive the destruction of Troy. He was a seer from whom Odysseus obtained the knowledge that Troy would fall only after the bow and arrows of Hercules were used against it. Helenus eventually married Andromache, the widow of Hector, and founded the city of Buthrotum. He foretold the founding of Rome by Aeneas.

HELIOS: In Greek mythology, Helios was the god of the Sun who drove his horse-drawn chariot across the sky each day. Forgotten when Zeus divided the earth among the gods, Helios requested the island of Rhodes. He became the chief god of the island, and the famous Colossus was dedicated to him. His offspring include the sorceress Circe and Phaethon, who was killed while attempting to drive his father's chariot. So greatly did Helios's daughters, the Heliades, weep at Phaethon's death that they were changed into poplars. The nymph Clytie, once loved by Helios, was changed into the heliotrope, a flower whose head turns to follow the Sun's course. Helios was later identified with Apollo. In Roman mythology, Helios was known as Sol.

HEPHAESTUS: In Greek mythology, Hephaestus was a master smith who was the god of fire and the patron of craftsmen. He was always represented as lame. Homer's *Iliad* includes two different accounts of his lameness. According to one story, Zeus quarreled with Hephaestus's mother, Hera, and flung him down from Olympus to the island of Lemnos for siding with her in a quarrel. According to the other, Hephaestus was born lame, and Hera, disgusted by his lameness, flung him from Olympus. A matchless artisan, Hephaestus took revenge on Hera by fashioning a golden throne that bound her fast. He also made armor for Achilles and an invisible net that enmeshed Hephaestus's faithless wife, Aphrodite, and her lover Ares. In Roman mythology, Hephaestus was identified with Vulcan.

HERA: In Greek mythology, Hera, the daughter of Cronus and Rhea, was queen of the Olympian gods. She was worshiped as the goddess of marriage, women, and childbirth; her sacred emblems were the apple, pomegranate and peacock. Hera's marriage to Zeus, king of the gods, was troubled by his many infidelities. Some of the best-known Greek myths deal with the jealous Hera's persecution of women loved by her husband. In the Trojan War, Hera favored the Greeks because the Trojan prince Paris slighted her by naming Aphrodite the most beautiful of the goddesses. In Roman mythology, Hera was identified with Juno.

HERACLES (HERCULES): Hercules is the Roman name for the Greek mythological hero Heracles, who was famous for his courage and strength. Numerous plays and operas have been based on the story of his conception and birth: he was conceived when his mother, Alcmene, was seduced by Zeus, who had disguised himself as her husband, Amphitryon. Zeus's wife, Hera, was duly angered over the impending birth of Hercules. She succeeded in delaying his birth, but her attempt to kill him by sending two snakes into his crib failed--Hercules strangled both of them.

The many feats of Hercules are customarily divided into the 12 labors and other exploits. The 12 labors, which were performed

for the Greek king Eurystheus as a result of Hera's enmity, were: (1) killing the Nemean lion, which could not be killed by metal or stone; from the lion he made the cloak and club that became his trademarks; (2) killing the multiheaded Hydra of Lerna, which could grow two new heads for each one it lost, the blood of the Hydra was the source of poison for Hercules' arrows, which could cause death even from a scratch; (3) capturing the golden-horned hind of Ceryneia, which was sacred to Artemis; (4) capturing the Erymanthian boar; (5) cleaning the stables of Augeas; (6) routing the Stymphalian birds, which had iron feathers and were sacred to Ares; (7) capturing the Cretan bull; (8) capturing the man-eating mares of Diomedes; (9) obtaining the girdle of Hippolyte, queen of the Amazons; (10) driving the cattle of Geryon from far west to Greece; (11) capturing Cerberus, the watchdog of the underworld; and (12) obtaining the golden apples of the Hesperides.

His other exploits included erecting the Pillars of Hercules (Gates of Gibraltar) with the aid of his father, Zeus, and tricking Atlas into holding the world on his shoulders again. In addition, he provided 50 sons for King Thespius by impregnating 49 of the king's 50 daughters in one night. He also inaugurated the Olympian Games, in honor of Zeus, and won every event in the first Olympics.

After his many adventures, Hercules settled down and married Deianeira. When a centaur named Nessus abducted Deianeira, Hercules shot him with one of his poisoned arrows. The dying centaur gave Deianeira a vial of his blood (now mixed with the Hydra's poison), telling her that she could use it to rekindle Hercules' love for her if it should ever fade. Later, when her jealousy was aroused, she sent her husband a garment dipped in the blood. When Hercules put it on, he felt as if his body was on fire. Realizing that death was near, he threw himself on a funeral pyre. As the pyre burned, he was carried up to Mt. Olympus, where he became a god and married Hebe, a daughter of Hera. In Greek mythology, Hercules was the only man to make the full transition from mortal to immortal.

HERMAPHRODITUS: In Greek mythology, Hermaphroditus was a handsome young man, the son of Hermes and Aphrodite. He was loved by the nymph Salmacis, who prayed that they become inseparable; when Hermaphroditus swam in her stream, their bodies fused into one. The term hermaphrodite has come to designate persons with both male and female genitals.

HERMES: In Greek mythology, Hermes (Roman, Mercury), the son of Zeus and Maia, was a ubiquitous and agile deity with many functions: protector of flocks and shepherds; guide and protector of travelers; conductor of souls to the underworld; a messenger of Zeus; bringer of good luck; and patron of orators, writers, athletes, merchants, and thieves. Known for his ingenuity, speed, and protectiveness, he was usually pictured with a broad-rimmed hat with wings on it, a herald's staff (caduceus), winged sandals, a ram, a lyre, and a shepherd's staff. Because his interests were broad and always changing, he was one of the most loved of the Olympian gods.

HERMIONE. In Greek mythology, Hermione was the only daughter of Helen of Troy and Menelaus. She was nine years old when her mother was abducted by Paris and abandoned her. Hermione later married Neoptolemus, son of Achilles. One of the traditional stories relates that Neoptolemus was murdered by Orestes, who then married Hermione.

HERO AND LEANDER: In Greek mythology Hero and Leander were lovers. Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite, lived in Sestos; Leander lived in Abydos, on the other side of the Hellespont (Dardanelles). Each night, Leander swam across the strait to be with Hero. One night a tempest arose and Leander drowned; when Hero saw her dead lover she drowned herself.

HESPERIDES: In Greek mythology, the Hesperides were the daughters of Atlas, variously numbered from three to seven, who guarded a tree that produced golden apples. Hera, who had received the tree as a wedding present, asked the Hesperides to guard it. The tree was later planted in a beautiful garden (also called Hesperides) at the western

Hermes (Mercury)



extremity of the world, where it was also guarded by the dragon Ladon. As one of his 12 labors, Hercules killed Ladon in order to obtain the golden apples.

HESTIA: In Greek mythology, Hestia was the goddess of the hearth and one of the 12 great Olympian gods. She remained forever a virgin, refusing marriage both with Poseidon and with Apollo. Of all the gods worshiped by the Greeks, Hestia alone never took sides in disputes of any sort and never participated in wars. She was the protector of suppliants, representing the security and hospitality of the home. In Rome, where she was identified with Vesta, her priestesses were called vestal virgins.

HIPPOLYTE: In Greek mythology, Hippolyte was a queen of the Amazons. She possessed a golden belt given to her by her father, Ares, and one of the tasks assigned to Hercules was to obtain the belt. Hippolyte agreed to give it to Hercules, but the goddess Hera, an enemy of Hercules, incited the Amazons to fight by telling them that Hercules had come to kill Hippolyte. In the ensuing battle Hercules succeeded in obtaining the golden belt, but Hippolyte was killed.

HIPPOLYTUS: In Greek mythology, Hippolytus was the son of the Athenian hero Theseus and the Amazon queen Hippolyte (or Antiope). Many cults were associated with him as a minor divinity, especially in the Peloponnesus. Euripides' play Hippolytus relates the traditional story of his dedication to the chaste goddess Artemis and his rejection of the cult of sensual Aphrodite, who in anger causes his stepmother Phaedra to fall passionately in love with Hippolytus. After he rejects her, Phaedra writes a note to Theseus in which she accuses Hippolytus of having violated her honor; she then hangs herself. Theseus calls on his father, Poseidon, to take Hippolytus's life, and Poseidon sends a sea monster to frighten Hippolytus's horses, causing him to be dragged to his death.

HORAE: In Greek and Roman mythology, the horae represent the seasons and, by extension, the natural course of events.

According to the dominant tradition, they were three daughters of Zeus and Themis: Eunomia, Dike, and Eirene (Good Order, Justice, and Peace). In the *Iliad* the horae guarded the gates of Olympus. With their sisters the moirae, they were said to superintend all mortal actions. In the Athenian variant, two goddesses, Thallo and Carpo, preside over the flowers of spring and fruits of harvest. When the day was later divided into 12 parts, each part was a hora, an hour.

HYACINTHUS: In Greek mythology, Hyacinthus, or Hyacinth, was a handsome youth loved by Apollo. One day when Apollo and Hyacinthus were playing quoits, Apollo hurled a discus that accidentally struck Hyacinthus in the forehead and killed him. According to another version, the wind god Zephyrus, Apollo's rival, caused the discus to strike Hyacinthus. Apollo, lamenting his death, changed him into the flower named for him.

HYDRA: In Greek mythology the Hydra was a multiheaded monster, a water serpent that ravaged the country of Argos. It grew two heads for every one that was cut off. The Hydra was killed by Hercules, who burned off the heads and used its gall to make poisoned arrows.

HYGEIA: In Greek mythology Hygeia was the goddess of health who was worshiped together with the deified Greek physician Asclepius. In later traditions, she was identified as either his daughter or his wife.

HYLAS: In Greek mythology, Hylas was the son of Theiodamas, king of the Dryopes in Thessaly. He was a favorite companion of Hercules (by some accounts his lover) on the voyage of the Argo (see Jason, mythology). On the island of Cios, Hylas was carried off by the nymph Pegae, who became enamored of him when he went to fetch water from a spring. Hercules threatened to ravage the land if Hylas was not found and lingered so long searching for him that the Argonauts sailed on without him. Afterward, in memory of the event, the residents of Cios spent

one day a year combing the mountainsides calling aloud for Hylas.

