

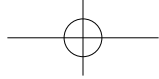


UNIT

3

Titanic and Olympian Genealogy





In Greek myth, the Titans and the Olympians were the two most important generations of the divine family. The strife between father and son, husband and wife, the old and the young, the male and the female, made up the history and genealogy of the Greek gods and goddesses.



A SURVEY OF THE DIVINE FAMILY

Uranus and Cronus

Mother Earth Gaia gave birth to Pontus (Ocean), which covered a large part of her body, and Uranus, the sky. Later Gaia and Uranus fell in love with each other. With Uranus, Gaia first gave birth to the Hecatoncheires, or the three Hundred-handed Ones. The three Cyclopes were born soon after, and Uranus looked at them with disgust: giants with one eye set in the middle of their forehead, and imperfect bodies made from flesh. He took the Hundred-handed Ones and the Cyclopes to the deepest caves within Gaia and locked them up, so they would no longer offend his eyes. Gaia loved her children, and tried time and time again to set them free, but Uranus always stopped her.

Her next brood was the 12 Titans, upon whom Uranus looked in awe. They possessed beauty beyond all comprehension, and were as tall as mountains. Uranus loved them, and treated them very well. Gaia would often tell them of their brothers who were locked away deep within the earth, and ask for their help to free them. The only Titan that was brave enough to stand up against their father was Cronus, the youngest. For him, Gaia made a sickle out of her hardest flint, sharp enough to cut through anything. Together the two of them made a plan to overthrow Uranus, and to free Gaia's children.

One night Uranus returned to lie beside Gaia, and quickly fell asleep. Cronus silently crept up to his sleeping father, raised the sickle, and in one sharp blow severed Uranus' genitals, flinging them into the ocean. Uranus poured out great



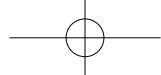
amounts of blood from his wound. The god became so weakened that he rose high above the earth, never to reach low onto Gaia again. As his blood fell onto the earth and mixed with the soil, it brought forth the Giants and the Furies. At this time the waves were lapping over Gaia, creating froth. As one drop of Uranus' blood, or, as many say, Uranus' genitals, mixed with the sea foam, the goddess Aphrodite was born and came into existence. Before Uranus fled to the farthest reaches of the universe, he swore to Cronus that some day one of his, i.e. Cronus', children would overthrow him, just as he had done to his own father, for crime begets crime.

Now that Uranus was out of the way, Cronus took his youngest sister Rhea as his queen, and established his kingdom on the summit of Mount Olympus. Gaia, his mother, reminded him to release his brothers that were locked away. Cronus followed Gaia down to the caves where the monsters were kept, and was repulsed when he found them. He refused to release such ugly things onto his perfect earth, and forbade Gaia to release them. Gaia was furious that Cronus had deceived her, and vowed to avenge at all costs. She knew that all she had to do was to remain patient, for one day Uranus' prophecy would be fulfilled.

Gaia's Children

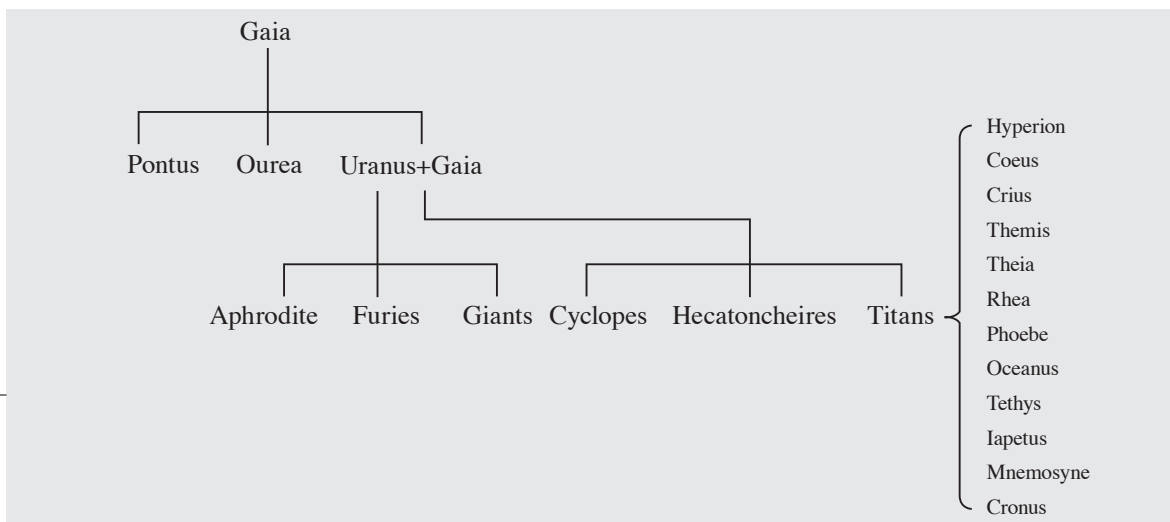
As mentioned above, Gaia, Mother Earth, gave birth to the Ocean and the Sky all by herself. And with her son Uranus, she had the Hecatoncheires and the Cyclopes. Her youngest children by Uranus were 12 in number, 6 male and 6 female. The gods were Oceanus¹, Coeus², Crius³, Hyperion⁴, Iapetus⁵ and Cronus, and the goddesses were Theia (Thea), Rhea, Themis⁶, Phoebe, Tethys and Mnemosyne. They are generally referred to as the elder gods or Titans, whose