HYMEN: In Greek mythology, Hymen was the god of marriage. The son of Aphrodite, he was a handsome youth whose name was invoked in wedding songs. Wearing a wreath, he presided at marriage feasts.

HYPERBOREANS: In Greek mythology, the Hyperboreans were a fabulous race who lived beyond the north wind, Boreas, in a land of perpetual warmth and sunshine. Their land was the source of the olive tree that Heracles (see Hercules) brought to Olympus. Believed to live to the age of 1,000, Hyperboreans were associated with the worship of Apollo at Delphi and Artemis at Delos. The historian Herodotus was the source for one legend: because Hyperborean maidens who were sent with offerings to Delos died as soon as their task was accomplished, the Hyperboreans arranged to have their gifts passed from nation to nation until they reached Delos.

HYPERION: In Greek mythology, Hyperion was one of the Titans, early giant gods of great size and strength. He was the son of Uranus and Gaea (Heaven and Earth) and father, by Thea, of Helios (the Sun), Selene (the Moon), and Eos (the dawn). Described as radiant, of unparalleled splendor, Hyperion may have been a personification of the Sun.

IDAS: In Greek mythology, Idas, son of Aphareus and brother of Lynceus, grew up with the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux. He became one of the Argonauts (see Jason, mythology) and participated in the Calydonian boar hunt. When Apollo carried off his love, Marpessa, Idas pursued them but Zeus intervened and allowed Marpessa to choose between her suitors. She chose and married Idas. When Castor and Pollux carried off the daughters of Leucippus, who were the cousins of Idas and Lynceus, Idas and his brother fought the Dioscuri. Idas killed Castor and was then killed by Zeus.

IDOMENEUS: In Greek legend Idomeneus, the son of Deucalion and grandson of Minos, was king of Crete. He was one of the major Greek leaders in the Trojan War. According to Homer's Odyssey, he and his 80 ships returned uneventfully to Crete after the fall of Troy. In a later version of the legend, however, he was caught in a storm on the return voyage and vowed that if he reached home safely he would sacrifice to Poseidon the first creature he encountered. This proved to be his son. When Idomeneus fulfilled the vow, a plague fell on Crete and his subjects banished him. Mozart's opera *Idomeneo* was based on the legend.

IO: In Greek mythology, Io, daughter of Inachus, was a priestess of Hera at Argos. She is sometimes called Callithyia. Zeus loved her and changed her into a white heifer to conceal her from the jealous Hera. When Hera sent a gadfly to torment her, Io was eventually driven across the Ionian Sea to Egypt, where she regained human form and bore Epaphus. In art she frequently retains a cow's head. She has been identified with the Egyptian goddess Isis, and Epaphus with the sacred bull Apis, and part of the legend connects her to the Syrian goddess Astarte. The Ionian Sea is named for her, as is the Bosphorus ("ox-ford").

IPHIGENIA: In Greek mythology, Iphigenia was the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. When unfavorable winds detained the Greek army at Aulis from sailing for Troy, an oracle told Agamemnon that he must sacrifice Iphigenia to appease the anger of Artemis, whose sacred stag he had killed. Agamemnon accordingly had Iphigenia brought to Aulis, where he performed the sacrifice. In another version of the story, Artemis substituted a deer on the altar at the last moment and carried Iphigenia in a cloud to Tauris, where she became a priestess of Artemis. Many years later Iphigenia escaped with her brother Orestes to Attica, where she established a new temple to Artemis.

IRIS: In Greek mythology, Iris, the daughter of Thaumas and Electra, was the goddess of the rainbow and a messenger from the gods to humankind. The rainbow was her bridge between heaven and earth. Iris was represented in art as a beautiful young woman in a long tunic with golden wings attached to her shoulders.

IXION: In Greek mythology, Ixion, king of the Lapiths, was traditionally considered the first murderer of a kinsman. He refused to pay his father-in-law, Eioneus, the promised price for his bride, Dia, and finally murdered him by throwing him into a fiery pit. To purify Ixion of this sin, Zeus invited him to Olympus; there Ixion tried to violate Hera, but she was transformed into a cloud. From Ixion's union with the cloud was born either the centaurs or their father, Centaurus, depending on the version of the legend. In punishment, Ixion was bound to a fiery, eternally revolving wheel.

J

JASON: In Greek mythology, Jason was the son of Aeson and the leader of the Argonauts, who sought the Golden Fleece. After Pelias, his uncle, usurped the throne of Iolcus, the young Jason was taken to the centaur Chiron, who reared him on Mount Pelion. When, as a man, Jason claimed his kingdom, Pelias gave him the task of bringing to him the Golden Fleece. Jason ordered the construction of a 50-oared ship called the Argo, for which he assembled a crew including Hercules, Orpheus, Theseus, and other heroes. The voyages of Jason and the Argonauts were fraught with danger and adventure--storms at sea, seduction by beautiful women, the overcoming of mythical monsters--but at last they reached Colchis, the land of the Golden Fleece. At Colchis, Jason yoked fire-breathing bulls, sowed the dragon's teeth of Cadmus, vanquished champions, and seized the fleece with the help of the princess Medea, with whom he returned to Iolcus. There they brought about the murder of Pelias but were expelled from the city by Pelias's son. After delivering the fleece to Orchomenus in Boeotia, Jason and Medea went to Corinth, where they lived as man and wife for many years. When Jason wished to marry Creusa (or Glauce), daughter of King Creon, Medea revenged herself by using her knowledge of magic and sorcery to burn to death both the father and daughter. For breaking his vow to Medea, Jason was condemned to wander the earth until, as an old man, he at last returned to Corinth. There he was accidentally killed when the prow of the Argo fell over and struck him.

IOCASTA: In Greek mythology, Jocasta, queen of Thebes, was both mother and wife to Oedipus. The daughter of Menoeceus, she married Laius, king of Thebes, and bore him a son. Because an oracle had foretold that Laius would be slain by his son, the baby was left to die, but he survived, was raised elsewhere, killed his father unwittingly in a quarrel, and was given the hand of the widowed Queen Jocasta for restoring order in Thebes. She bore him four children, Eteocles, Polynices,

Antigone, and Ismene. When her relation to Oedipus was revealed, Jocasta hanged herself and Oedipus blinded himself.





KAIROS: In Greek mythology, Kairos was the personification of opportunity. He had a cult and an altar at Olympia, but no mythology has survived. A popular subject in art, Kairos was usually depicted as bald behind with a long forelock. Some scholars have suggested that his image inspired the expression "take time by the forelock" to mean "seize an opportunity."

KERES: In Greek mythology, the keres were evil spirits associated with death. Sometimes they were regarded as souls of the dead, sometimes as bringers of death, specifically malignant goddesses who could infect mortals with disease. They could pollute and make unclean in all ways and were also implicated in blindness, old age, and misfortune. According to literary descriptions, the keres resembled birds of prey, similar to the Harpies. In later mythology they became identified with the Furies.

LLAMIA: In Greek mythology, Lamia was a beautiful woman whose children were taken away in jealousy by Hera because Zeus had loved her. In revenge, Lamia began to steal and kill the children of others. She became a hideous creature. Because Hera had condemned her to sleeplessness, Zeus gave Lamia the ability to remove her own eyes at will in order to sleep. In later legend the lamia was a vampire that seduced young men.

LAOMEDON: In Greek mythology, Laomedon was a king of Troy and the father of Priam. When he refused to pay Apollo and Poseidon for building the walls of Troy, they sent a plague and a sea monster, respectively, to ravage the city. An oracle advised Laomedon to sacrifice his daughter Hesione to the monster. She was rescued by Hercules, to whom Laomedon gave mortal horses rather than the immortal steeds that he had promised. In revenge, Hercules returned with six ships to destroy Troy, killed Laomedon, and carried Hesione away.

LEDA: In Greek mythology, Leda was the wife of Tyndareus, king of Sparta. Zeus, who came to her as a swan, seduced her and was the father of one or more of her children. There are many variations of the legend. In one version Leda's daughter Helen of Troy was hatched from an egg. In another version Leda bore two eggs, from which came Helen and Clytemnestra and Castor and Pollux. Helen and Pollux are commonly thought to have been the children of Zeus, whereas Clytemnestra and Castor were those of Tyndareus.

LETHE: In Greek mythology, Lethe was one of the five rivers in Hades. Souls drank from it to forget their earthly sorrows before passing into the Elysian Fields. In Dante's Divine Comedy, Lethe is a fountain in purgatory whose water obliterates all memory of sin.

LETO: In Greek mythology, Leto was the daughter of the Titans Coeus and Phoebe and the mother of Artemis and Apollo by Zeus. Leto wandered through many lands seeking a place to give birth to her children, because Hera, the wife of Zeus, had

forbidden any place under the sun to receive her. In the most common version of the story, Leto gave birth while clinging to a palm tree on the island of Delos, which Poseidon had covered with waves to evade Hera's decree. Leto appears in many literary works, including the *Iliad*, and is generally associated with Artemis and Apollo.

LOTUS-EATERS: In Greek mythology, the Lotus-Eaters (or *Lotophagi*) were a people who lived on the coast of North Africa. They subsisted on the fruit of the lotus tree, which made them forget the past and live in blissful indolence. In the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus landed on their coast, some of his scouts tasted the lotus fruit, forgot their homes and families, and had to be forcibly carried back to the ships by their companions.



MAENADS: In Greek mythology, maenads were women votaries of Dionysus, the god of wine. Waving the thyrsus - an ivy-entwined staff - as they sang while draped in the skins of animals, the maenads abandoned themselves to orgiastic dancing and festivals.

MAIA: In Greek mythology, Maia was the eldest of the Pleiades, the seven daughters of the Titan Atlas and Pleione who were changed into doves by Zeus to protect them from the hunter Orion. They then flew up to the heavens, where they became a constellation. Maia was the mother by Zeus of the messenger god Hermes and the nurse of Arcas after the death of Callisto. She was commonly confused by the Romans with their own Maia Maiesta, a fertility goddess and cult partner of Vulcan. Her festival was celebrated on the first day of May, thought to be named for her. She has been identified with Fauna, Bona Dea, and Ops. Maia is also one of the names of the great mother goddess Cybele.

MARSYAS: In Greek mythology, Marsyas was a Phrygian satyr. When Athena abandoned the double flute because playing it distorted her face, Marsyas took it up and became famous for his beautiful music. He challenged Apollo to a musical contest, on the terms that the winner could do what he wished with the loser. At first both played equally well, but Apollo then challenged Marsyas to play his instrument upside down; this could be done on Apollo's instrument, the lyre, but not on the flute, so the Muses, who were judges, awarded the contest to Apollo. He hanged Marsyas from a pine tree and flayed him. Marsyas' blood, or the tears of his friends, is said to have formed the river Marsyas. In another version, the judge was Midas, who declared Marsyas the winner; Apollo punished Midas by giving him the ears of an ass. Marsyas was a popular subject of Roman art, his statue stood in the Forum.

MEDEA. In Greek mythology Medea was the sorceress who helped Jason steal the Golden Fleece from her father, King Aeetes of

Colchis. Fleeing from Colchis with Jason and the Argonauts, Medea allegedly dismembered her brother Apsyrtus to delay Jason's pursuers. By the time they reached Greece, Medea and Jason were married. She tricked King Pelias's daughters into murdering their father, Jason's uncle, thus crowning Jason. When Jason repudiated her for Glauce (or Creusa), the daughter of King Creon of Corinth, Medea first sent a poisoned robe to his fiancee, then killed her own two sons and set fire to the palace, fleeing through the air on a chariot sent by Helios, Aeetes' father. Understood not as a kidnapped earth goddess, but as an evil woman.

MEDUSA: In Greek mythology, Medusa was the only mortal of the three Gorgons, daughters of the sea god Phorcys and his sister-wife Ceto. Originally very beautiful women, they were transformed into ugly monsters, with serpents for hair, claws of bronze, and staring eyes capable of turning anyone who looked at them into stone. The hero Perseus killed Medusa by cutting off her head, and the winged horse Pegasus sprang from the blood that spurted from her neck. Perseus used Medusa's head to petrify Atlas (hence the Atlas mountains) and a few personal enemies, but he later gave the head to Athena, who put it in the center of her shield.

MELEAGER: In Greek mythology, Meleager was the son of Oeneus, king of Calydon, and Althea. When he was born the Fates predicted that he would live until a brand burning in the fireplace turned to ash. Althea snatched the brand from the fire and extinguished it, putting it in a chest for safekeeping. Meleager grew up to become a famous javelin thrower. When Artemis sent a wild boar to ravage Calydon, the bravest heroes of Greece were summoned, but Meleager killed the boar. In a dispute over who should receive the prize of the boar's skin, however, Meleager killed his mother's brothers. The enraged Althea then brought about his death, either by cursing him or by throwing the fatal brand in the fire.

MELPOMENE: In Greek mythology, Melpomene is one of the nine muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne. When the Romans

separated their fields of inspiration, Melpomene was originally the muse of song and musical harmony, but she later became the particular patron of tragedy. She was said to sing, in a clear voice, songs of mourning for poets and men of action. In Greek art her attributes are the tragic mask and the club of Hercules. According to some accounts, the Sirens -creatures who were half-bird, half-woman- were born of the union of Melpomene and the river god Achelous.

MEMNON: In Greek mythology, Memnon, the son of Eos, goddess of dawn, and Tithonus, brother of Priam, was king of Ethiopia. He led his army to the defense of Troy in the Trojan War, where he was killed by Achilles. At Eos's request, Zeus granted immortality to Memnon, according to one version of the myth. The Greeks called the statue of the pharaoh Amenhotep III near Thebes, Egypt, the colossus of Memnon because at dawn it emitted mysterious musical sounds that were thought to be Memnon's greeting to Eos.

MENELAUS: In Greek mythology Menelaus, king of Sparta, was the son of Atreus and the husband of Helen of Troy. When Paris carried off Helen and much of his treasure to Troy, Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon led the army of Greek princes that won the Trojan War and recovered Helen. On the return voyage, Menelaus lost most of his ships and was driven to Egypt. There, in one version of the story, he rescued Helen, who had been brought there by Hermes while the Greeks and Trojans were fighting over a phantom of her. Menelaus and Helen achieved immortality at their deaths.

MENTOR: In Greek mythology, Mentor was the trusted friend of Odysseus and the tutor of Telemachus, Odysseus' son. During the Trojan War, Odysseus entrusted the care of his household to Mentor. The word mentor now refers to a trusted advisor.

MEROPE: In Greek mythology, Merope was one of the Pleiades, the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione who were changed into doves to protect them from the hunter Orion, and then into a star cluster. Whereas all her sisters married gods, Merope

wed a mortal, Sisyphus of Corinth, and bore him four children. She is said to be the least visible star in the cluster because she hid in shame at having mated with a mortal. Other mythological figures called Merope include the wife of Cresphontes, king of Messenia; the wife of Polybus of Corinth; the daughter of Oenopion (sometimes called Aero); and the daughter of Pandareus.

METIS: In Greek mythology, Metis was the daughter of the Titans Oceanus and Tethys and was said to be the wisest of the gods. According to Hesiod's *Theogony*, she was the first wife of Zeus. When she became pregnant, Zeus was told that her first child would be a girl, and if she had another it would be a boy who would overthrow him. He swallowed Metis, who counseled him from within. In time, Athena, the daughter of Zeus and Metis, sprang fully armed from the brow of Zeus when Prometheus (or possibly Hephaestus) split his skull with an ax. To the Greeks, Metis personified prudence and insight.

MIDAS: In Greek mythology, Midas was a Phrygian king whose touch turned everything into gold. Two stories are told of him. In the first, he insisted that Marsyas (or Pan, in some versions) was a better musician than Apollo, and Apollo gave Midas the ears of an ass. He concealed the ears under a turban, permitting no one but his barber to see them. The barber, sworn to silence, whispered the secret into a hole in the ground and then filled in the hole; but reeds grew from the hole and whispered Midas's secret in the wind.

In the second story Dionysus gave Midas the gift of golden touch as a reward for a favor. After a brief period, during which his food, drink, and daughter were all turned into gold, he regretted his wish and asked to be released from it. He was allowed to wash his hands in the Pactolus River, and, ever after, the sands of that river were gold.

MILO: Milo, or Milon, was a Greek athlete who lived in the last part of the 6th century BC (see Greece, ancient). He won many prizes as a wrestler at the Olympic and Pythian games and led the army of his native city, Croton, to victory over Sybaris c. 510

BC. Many legends arose about his strength; he was said, for example, to have carried a 4-year-old heifer through a stadium and then to have killed it and eaten all of it in a single day. He himself was said to have been eaten by wolves while his hands were caught in the crack of a tree that he was trying to tear apart.

MINOS: In Greek and Roman mythology, Minos was both the ruler of Crete and, after his death, a judge of the underworld. Along with his twin brother, Rhadamanthus, Minos was the son of Europa, who had been impregnated by Zeus in the guise of a white bull. After becoming king of Crete with the aid of Poseidon, Minos used his powerful navy to rule over an extensive Aegean empire. The Minoan civilization, which flourished on Crete from about 3000 to 1450 BC, was subsequently given his name; and the palace at Knossos, excavated by archaeologists in the early 20th century, is popularly thought to be his palace, within which Minos confined the deadly Minotaur in an elaborate labyrinth built by Daedalus. The killing of this creature by the Athenian Theseus is interpreted as symbolizing the political freedom won by Athens after years of paying tribute to Crete. Known for his justness, Minos was consulted by Odysseus (Odyssey, Book 2) in his capacity as judge after death.

MINOTAUR: A Greek mythological monster, half man and half bull, the Minotaur was the offspring of Pasiphae, wife of King Minos of Crete, and a beautiful white bull. Poseidon had caused Pasiphae to fall in love with the bull as a punishment to Minos for failing to offer the bull in sacrifice to the gods. Kept in the labyrinth designed by Daedalus, where 14 youths were annually sacrificed to him by Minos, the Minotaur was finally killed by the Athenian hero Theseus, with the help of Ariadne, daughter of Minos.

MNEMOSYNE: In Greek mythology Mnemosyne, the daughter of Uranus and Gaea, was goddess of memory. She slept with Zeus for nine nights and gave birth to the nine muses. She appears

in Hesiod's *Theogony*, but in most accounts she is a personification of memory rather than an actual character.

MORPHEUS: The god of dreams in Greek and Roman mythology, Morpheus was the son of Hypnos (or Somnus), god of sleep. He appeared in dreams in human form and was able to assume the form of any person. Generally portrayed as winged and carrying clusters of poppies, whose seeds he scattered to induce sleep, Morpheus was sometimes represented as a slumbering child. He was more important as a poetic concept than as a mythological figure.

MUSES: The muses were the nine Greek goddesses of inspiration in learning and the arts (see mythology). Since ancient times all writers, but most especially poets, have invoked the appropriate muse for aid: Calliope for epic and heroic poetry; Clio for history; Erato for love poetry; Euterpe for music and lyric poetry; Melpomene for tragedy; Polymnia for songs or hymns to the gods; Terpsichore for dance; Thalia for comedy; and Urania for astronomy. The muses were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, or Memory; their leader was Apollo. Sometimes called the Pierides, after their early home, Pieria, in Macedonia, they frequented the fountain of Aganippe on Mount Helicon.



NARCISSUS: In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a beautiful youth who rejected all admirers, including the nymph Echo. As punishment the goddess Artemis caused him to fall in love with his reflection in a pool. Killing himself in despair, he was transformed into the flower that bears his name. From this legend comes the term narcissism, meaning exclusive love of self. Psychoanalytic theory considers this a normal childhood phase. In adults it may become narcissistic personality disorder.

NEMESIS: In Greek and Roman mythology Nemesis was a goddess who brought retribution for evil deeds or undeserved good fortune. She was called the daughter of Nyx (Night) but was essentially the personification of an idea, rather than a mythological character.

NEOPTOLEMUS: In Greek mythology, Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, entered the Trojan War after his father was killed. During the sack of Troy, Neoptolemus killed Priam at the altar of Zeus and (according to Ovid's Metamorphoses) sacrificed Priam's daughter Polyxena on the grave of Achilles. Andromache, Hector's widow, was taken by Neoptolemus as his concubine. Although in the Odyssey he is described as returning safely from the war and afterward marrying Hermione, according to later accounts Neoptolemus was killed in Delphi at the shrine of Apollo; thus "the punishment of Neoptolemus" became a metaphor for poetic justice.