- 1 Oceanus was, according to the ancients, the great stream of water that encircled the world, and later it was called the Outer Sea (the Atlantic Ocean). Oceanus was also one of the twelve Titans, and the husband of Tethys. They together gave birth to three thousand Oceanids and rivers.
- 2 Coeus was the husband of Phoebe (the moon goddess), the father of Leto and Asteria, and the grandfather of Artemis and Apollo.
- 3 Also called Creus, Crius was the father of Astraeus, Pallas, and Perses by Eurybia.
- 4 Hyperion was the husband of Theia, and the father of the sun, moon and dawn. He is often referred to as the sun itself.
- 5 Iapetus was the husband of Themis or Clymene (daughter of Oceanus and Tethys), and the father of Atlas, Menoetius, Epimetheus and Prometheus.
- 6 Themis was first the wife of Iapetus, then wife of Zeus. Her famous son by Iapetus was Prometheus. By Zeus, she was the mother of the three Horae (Seasons) and the three Fates. She was the first goddess to whom temples were built on the earth.



dominion was afterward transferred to the new Olympians, when Cronus yielded to Zeus, Oceanus to Poseidon, Hyperion to Apollo.

According to some mythic account, there are two names omitted as shown from the following chart of Gaia's children: Ophion and Eurynome⁷, who ruled over Olympus until they were dethroned by their brother and sister Cronus and Rhea. And the children of the old Titans like Atlas, Prometheus, Epimetheus, Leto and Metis⁸ are also known as Titan or Titaness.

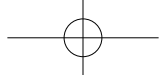


Cronus and Zeus

After dispatching Uranus, Cronus kept the Hecatoncheires and the Cyclopes imprisoned deep in the earth. He was now the ruler of the earth, and Rhea was his queen. This time was called the Golden Age, as people of the time had no need for laws or rules. Everyone did right, so there was no need.

Rhea sat and watched all of her sisters having children and living happily with their husbands. Soon she began to desire the same for herself. She was impregnated by Cronus with their first child, and was ecstatic. She told Cronus

- 7 There is confusion concerning these two, as they were the earliest god and goddess at the creation, but now they are referred to as Titans. Whichever account, they played a very important role in the old myth as creators or rulers. So, it is advisable to combine different accounts in understanding these two.
- 8 Metis was one of the three thousand daughters of Oceanus and Tethys. She was the first wife of Zeus, and the mother of Athena. And she was the goddess of wisdom, wiser than all gods and mortal men.



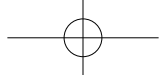
the instant she knew she was pregnant and this reminded him of his father's prophecy: "One day your own son shall overthrow you, for crime begets crime." After all that he had achieved, Cronus wasn't about to let it all slip through his fingers, even if this meant never to have any children of his own. He pretended to be happy, but immediately began to think of ways to dispose of the child once it was born.

The child in Rhea grew rapidly, and she was ready to give birth by the end of the month that she had conceived it. She summoned Cronus to her side, and the two of them retired to their chambers, where she gave birth to her first child, a daughter. Exhausted from the labor, Rhea looked down and was horrified to see Cronus swallowing their baby! She tried to stop him but it was too late. She flew into a fit of rage, and rushed at Cronus in blind anger. Cronus brushed her aside as if she were an insect, and drew the sickle that Gaia had made for him, holding it to her throat. "Any child born from your womb from this moment on will follow that one," he said to her, watching fear mingle with hatred in her eyes. Rhea didn't know why Cronus was doing this to their child, and he never told her.