NEREUS: In Greek mythology Nereus was a sea god who, in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey and Hesiod's Theogony, was called the Old Man of the Sea. He and the Oceanid Doris were the parents of the 50 sea nymphs known as the Nereids. In art, the wise and prophetic Nereus is often represented as wrestling with Hercules.

NESTOR: In Greek mythology, Nestor was a king of Pylos. A famous athlete in his youth, he distinguished himself in a battle that he entered on foot after his father had taken away his horses. In his old age Nestor led a fleet of 90 ships to the Trojan War, where his wise counsel was esteemed by the younger Greek leaders. A Mycenaean palace located a short distance from modern Pylos is identified with the palace in which Nestor entertained Telemachus in the *Odyssey*.

NIKE: In Greek mythology, Nike was the goddess of victory, who presided over all military and athletic contests. The counterpart of the Roman goddess Victoria, she was primarily an abstraction rather than a mythological figure but achieved great popularity following the Greek victories over the Persians in 480 BC.

NIobe: In Greek mythology, Niobe was the wife of King Amphion of Thebes and the mother of six sons and six daughters. Because she taunted Leto for having only two children—Artemis and Apollo—Leto's twins avenged their mother by killing all of Niobe's offspring. The story of Niobe's never-ending tears and of Zeus turning her into stone is recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

NYMPHS: In Greek and Roman mythology nymphs were female nature spirits who were associated with such natural phenomena as seas, rivers, mountains, woods, meadows, and caves, as well as with specific localities. Young and beautiful, these mortal creatures figured frequently in myth, sometimes as the love objects of the Olympian god Apollo or of various nature deities. Although characteristically gentle and benevolent, nymphs could also be vengeful and destructive, similar to satyrs in their wildness. The main categories of nymphs included Naiads, or water nymphs, who lived in or near rivers and springs; Nereids, daughters of the sea-god Nereus, and Oceanids, daughters of Oceanus, who lived and frolicked in the saltwater seas and oceans; and Dryads and Hamadryads, woodland nymphs, the latter of whom lived only so long as their particular trees remained intact.

NYX: In Greek mythology, Nyx was the goddess of night, or darkness. She was the daughter of Chaos and the sister of Erebus. Aether (Air) and Light were children of Erebus and Nyx. Nyx was feared even by Zeus, king of the gods. Although seldom worshipped, she was often depicted in poems and art.



OCEANUS: In Greek mythology, Oceanus was the eldest of the Titans, son of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaea (Earth). After the fall of Cronus he acknowledged the sovereignty of Zeus but took little part in the affairs of the gods. Oceanus and his wife, Tethys, had 3,000 sons, the river gods, and 3,000 daughters, sea and river nymphs. They also reared Hera. Oceanus did not accumulate many myths, but he appeared early in art, most famously in the Gigantomacy of Pergamum. Aged and bearded, his image is frequently adorned with a garland of crab claws.

ODYSSEUS: In Greek mythology, Odysseus, king of Ithaca, was an epic hero whose arduous, 10-year voyage returning to Ithaca after the Trojan War is the subject of Homer's *Odyssey*. As a Greek commander in the Trojan War, he also appears in the *Iliad*. Noted for his cleverness--it was Odysseus who suggested the stratagem of the Trojan Horse--the Ithacan king served ably in the conflict with Troy. The goddess Athena, however, became angry with the Greeks because of the ill-treatment they had accorded the Trojan princess Cassandra at the end of the war. As a result, all of the victors had difficulties in returning to their homes in Greece.

None, however, encountered greater obstacles than Odysseus. For a decade he and his men wandered from place to place and had a great many adventures: they were turned into swine by the sorceress Circe; they almost succumbed to the temptations of the land of the Lotus-Eaters and the insidious song of the Sirens; they barely survived the dangers of the passage between Scylla and Charybdis, as well as their encounter with the fearsome one-eyed giant Polyphemus. Nevertheless, the wily Odysseus managed to survive.

With the help of the Phaeceans, on whose shore Odysseus had been shipwrecked--his crew had long since perished--he finally arrived home in Ithaca only to find his faithful wife, Penelope, hounded by suitors, who believed him dead. Aided by his son

Odysseus and the Sirens



Telemachus, he surprised Penelope's would-be husbands, killed them all, and was reunited with his family.

OEDIPUS: Most famous of the ancient Greek heroes of Thebes, the unfortunate King Oedipus inspired the great tragedies of Sophocles - *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. The son of Laius, king of Thebes, and Jocasta, the infant Oedipus was ritually wounded in the foot (hence his name, which means "swollen foot") and exposed on Mount Cithaeron, because of a prophecy that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Rescued by a shepherd, he was brought up by King Polybius of Corinth.

When grown, Oedipus heard the prophecy about himself and fled Corinth, believing that Polybius was his father. While on the road he killed a stranger, not knowing that it was Laius. Entering Thebes, he found the city dominated by a sphinx who killed anyone who could not solve her riddle: "Who goes on four feet in the morning, on two at noon, and in the evening on three?" Oedipus vanquished her by replying, "Man, in the three ages of his life," and won the hand of the widowed queen. Marrying Jocasta and thus fulfilling the prophecy, Oedipus reigned long in Thebes and raised two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, and two daughters, Antigone and Ismene. When the secret of his birth came to light, Jocasta hanged herself, and Oedipus blinded himself in remorse, or was blinded. Under the regency of Jocasta's brother Creon, Oedipus was driven from Thebes. Antigone chose exile with him, the two seeking refuge at Colonus, near Athens. Both daughters helped prepare Oedipus for death in a grove sacred to the Eumenides. Many variations of the story occur in literature.

OENEUS: In Greek mythology, Oeneus, king of Calydon, married Althaea and sired Meleager and Deianira. Probably evolved from an early wine god (his name is derived from the Greek word for wine), Oeneus was the first to cultivate grapes, from a vine given to him by Dionysus. Some accounts say that Dionysus was the father of Deianira. When Oeneus forgot to make an offering to Artemis, the goddess sent a wild boar to devastate his land. Meleager led many heroes in the

Calydonian boar hunt and finally killed the beast himself. In his old age Oeneus lost his kingdom to his brother Agrius, but it was restored by Diomedes, his grandson.

OENON: In Greek legend, Oenone was a nymph of Mount Ida who was taught the healing arts by Apollo. She was loved by Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy, when he lived in Mount Ida as a shepherd. Though she bore him a son, Corythus, Paris deserted her for Helen. Wounded in the Trojan War, Paris came to Oenone to be healed, but she was unable to forgive him and refused. When she relented, it was too late. Paris was dead. According to most accounts, Oenone threw herself on his pyre, and their ashes were buried together. Marble pillars marked the spot, facing in opposite directions.

OMPHALE: In Greek mythology, Omphale, daughter of Iardanus, was the widowed queen of Lydia, possibly the mother of Tantalus. When Heracles (see Hercules) sold himself into slavery in expiation for his murder of Iphitus, Omphale bought him and set him many labors. Some of the tasks were women's work, and in some accounts Omphale forced Heracles to wear women's clothes. The length of his servitude was either one year or three years. During that time Omphale bore him several sons, including Lamus.

ORACLE: In ancient Greece, a priest or priestess who communicated the response of a god to a questioner was called an oracle. The term was also applied to the response itself and to the shrine of the god. The most famous oracles were at Dodona, where Zeus was thought to answer through the rustling of oak leaves, and at Delphi, where Apollo supposedly spoke through a priestess. In both cases, oracular responses came in such ambiguous ways that it was difficult to prove them wrong. A famous Roman oracle was at Cumae, where the sibyl was said to draw inspiration from Apollo.

ORESTES: In Greek mythology, Orestes was the son of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, king of Mycenae and commander in chief of the Greeks in the Trojan War. Shortly

after Agamemnon returned from Troy, Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, her lover, slew him. Despite the fact that matricide was a serious crime, Orestes avenged Agamemnon's death by killing Clytemnestra and her lover.

In Aeschylus's *Oresteia*, Orestes is ordered by Apollo to commit this act and is helped by his sister Electra and his friend Pylades. At first Orestes is condemned by the gods for his actions, despite the favorable oracle from Apollo, but eventually he is exonerated by Athena and the Furies, who, in the process, transformed themselves into the more benign Eumenides. Sophocles, Euripides, and later writers give slightly different versions of the story.

ORION: In Greek mythology, Orion was a famed Boeotian hunter. In one account he was the son of Poseidon; in others, he was born from the hide of an ox on which Zeus, Poseidon, and Hermes had urinated (hence his original name, Urion). Orion was blinded by Oenopion, whose daughter he had raped, but his vision was restored by the rising sun. Stories concerning Orion's death vary. The most common relates that as he attempted to assault Artemis, or one of her nymphs, he was stung by a scorpion sent by Apollo or by Artemis herself. Both the scorpion and Orion later became constellations.

ORPHEUS: In Greek mythology, Orpheus was a Thracian musician whose magical skill on the lyre enabled him to charm the trees, rivers, and stones, as well as wild beasts. He was the son of Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, and a Thracian river-god (some versions say Apollo). Orpheus married the nymph Eurydice, but she soon died, bitten on the heel by a snake. Her grieving husband followed her to the underworld and, by playing on his lyre, charmed the deities into releasing her. The one condition was that he should escort her back to the upper world without looking at her. He did look, however, and Eurydice disappeared. Rejecting all women thereafter, Orpheus was torn to pieces by Thracian women; in one version, he was dismembered by maenads at the urging of Dionysus, who resented Orpheus's advocacy of the worship of

Apollo: Orpheus's singing head and lyre floated to Lesbos, where an oracle of Orpheus was established.

Some legends make Orpheus the founder of the Orphic mysteries and the author of the sacred texts of that cult (see mystery cults). Orphism developed an elaborate cosmogony that focused on the killing and eating of Dionysus, son of Zeus, by the Titans, or Zeus's subsequent destruction of the Titans, from whose ashes arose the human race, part Dionysiac (divine and good) and part Titan (earthly and evil). Through initiation into the Orphic mysteries and by living an ascetic life of abstention from meat, wine, and sexual activity, individuals sought to suppress their earthly nature. Full liberation of the divine soul could be achieved only through a cycle of incarnations.



PALAMEDES: In Greek mythology, Palamedes was a hero of the Trojan War and was also credited with such inventions as the alphabet, numbers, measures, coinage, and the method for telling time. He was also noted for cunning. When Odysseus pleaded insanity to avoid fighting in the Trojan War, Palamedes exposed his trickery. In the Euripidean tragedy Odysseus sought revenge by hiding gold in Palamedes' tent and forging a letter from King Priam of Troy indicating that Palamedes would betray the Greeks for gold. The Greeks believed the forgery and stoned Palamedes to death.

In Arthurian legend Palamedes was a Saracen knight who was repeatedly defeated in both battle and love by Tristram, who converted him to Christianity.

PALLADIUM: In Greek mythology the Palladium was a wooden statue of the goddess Athena, or Pallas Athene, that was sent from heaven by Zeus to Dardanus, the founder of Troy. It was said to protect the city from enemies. During the Trojan War, Odysseus and Diomedes stole it, after which Troy fell to the Greeks. Roman myths relate that Aeneas brought the Palladium to Rome, where it was credited with the same protective powers that it had afforded Troy. It was kept in the temple of Vesta. Some accounts said there were actually two Palladia in Rome: the original, which was kept hidden, and a copy, which was displayed to deceive would-be thieves.

PAN: In Greek mythology, Pan, son of Hermes, was an Arcadian god of shepherds and their flocks, hunters, forests and wild life, and fertility--in essence, the god of nature. Portrayed as having the body of a man but the beard, horns, ears, and legs of a goat, Pan frequented lonely rustic areas and inspired terrible fear in travelers who encountered him (hence the word panic). He was playfully lecherous and continually chased the nymphs. When he was pursuing the nymph Syrinx, he reached out to embrace her and she vanished, leaving in her place a

bed of reeds. Pan fashioned these into a shepherd's pipe, or syrinx, which he often played.

PANDARUS: In Greek legend, Pandarus was a famous archer on the side of Troy in the Trojan War. In the Iliad, Pandarus breaks the truce between Greece and Troy, at the instigation of Athena, by shooting an arrow at Menelaus. He later wounds Diomedes and is killed by him. In the Aeneid, Pandarus is one of the companions of Aeneas on the flight from Troy. In medieval and Renaissance works about Troilus and Cressida--notably those by Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Dryden, which have no basis in classical lore--Pandarus is a procurer, hence the English term pander.

PANDORA: In Greek mythology, Pandora (meaning "all gifted") was the first woman on Earth, created by Zeus to plague mankind. The gods bestowed on her such gifts as beauty and charm but also gave her great curiosity. Zeus, seeking to punish man for accepting the gift of fire that Prometheus stole from heaven, gave Pandora a box containing all the troubles and diseases that the world now knows. She was warned not to open the box, but her curiosity overcame her. Only Hope remained inside the box as she quickly closed the lid again.

PARIS: In Greek mythology Paris was the handsome Trojan prince, son of Priam and Hecuba, whose seduction of Helen caused the Trojan War. As an infant Paris was exposed on a hillside and left to die by his parents because an oracle had predicted that he would bring about Troy's downfall. He was found and raised by some shepherds and, as a young man, returned to Troy. His athletic prowess was so great--he earned the epithet Alexandros or "champion"--that his true heritage was recognized, and he was reunited with his family.

PASIPHÄE: In Greek mythology, Pasiphae was the daughter of Helios and Perseis and sister of Circe. She married Minos, king of Crete, and by him bore Ariadne and Phaedra, among others. When Minos asked Poseidon for a bull to sacrifice, he was given a fine white one, but he substituted a lesser animal for the rite. Poseidon then caused Pasiphae to fall in love with

the white bull. The offspring of their union was the Minotaur, a half-bull, half-human monster that ate human flesh. Minos hid the Minotaur, and by some accounts Pasiphae, in a labyrinth. She cursed Minos so that all women would die after intercourse with him.

PATROCLUS: In Greek mythology, Patroclus was the son of Menoetius and the intimate companion of Achilles. In the tenth year of the Trojan War, Achilles withdrew from the fighting after a bitter dispute with Agamemnon. Without Achilles to lead the Greeks, the Trojans were able to push them to the sea. When Achilles remained adamant, Patroclus donned his friend's armor and led his Myrmidons into battle. Aided by Zeus, he drove the Trojans to the city walls but was killed by Hector. Achilles avenged him but was slain by Paris. The friends' ashes were placed in the same urn.

PEGASUS: In Greek mythology, Pegasus was the winged horse of the Muses, born of the blood of the decapitated Medusa. He was tamed by Bellerophon with the aid of a golden bridle given him by Athena. When Bellerophon tried to ride the horse to heaven, Pegasus, stung by a gadfly sent by Zeus, threw him and continued the ascent alone, becoming the constellation of the same name. A kick from his hoof created the fountain of Hippocrene, the source of poetic inspiration.

PELEUS: In Greek mythology, Peleus, son of Aeacus, was king of the Myrmidons in Thessaly and father of Achilles. He was banished twice, for killing his half-brother Phocus and for accidentally killing Eurytion at the Calydonian boar hunt. Challenged to a hunting contest by Acastus, Peleus won and was given the sea nymph Thetis. At their wedding Eris (discord) tossed an apple inscribed "For the fairest" among the goddesses, provoking the judgment of Paris and the Trojan War. Thetis left Peleus when he interrupted her attempt to make Achilles immortal by burning away his mortal parts. He became an Argonaut and outlived his famous son.

PELIAS: In Greek mythology, Pelias, son of Poseidon and Tyro, was the king of Thessaly or Iolcos who imposed on Jason the task of retrieving the Golden Fleece. Pelias had seized the throne from his twin, Neleus, and by some accounts murdered Aeson, the rightful heir, and Aeson's son. According to later legends, when Jason returned with the Fleece, he brought his wife, the enchantress Medea. Persuading Pelias that Hecate had given her powers that could rejuvenate him, Medea put him into a deep sleep and tricked his daughters into cutting his throat and dismembering his body.

PELOPS: In Greek mythology, Pelops was founder of the Pelopid dynasty at Mycenae; the Peloponnesus was named for him. As a child he was killed by his father Tantalus and served to the gods to test their omniscience. The gods restored Pelops to life, giving him an ivory shoulder to replace the one that Demeter--the only deity who did not recognize her fare--had eaten. Pelops won the hand of Hippodamia in a famous chariot race against her father, Oenomaus, king of Pisa in Elis. Pelops won the contest by driving winged horses given him by Poseidon and by bribing Myrtillus, Oenomaus's charioteer, to take a bolt out of his master's chariot. Oenomaus was killed, but Pelops drowned Myrtillus to avoid paying the bribe. As he was dying, Myrtillus cursed Pelops and his descendants. The misfortunes of the house of Atreus, Pelops's son, were attributed to this curse.

PENELOPE: In Greek mythology Penelope was the faithful wife of Odysseus, king of Ithaca. During Odysseus's 20-year absence, Penelope was besieged by an ardent band of suitors. Neither she nor her son Telemachus ever quite gave up hope of Odysseus's return, however, so she devised a clever scheme to keep her suitors at bay. Announcing that she would remarry as soon as she finished weaving a funeral shroud for her aged father-in-law, Laertes, Penelope unraveled it secretly every night. After 3 years of this deception, her maids revealed her secret, but, when all seemed lost, Odysseus returned and, with the aid of Telemachus, slew his wife's suitors.

PERSEPHONE: In Greek mythology, Persephone (also called Kore) was the beautiful daughter of Zeus and Demeter who

represented both nature's growth cycle and death. Hades, god of the underworld and brother of Zeus, was lonely in his underworld kingdom; therefore Zeus, without consulting Demeter, told him to take Persephone as his wife. Thus, as Persephone was picking flowers one day, Hades came out of the earth and carried her off to be his queen. While the grieving Demeter, goddess of grain, searched for her daughter, the earth became a barren wasteland. Zeus finally obtained Persephone's release, but because she had eaten a pomegranate seed in the underworld, she was obliged to spend four months (winter) of each year there, during which time barrenness returned to the earth. With her mother, Persephone was a central cult figure in the Eleusinian mysteries.

PERSEUS: In Greek mythology, Perseus, the son of Zeus and Danae, was the hero of many exciting adventures. Danae's father, King Acrisius, fearing the fulfillment of a prophecy that he would die at the hands of his grandson, tried to dispose of mother and child by enclosing them in a chest and throwing them into the sea. The chest floated to safety on the island of Seriphos, where Perseus grew to manhood. Its ruler, King Polydectes, fell in love with Danae and schemed to get rid of Perseus. He set Perseus the almost impossible task of killing the Gorgon Medusa. With the aid of a cap that made him invisible, Perseus succeeded in slaying the monster.

In Ethiopia, before reaching home, he encountered Andromeda, whom he saved from a fearful sea monster and then took as a bride. After returning to Seriphos, he rescued his mother from Polydectes by turning him to stone with Medusa's head and then gave the head to the goddess Athena. Later, while participating in athletic games, Perseus threw a discus far beyond its target, hitting and killing Acrisius, who was a spectator. Thus the prophecy was fulfilled. As king of Tiryns, Perseus founded the city of Mycenae, and through his son Perses became the legendary founder of the Persian empire. After his death, according to a later version of the myth, Zeus immortalized Perseus by placing him and Andromeda in the sky as constellations.

PHAEDRA: In Greek mythology, Phaedra was the daughter of Minos, king of Crete, and Pasiphae, daughter of Helios; Ariadne was one of her siblings. Phaedra married Theseus, aging king of Athens and former lover of Ariadne, and was caused by the goddess Aphrodite to fall in love with Theseus's son (by Hippolyte) Hippolytus, who rejected her. Angry, Phaedra falsely accused Hippolytus in a note to Theseus, then hanged herself in remorse.