Five children, three daughters and two sons, were born to Rhea by Cronus. They were Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades and Poseidon. Cronus swallowed them all as soon as they were born. By the time Rhea was pregnant with her sixth child, she went to Gaia for help to protect this child from Cronus. Gaia knew why Cronus was doing this, and smiled grimly, promising Rhea her help. Gaia took her to the isle of Crete, where she had prepared a cave for her daughter. She also offered Rhea the Goat-nymph Amalthea to suckle her baby when it was born, since Rhea would not be able to nurse the baby herself. There were two attending nymphs with the goat that would look after the baby in Rhea's absence.⁹ Gaia summoned a throng of wood sprites to the cave entrance. With the noises they made, it would be impossible, even for a god, to hear the cries of a newborn infant.

On the day Rhea was to give birth, she went to the cave. She lay in the bed against the solid stone, and began to give birth. The entire earth shook with her mighty labor; fissures opened and swallowed mountains and rivers. Once the baby was born, she wrapped him up in clothes, and presented him to the nymphs, introducing him as Zeus.

⁹ It is said that the nymphs hid the baby by dangling him on a rope from a tree so he was suspended between the earth, sea, and sky, and thus invisible to his father.



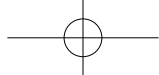
Before she left the cave, she picked up a stone roughly the same size and weight of her baby, and wrapped it in swaddling clothes. She returned to Mount Olympus with the stone, and sat in her bedchamber, holding it close to her chest and humming softly. Cronus burst into the room, furious that she had given birth without him being there, snatched the stone from her arms, and swallowed it, thinking it was his baby. Rhea apologized for her insolence, and smiled to herself as Cronus left the bedchamber.

Rhea returned periodically to see Zeus as he was growing up. He was being suckled by the goat which produced ambrosia, rather than milk. The bees brought him honey and an eagle would bring him nectar so he could drink. With this diet, he grew to manhood in less than a year.

On the day of his first birthday, Rhea told him about his father, and everything that happened to Uranus, and the Cyclopes and the Hecatoncheires. She gave a potion to Zeus along with instructions for its use. Together Rhea and Zeus went to Mount Olympus, where Zeus was presented to Cronus as their new cup-bearer. Cronus was pleased with the boy's beauty, and allowed him to stay. On the first night on Mount Olympus, Zeus prepared the potion in Cronus' drink as Rhea had instructed, and gave it to Cronus. Immediately after consuming the potion, Cronus became violently sick, and began to vomit. He disgorged the children in reverse order of swallowing: first the stone, which was set down at Pytho, or Delphi, under glens of Parnassus to be a sign to mortal men, then followed by the five children, who were all fully-grown and unharmed. They instantly sided with Zeus, and vowed to destroy Cronus. Cronus was forced to remember the prophecy, and realized that Zeus was his own son. He called together the rest of his brothers and sisters to help him fight the young gods, and the battle for Olympus began.

Titanomachy

The first thing that Zeus did was return to the deepest part of the world, and free the Hecatoncheires and the Cyclopes. Once freed, they all agreed to side with Zeus in the war against the Titans. For Zeus they made the lightning and thunder, which became his symbol of authority and most powerful weapon. Poseidon received his trident, which he used to raise the oceans to aid the other young gods in their battle. Zeus and the others stood at the base of Mount Olympus, and the Titans stood at the top. Out of nowhere, Cronus came charging down the mountain, followed by the other Titans. Zeus began blasting the



Titans down with his thunder and lightning, and Poseidon raised tidal waves to wash them out to the sea. By slamming the end of his trident into the earth, Poseidon was able to open large fissures that cut deep into the earth. Titans falling into these fissures would be swallowed up into the earth and trapped there. The Hecatoncheires lay in wait at the bottom of the mountain. And as the Titans neared the bottom, they stood up, holding a large boulder in each of their hundred hands. They hurled all of the boulders at once, and the Titans were forced to retreat from the storm of boulders that seemed to fall from the skies. The war is known as “Titanomachy” to celebrate Zeus’ victory over Cronus.

Zeus assumed the role of the king of gods, and they made their home on Mount Olympus. All the Titans who had joined the battle were sent into Tartarus after the battle, except Atlas, a son of Iapetus, who was taken prisoner. As a punishment, he was to bear the weight of the sky upon his shoulders for the rest of eternity.