PHAETHON: In Greek mythology, Phaethon, the son of Helios, persuaded his father to let him drive the chariot of the sun for a day. He lost control of the horses, however, and they rushed too near the earth, burning the large area that is today known as the Sahara Desert. Zeus struck Phaethon dead with a thunderbolt to prevent him from burning up the entire planet.

PHILOCTETES: The Greek legendary hero Philoctetes was the recipient of Hercules' famous bow and poisoned arrows. On the way to fight in the Trojan War, Philoctetes was bitten by a serpent. His cries of pain and the smell of the festering wound led the Greeks to abandon him on the island of Lemnos. When a captured Trojan seer told the Greeks that they could not conquer Troy without Hercules' bow and arrows, Odysseus and Neoptolemus went to Lemnos, healed Philoctetes' wound, and brought him to battle.

PHILOMELA AND PROCNE: In Greek mythology, Philomela and Procne were the daughters of King Pandion of Attica. Procne married the Thracian king Tereus, who raped Philomela and cut out her tongue to silence her. Philomela managed to tell her sister what happened by weaving the story into some cloth. Procne then punished Tereus by feeding him their son, Itys. The sisters fled, with Tereus in pursuit. The gods intervened by changing Tereus into a hawk (or hoopoe), Procne into a swallow, and Philomela into a nightingale.

PIRITHOUS: In Greek mythology, Pirithous was king of the Lapiths in Thessaly and husband of Hippodamia. Pirithous invaded Attica to do battle with Theseus, but the two men

instead vowed eternal friendship. After Hippodamia's death, they resolved to marry daughters of Zeus. Pirithous helped Theseus kidnap Helen of Troy, and Theseus accompanied Pirithous to Hades to abduct Persephone. Hades, Persephone's husband, tricked the men into sitting on a magic bench from which they could not arise. Hercules later pulled Theseus from the bench but could not free Pirithous. In some accounts, Pirithous was also rescued.

PLEIADES: In Greek mythology, the Pleiades were seven nymphs, the daughters of Atlas and Pleione: Maia, Electra, and Taygete, each of whom bore a child to Zeus; Celaeno, who bore Poseidon's child; Merope, wife of Sisyphus; Sterope, who bore Ares' child; and Alcyone. While hunting with Artemis, they encountered Orion, who pursued them until Zeus engineered their escape by turning them into a constellation. In Roman mythology, they were called the Vergiliae.

PLUTO: In Greek mythology, Pluto, or Pluton (also known as Hades), was a god both of death and of fertility or abundance. The name Pluto means "rich one," and the Romans derived Dis (from dives, "rich"), their god of the dead, from Pluto. Pluto helped his brothers Zeus and Poseidon depose their father, Cronus, as the ruler of the universe, which they then divided among themselves. Pluto's realm, the house of Hades, is usually located beneath the earth, though sometimes in the west.

POLYHYMNIA: In Greek mythology, Polyhymnia is one of the nine muses, the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (memory) who personify the highest aspirations of art and intellect. According to various accounts, Polyhymnia is the patron of religious dance, sacred poetry (hymns to the gods), or geometry. She was said to be the mother of Triptolemus, the first priest of Demeter and inventor of agriculture, of the hero Orpheus, or of Eros, the god of love. In art Polyhymnia is usually represented in a meditative attitude, heavily draped, without an attribute. Her name also appears as Polymnia or Polymnis.

POLYPHEMUS: In Greek mythology, Polyphemus was a Cyclops, a one-eyed giant, who lived in an island cave on Sicily. According to Homer's *Odyssey*, Polyphemus imprisoned Odysseus and six of his men, devouring the remaining six. To escape, Odysseus made Polyphemus drunk and then blinded him with a burning pole. When Polyphemus let his flock out to graze, Odysseus tied the sheep three abreast, and each man escaped, suspended from the belly of an animal in the middle of a group of three. By these actions Odysseus earned the hatred of Poseidon, father of Polyphemus.

POSEIDON: In Greek mythology, Poseidon was the god of the sea and of earthquakes. Son of Cronus and Rhea and brother of Zeus, he has been portrayed as a violent and powerful god who was involved in many battles. His chief weapon was the trident, a three-pronged spear, and he was closely associated with bulls, horses, and dolphins. Although married to Amphitrite, granddaughter of Oceanus, Poseidon was renowned for his many love affairs. One of his conquests was Medusa, when she was still a beautiful woman. After he made love to her in one of Athena's temples, the virgin goddess turned Medusa into a hideous creature and helped Perseus to slay her. Pegasus, who sprang from Medusa's blood, was Poseidon's issue. The Mycenaean worshiped Poseidon as their principal deity.

PRIAM: In Greek legend Priam was king of Troy during the Trojan War. He was portrayed in Homer's *Iliad* as a gentle, revered old man, the father of many sons and daughters, whose most famous act was the attempt to ransom the body of his son Hector, slain by Achilles. Moved by Priam's grief, Achilles yielded the body. When the Greeks sacked Troy, Priam was killed by Neoptolemus, Achilles' son.

PRIAPHUS: In Greek mythology, Priapus was the son of Aphrodite and Dionysus. Portrayed as a grotesque little man with a huge phallus, he was associated particularly with fertility rites and also protected crops and gardens from animals, birds, and thieves.

Neptune (mythology)



PROCRUSTES: In Greek legend, Procrustes was a giant outlaw who lived near the road to Athens. He would offer travelers hospitality, then force them to lie on an iron bed. If they were shorter or taller than the bed, he would stretch them on a rack or lop off their limbs until they fit. The English word *procrustean* signifies conformity at any cost. Theseus killed Procrustes by his own methods. He also killed Procrustes' son, Sinis, called the Pine-Bender because he would tie his victims to bent pines and watch their bodies fly apart when the trees were released. Procrustes is also called Polypemon or Damastes.

PROMETHEUS: In Greek mythology, Prometheus ("Forethought") was the Titan who stole fire from the gods and gave it to humans, along with all human arts and civilization. He was also variously regarded as the creator of man (from clay), the first mortal man (along with his brother Epimetheus), and humanity's preserver against the threats of Zeus, whom he greatly offended by his actions. In Hesiod's version, Zeus' punishment was the creation of Pandora, the first woman, who unleashed on the world all its woes. In the Aeschylean version, Prometheus Bound, Zeus had Prometheus chained to a rock on Mount Caucasus, where an eagle ate away at his liver, starting afresh each day after the liver had grown back during the night. One source has Prometheus eventually freed by Hercules and brought to Olympus to join the gods he had defied.

PROTEUS: In Greek mythology, Proteus was a sea god, the keeper of the seals of Poseidon, with the ability to assume various shapes. Whoever could bind him during his noontime sleep to keep him from changing shape could oblige him to foretell the future. In the Odyssey, Menelaus held onto Proteus until he informed him how to return to Sparta. The word *protean* is derived from his name.

PSYCHE: In Greek and Roman mythology, Psyche was a beautiful maiden who won the love of Cupid (Eros). He visited her each night but made her pledge never to look upon his divine countenance. Overcome by curiosity, she shone a light on him while he slept. A drop of oil woke him, and he vanished.

Psyche begged Venus for help in finding him, but Venus, jealous of Psyche's beauty, assigned her several impossible tasks. At last, with Jupiter's help, Cupid and Psyche were reunited and married, and Psyche became immortal.

PYGMALION: In Greek mythology Pygmalion was the subject of two separate legends. In one he was the king of Cyprus who sculpted an ivory statue of a woman and then fell in love with it. In answer to his prayers Aphrodite gave life to the statue, whom Pygmalion called Galatea. She bore him a son, Paphos. Ovid tells this story in *Metamorphoses*.

PYTHON: In Greek mythology, Python was a serpent that dwelt in the caves of Mount Parnassus and was slain by Apollo, who then founded the sacred oracle at Delphi or took it over from Python's guardianship. According to one version, a jealous Hera sent Python to harm Leto, impregnated by Zeus. Zeus helped Leto escape, and soon afterward she bore Apollo and Artemis. When Apollo was still an infant, he avenged the wrong done his mother by slaying Python with his arrows, which he had never before used against any but the most feeble animals. He then took the name Pythius and organized the Pythian Games--which tested a man in strength, swiftness of foot, and chariot racing--to celebrate his victory. In other versions Apollo killed Python simply because it would not allow him to found the oracle.



RHADAMANTHUS: In Greek mythology, Rhadamanthus was the son of Zeus and Europa and one of the judges of the underworld (Hades).

RHEA: In Greek mythology, Rhea was one of the Titans, the daughter of Uranus and his mother Gaea, whose position as goddess of the Earth she assumed. Rhea is also known as the "mother of the gods" because she and her brother Cronus were the parents of the original gods of Olympus: Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon, and Zeus. Cronus tried to swallow all of his children as potential usurpers, but the brood was rescued by the trickery of Rhea, Gaea, and eventually Zeus, whom the goddesses had rescued beforehand. Rhea was identified with the Anatolian goddess Cybele, and her worship spread across Greece and eventually to Rome.



SARPEDON: In Greek mythology Sarpedon was a son of Zeus and Laodamia, daughter of Bellerophon. According to Homer's *Iliad*, Sarpedon led the Lycians, allies of the Trojans, in the Trojan War. He was killed by Patroclus, but Zeus ordered Apollo to retrieve his body and carry it to Lycia for a hero's burial. In later Greek tradition Sarpedon was the son of Zeus and Europa.

SATYR: In Greek mythology satyrs were immortal creatures of the forest and hills and symbols of nature's wealth. Usually identified with the sileni (see *Sileneus*), the satyrs were attendants of Dionysus. They had the head, arms, and torso of a man and the horns, ears, and hind legs of a goat (in Attic art, satyrs had horses' tails). Satyrs loved to frolic, drink, chase nymphs, and play reed instruments. Their Latin counterparts were fauns (see *Faunus*).

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS: In Greek mythology, Scylla and Charybdis were two sea monsters who lived in caves on opposite sides of the Straits of Messina, separating Italy and Sicily; they devoured sailors from passing ships. Scylla, originally a beautiful nymph, had been loved by Glaucus. When Glaucus asked Circe to give Scylla a love potion, the jealous sorceress instead gave her a poison that turned her into a monster with 6 heads, 12 feet, and loins girded with the heads of baying dogs. Charybdis personified a dreadful whirlpool, sucking in and spewing out the sea 3 times a day. Different versions of the myth give varying details.

SELENE: In early Greek mythology Selene was goddess of the Moon. She was later identified with Artemis and, to a lesser extent, Hecate. According to two separate legends, she was wooed by Pan with a fleece and loved the shepherd Endymion.

SEMELE: In Greek mythology Semele was a beautiful daughter of Cadmus who won the love of Zeus. To gain revenge, his jealous wife, Hera, appeared to Semele in the guise of her old nurse and persuaded her to demand that Zeus come to her in his divine form. Since Zeus was the god of thunder, Semele was consumed by lightning when she saw him. Zeus rescued their unborn child, Dionysus, by sewing him up in his thigh. Dionysus later retrieved Semele from the underworld, and she lived among the gods under the name Thyone.

SEVEN AGAINST THEBES: In Greek mythology, the Seven against Thebes were heroes, all but one of whom died in their war on Thebes. Eteocles and Polyneices, twin sons of King Oedipus of Thebes, exiled their father and agreed to rule the city in alternate years. When Eteocles, the elder, refused to yield power, Polyneices enlisted the aid of his father-in-law, King Adrastus of Argos. They raised an army to march on Thebes, led by seven heroes-Polyneices, Adrastus, Amphiaraus, Capaneus, Hippomedon, Parthenopaeus, and Tydeus (in one version). After prolonged fighting Polyneices and Eteocles killed each other in direct combat. Adrastus was the sole survivor of the seven. He later led the sons of the heroes in a second, successful attack on Thebes.

SIBYL: In classical mythology sibyls were female prophets whose ecstatic utterances were inspired by Apollo. Early accounts refer to one individual, a famous prophetess of great age whose name was Sibylla. By the late 4th century BC, however, the name had become a title for as many as ten prophetesses. The sibyl of Cumae was said to have offered Tarquinius Superbus, one of the later kings of Rome, nine books of prophecies on Rome's destiny in return for half the king's fortune. When he answered that the price was too high, she burned three books and offered him the other six at the same price. Finally, she burned three more, and he paid the original price for the remaining three. The Sibylline books were placed in the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill and were consulted in times of emergency.

SILENUS: In Greek mythology, Silenus (often referred to in the plural as the sileni and identified with the satyrs) was a shaggy, bearded, potbellied old man with a horse's ears who rode an ass and was usually drunk. He was the guardian, tutor, and constant companion of the god Dionysus.

Silens had the gift of prophecy and could charm humans and animals with his song. King Midas once captured Silenus, so that he might gain some of the latter's wisdom. When the king returned him to Dionysus, the god rewarded (or punished) Midas by giving him the ability to turn whatever he touched into gold.

SIRENS: In Greek mythology, the Sirens sang melodies so beautiful that sailors passing their rocky island were lured to shipwreck and death. Homer, in the *Odyssey*, mentioned two Sirens; later, in the tales of the Argonauts, three are mentioned, each having the head of a woman and the body of a bird. Odysseus ordered his men to stop their ears with beeswax so that they could not hear the Sirens' songs and to tie him to the ship's mast so that he could not swim ashore. Jason and the Argonauts were saved when Orpheus, who accompanied them, played music that was even more enchanting. The jealous Sirens then jumped to their deaths in the sea.

SISYPHUS: In Greek mythology Sisyphus, the wily son of Aeolus and king of Corinth, outwitted even Death. When Death came to fetch him, Sisyphus bound him in chains so that no one could die until Zeus freed him. Sisyphus then went to Hades, but he had previously instructed his wife to give him an improper burial and was allowed to return to Earth in order to settle this matter. He then refused to return to Hades. When Death finally claimed him, Sisyphus was condemned eternally to roll a heavy stone to the top of a hill, only to have it fall back each time.

STYX: In Greek mythology the Styx was the river that separated Hades from the land of the living; it was crossed in a boat ferried by Charon. Styx personified as a nymph aided Zeus in

the war between the gods and the Titans. As a reward, her name became sacred and the gods swore their most solemn oaths by it.

AUTHOR
of Zeus
adulation
to become
a story. Fancied
as tableaux
or novels, or
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Author
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gods.

T

TANTALUS: In Greek mythology, Tantalus was a son of Zeus and father of Pelops and Niobe. He was admitted to the company of the gods and permitted to become immortal by eating their food. Depending on the story, Tantalus either stole ambrosia and nectar from the gods' table and fed the sacred food to mortals, or divulged divine secrets, or served his murdered son, Pelops, to the gods to test their omniscience. As punishment, he was condemned to stand eternally in water that receded when he tried to drink and to see beautiful boughs of fruit that bent just beyond his reach when he tried to eat. A great stone, hanging over his head, continuously threatened him. The word tantalize is derived from his name.

TARTARUS: In Greek mythology, Tartarus was variously the lowest region of the underworld or synonymous with the underworld (Hades), where Uranus banished his rebellious sons, the Cyclopes, and according to Homer, Zeus later confined the defeated Titans. According to one creation myth, based on Hesiod, Tartarus was born of the union of air and mother earth; the giants, of the union of Tartarus and earth. A grove of black poplars along the ocean stream marks the entrance to Tartarus, which is bounded on the west by the Styx.

TELAMON: In Greek mythology, Telamon was the son of Aeacus, king of Aegina, who banished him and his brother Peleus for murdering their half-brother Phocus. Telamon settled in Salamis, married Glauce, daughter of King Cychreus, and succeeded to the throne. By his second wife, Eriboea, he sired Aias, or Ajax. Telamon sailed with the Argonauts, joined the Calydonian boar hunt, and aided Hercules in the sack of Troy, for which he was awarded Hesione as a concubine. She bore him Teucer, who became a fine archer in the second Trojan War. When Teucer returned after Ajax killed himself, Telamon banished him.

TELEGONUS: In Greek mythology, Telegonus was the son of Odysseus and the sorceress Circe, born during one of Odysseus's stops on his way home to Ithaca from the Trojan War. When Telegonus was grown, Circe sent him to find his father. He raided Ithaca in ignorance and unknowingly killed Odysseus, fulfilling a prophecy. Telegonus took the body of Odysseus back to Circe, accompanied by Odysseus's wife, Penelope, and son Telemachus. He married Penelope, and Circe made them immortal. In some accounts Circe married Telemachus. Telegonus is credited with founding Praeneste, and perhaps Tusculum, in Latium.

TELEMACHUS: In Greek legend, Telemachus is the son of Odysseus and Penelope. He appears rarely outside of Homer's Odyssey, but throughout that work he is seen to develop from an untried youth to an able ally of his father, principally through his dealings with Penelope's suitors. By the time he is reunited with Odysseus, with the aid of Athena he has become a man of wit and courage. When Odysseus is killed by Telegonus, his son by the sorceress Circe, Telemachus accompanies the body to Circe's island, marries her, and fathers a son. Circe makes him immortal. Later traditions vary from this account.

TERPSICHORE: In Greek mythology, Terpsichore is one of the nine muses, the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (memory) who came to personify the highest aspirations of art and intellect. Terpsichore is the muse of lyric poetry and the dance, including choral dance and the dramatic chorus that developed from it. According to some traditions, she also educated the young. By the last days of Greek religion her patronage had been limited to lyric poetry. In art Terpsichore carries a lyre and sometimes wears a crown of laurel. By some accounts she gave birth to the Sirens, who were sired by Achelous.

TETHYS: In Greek mythology, Tethys was a Titan, daughter of Uranus and Gaea. She was the consort of her brother, Oceanus, and bore him 3,000 sons, the river gods, as well as 3,000

daughters, sea and river nymphs. Under the supervision of Apollo these nymphs protected young men until they came into their prime. Oceanus and Tethys supported Zeus in his war against the other Titans. Tethys considered Hera her foster child, and at Hera's request arranged it so that the Great Bear, the constellation of Hera's rival Callisto, revolves eternally around the Pole Star, never descending into the stream of Oceanus to rest.

TEUCER: In Greek legend, Teucer was the bastard son of Telamon and his concubine Hesione. An expert archer in the Trojan War, he often shot from the shelter of the huge shield carried by his half-brother, Aias (Ajax). He killed many Trojans. While Teucer was on an expedition, Ajax killed himself when the armor of the dead Achilles was awarded to Odysseus. Teucer defied Agamemnon and Menelaus to bury Ajax properly, but when he returned from the war his father would not let him land because he had not prevented his brother's suicide. Eventually Teucer built a new city in Cyprus and founded a dynasty of kings. Teucer is also the name of the first mythical king of Troy.

THALIA: In Greek mythology, Thalia is one of the nine muses, the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (memory) who came to personify the highest aspirations of art and intellect. She is the patron of comedy. In art, Thalia is usually depicted with a mask carried by comic actors and a shepherd's crook, sometimes wearing an ivy wreath. According to some accounts, the corybants were the children of Thalia and Apollo. Thalia was also the name of one of the Graces and one of the Nereids (see nymphs).

THANATOS: In Greek mythology, Thanatos was the god of death. He dwelt with his brother Hypnos (Sleep) in the underworld and is portrayed as winged, bearded, and holding a sword. He was said to be the only god who shunned sacrificial offerings.

THEMIS: In Greek mythology, Themis was a Titan, daughter of Uranus and Gaea. She was the second wife of Zeus, and by him gave birth to the moirae (Fates) and the horae (Seasons). By her original husband, the Titan Iapetus, she was the mother of Prometheus. According to early myths, Themis received from Gaea the oracle of Delphi. She told Deucalion and Pyrrha how to repopulate the world and foretold the future for Prometheus. In later mythology she was counselor rather than consort to Zeus, sitting beside him on the throne to preside over justice and order. She finally became a personification of law and custom.

THESEUS: In Greek mythology Theseus was usually regarded as the hero who organized Athens into a city, became its first true king, and set it upon the path of civilization. The son of either Aegeus, king of Athens, or Poseidon and Aethra, Theseus was born and grew up in Troezen, in Argolis. On his way from Troezen to Athens to claim his patrimony, he performed six labors, all but one of which involved killing robbers and murderers by their own methods. He killed (1) Periphetes with his own bronze club; (2) another robber named Sinis by tying his arms and legs to two bent pine trees and then releasing the trees to tear him apart; (3) the wild sow of Crommyon; (4) the robber Sciron, by throwing him off the cliff he had used for his victims; (5) the cruel wrestler Cercyon with wrestling techniques; and (6) Procrustes by his own method of torture, fitting victims to a bed by cutting off the legs of those too tall to fit or racking those too short. At last, Theseus arrived in Athens and was greeted by his father Aegeus and his stepmother Medea. Jealous of his influence over Aegeus, Medea tried to kill Theseus by sending him to rid the plain of Marathon of a wild bull; once Theseus had sacrificed the bull to Apollo, Medea tried to poison him. Aegeus saw through her plot, and Medea escaped to Asia.

Further adventures of Theseus were killing the Minotaur in Crete with the aid of Ariadne, whom he loved and later deserted at Naxos; becoming king of Athens upon the death of Aegeus and uniting the Attic communities into a single state; assisting Oedipus in his last, blind days; warring against the

Amazons and abducting their queen, Hippolyta (or Antiope), by whom he had a son Hippolytus; kidnapping Helen of Troy with Piritheus, king of the Lapiths, and then trying to kidnap Persephone from the underworld, for which Hades punished them by chaining them to a bench (Theseus was eventually rescued by Hercules); and marrying Phaedra, Ariadne's sister, who made improper advances toward Hippolytus and who, after falsely accusing Hippolytus, hanged herself. Banished from Athens after a descendant of an old king of Athens stirred up a conspiracy against him, Theseus went to Skyros, where King Lycomedes pushed him off a cliff to his death. Later, Cimon of Athens recovered the body of Theseus and reburied it in Athens. Many other deeds were ascribed to Theseus, several of them paralleling feats of Hercules, such as participating in the voyage of the Argonauts and the Calydonian boar hunt. Theseus was also credited with founding the Isthmian Games, held every 2 years in Corinth, in honor of the god Poseidon.

THETIS: In Greek mythology Thetis, mother of Achilles, was a sea goddess attended by the Nereids and beloved by both Zeus and Poseidon. Neither would marry her, however, because an oracle had decreed that she would bear a son mightier than his father. Thetis married King Peleus and, according to Homer, when Achilles was born, she resolved to make him invulnerable by dipping him into the River Styx. Only his heel, by which she held him, could thereafter be pierced successfully by a weapon.

THYESTES: In Greek mythology, Thyestes, king of Mycenae, was the son of Pelops and Hippodamia and the brother and rival of Atreus. After he seduced his brother's wife, Aerope, she had twin sons. Atreus killed and cooked them and served their flesh to Thyestes, who subsequently pronounced a curse on the house of Atreus. The blood feud continued until Aegisthus, product of an incestuous union between Thyestes and his own daughter Pelopia, seduced Clytemnestra and murdered her husband, Agamemnon, son of Atreus, only to be killed in revenge by Agamemnon's son Orestes. Athena intervened, purified Orestes, and put an end to that particular feud.

TIRESIAS: In Greek mythology Tiresias was a blind Theban soothsayer. According to one legend Athena blinded him when he accidentally came upon her bathing. His mother, the nymph Chariclo, begged for mercy; so Athena gave him the power of prophecy, as well as a golden staff to guide him in walking. Another tale relates how Tiresias, who had been changed into a woman and then back into a man, was asked to settle a quarrel between Zeus and Hera about which sex enjoyed love more. He said woman, angering Hera, who then blinded him. Zeus compensated him by giving him long life and the gift of prophecy, but Hera decreed that no one would believe his predictions.

TISIPHONE: In Greek mythology, Tisiphone is one of the three Furies (later called the Eumenides), born of the blood that fell on Gaea (Earth) when Cronus castrated Uranus. Tisiphone is the avenger; her sisters are Alecto (the unresting) and Megaera (the jealous). Ancient personifications, they antedate the Olympian gods. Tisiphone avenges violations of the natural order, such as patricide. The scourge of the Underworld, she persecutes the guilty who escaped punishment on Earth. When Aeneas journeyed in Hades seeking his father, he saw Tisiphone sitting on a crag in a bloody robe. Tisiphone is also the name of Alcmaeon's daughter.

TITANS: In Greek mythology, the Titans were the 12 offspring of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaea (Earth). In Hesiod's Theogony their names are given as Oceanus, the stream surrounding the world; Coeus; Crius; Hyperion, sometimes regarded as a sun god; Iapetus, known as the father of Prometheus and Atlas in some myths; Thea, who was apparently associated with the sky; Rhea, who married Cronus and mothered the original Olympian gods; Themis, sometimes listed as an earth goddess and an early wife of Zeus, who bore him the Hours and the Fates; Mnemosyne ("Memory"), mother, by Zeus, of the nine Muses; Phoebe, later identified with the moon; Tethys, sometimes associated with water; and Cronus, the most famous of the group, who castrated and killed his father and later led

the Titans in their losing war against Zeus and the Olympians. Several authors, including Vergil, pictured the Titans in the section of the underworld called Tartarus, where they underwent lasting torment because of their sins against the gods.

TITHONUS: In Greek mythology, Tithonus was the son of Laomedon and brother of Priam, king of Troy. He was a beautiful youth. Eos, the dawn, fell in love with him and carried him off, and he fathered two of her sons, Memnon and Emathion. In the Trojan War, Priam bribed Tithonus to send Memnon to the Trojans, and Memnon was killed. Eos persuaded Zeus to grant Tithonus immortality, but she forgot to ask for perpetual youth as well. He aged and withered and shriveled until there was little left but his shrill voice, ceaselessly talking, and he was transformed into a cicada.

TRITON: In Greek mythology, Triton, a gigantic sea god, part man and part fish, was the son of Amphitrite and Poseidon. He raised rocks from the sea and created islands with his trident, and he blew on a trumpet made from a conch shell. Triton freed Aeneas's ships when they were grounded in a storm, but when Misenus, Aeneas's main trumpeter, challenged Triton to a musical contest, Triton drowned him.

TYCHE: In Greek mythology, Tyche was the goddess of chance, later identified with the Roman goddess Fortuna. By some accounts she was the daughter of Zeus, who gave her the power to decide the lot of individual mortals. A capricious dispenser of good luck and bad, Tyche was invoked in risky situations--including athletic contests, love, and seafaring--and was considered a moderating influence on overprosperous men. In art she is sometimes depicted with wings and a crown, sometimes blindfolded and carrying devices signifying uncertainty or risk, such as a wheel of fortune.

U

UNDINE: In folklore, Undine was a water nymph who could acquire a soul by marrying a mortal. If her lover proved unfaithful, however, she had to return to the sea. The legend is the subject of many dramas, and Hans Christian Andersen used it as the basis for his tale of the Little Mermaid. The name also appears as Ondine.

URANIA: In Greek mythology, Urania is one of the nine muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (memory) who came to personify the highest aspirations in art and intellect. She is the muse of astronomy, astrology, and celestial forces, sometimes the arbiter of fate. Although Urania had no individual mythology, she was quite popular, second only to Calliope among the muses. According to some accounts, she was the mother of the poet Linus by Apollo, and perhaps of Hymenaeus by Dionysus. In art, Urania's attributes include a globe and a pair of compasses for tracking the course of the stars.

URANUS: In Greek mythology, Uranus represented the sky or heaven. He was both the son and husband of Gaea, the Earth, by whom he fathered first the hundred-handed giants and the Cyclops, whom he banished to Tartarus, and later the Titans. Gaea, angry because her children were imprisoned, set the Titans against Uranus. Cronus, their leader, castrated Uranus and succeeded him as ruler of the universe. According to Hesiod's Theogony, Aphrodite was born of the foam of Uranus's discarded genitals as they fell in the sea. Blood falling from the wound on Earth engendered the Furies.



XANTHUS AND BALIUS: In Greek legend, Xanthus and Balia were a pair of immortal horses born of Zephyrus, the west wind, and the harpy Podarge. Their names mean "Bay" and "Piebald." Poseidon gave the horses to Peleus, father of Achilles, and Achilles took them to the Trojan War. Patroclus drove them into battle, and they wept when he was killed by Hector. When Achilles reproached them for allowing Patroclus to die, Hera endowed the horses with the power of speech and Xanthus reminded Achilles that Apollo had decreed that death to give glory to Hector. He also foretold Achilles' death before the Furies struck him dumb.

Z

ZEPHYRUS: In Greek mythology, Zephyrus (or Zephyr), son of Eos and Astraeus, was the personification of the west wind, gentlest and most welcome of all winds. He loved Chloris, goddess of flowers, or of spring, who bore him a son, Carpus, though in some accounts he is married to Iris, goddess of the rainbow. By Podarge the harpy he sired the immortal horses Xanthus and Balios. Zephyrus is a subordinate figure in a few legends. Falling in love with Hyacinthus, he grew jealous of the youth's attraction to Apollo and caused Apollo's discus to swerve and kill Hyacinthus. The Romans identified their west wind, Favonius, with Zephyrus.

ZEUS: In Greek mythology, Zeus was the principal god of the pantheon and the ultimate ruler of heaven and Earth and of all gods and humankind. The youngest son of the Titan Cronus, Zeus escaped the fate of his siblings. Cronus had swallowed them in fear that one would grow up to depose him, but Zeus was hidden on Crete by his mother, Rhea, who had given her husband a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes in place of her infant son. When Zeus reached manhood he reappeared and, by means of a trick, caused Cronus to vomit up Poseidon, Hades, and the rest of his swallowed offspring. Led by Zeus, they fought a successful war against Cronus and his fellow Titans. Cronus was banished to Tartarus, a subterranean region, and Zeus and his siblings established their residence atop Mount Olympus and assumed power.

Zeus was married to his sister Hera. He had, however, many casual affairs with mortal women as well as goddesses, and he fathered innumerable children. Among them were the brilliant god Apollo, Helen of Troy, and the warlike goddess Athena, who sprang fully armed from his forehead without benefit of a mother.

Originally identified as a sky and weather god, Zeus had control over meteorological phenomena. His traditional weapon was the thunderbolt. Considered the "righteous

Statue of Zeus at Olympia



governor of the world," Zeus saw all that humankind did and punished their wrongdoing.

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