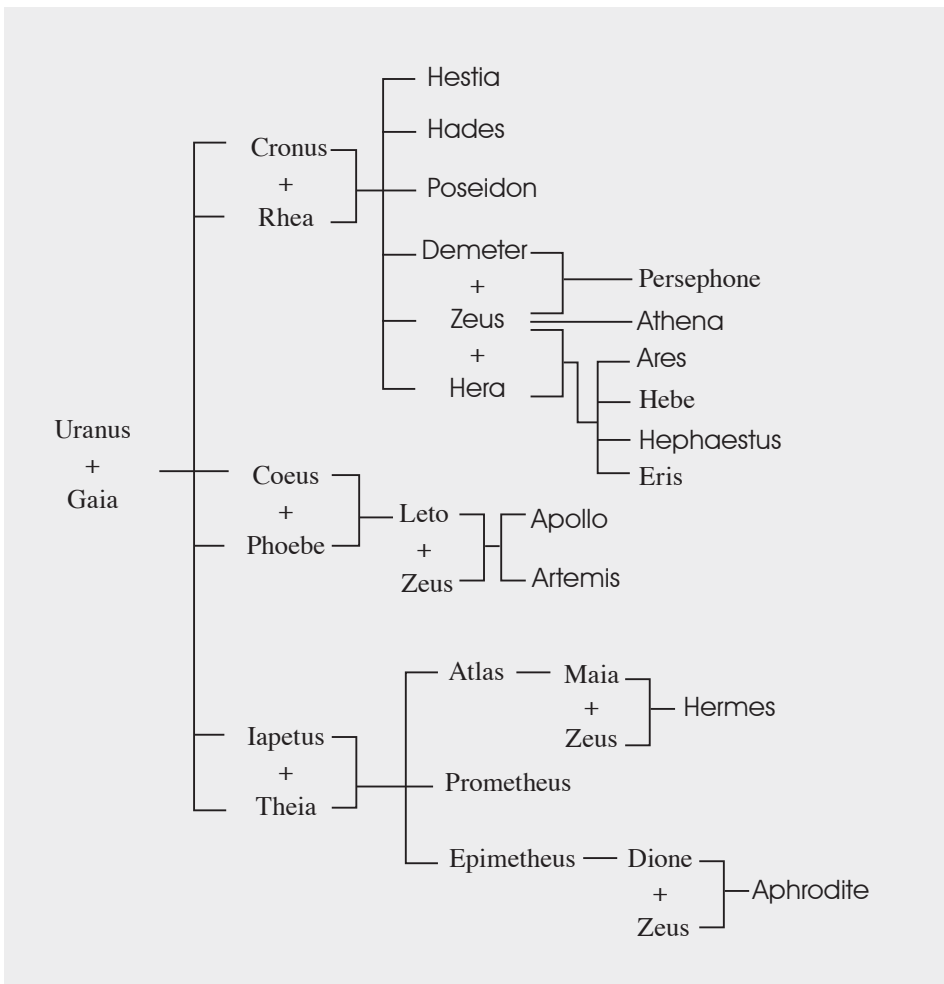
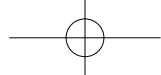
After the dethronement of Cronus, Zeus with his brothers Poseidon and Hades divided his dominions. His portion was the heavens, Poseidon’s the ocean, and Hades’ the realms of the dead. Earth and Olympus were common property. Zeus, the last and the first-born, was king of gods and men.



THE OLYMPIAN FAMILY

The Family Tree

The Olympian family had 14 members: Zeus, Hera, Hestia, Hades, Poseidon, Demeter, Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Hephaestus, Hermes, Aphrodite, and Dionysus. All of them had pure divine parentage of the Titans except Dionysus, whose mother was a mortal. Moreover, most Olympians derived from the Titanic leader Cronus.



Major Olympians

Aphrodite (Venus)

Goddess of Love, Desire and Beauty. According to some accounts, she was the daughter of Zeus and Dione, but many people, such as Plato, preferred the version that she sprang from the sea foam which gathered about Uranus' genitals thrown into the sea by Cronus. She rose naked from the foam, and, riding on a giant scallop, walked to the shore in Cyprus. Zeus gave her as wife to the lame smith god Hephaestus, but her true lover was Ares, the handsome, impetuous, drunken, and quarrelsome god of war. She also had affairs with Hermes—



their children being Eros (Cupid) and Hermaphroditus¹⁰ —, Poseidon, Dionysus, and her union with the mortal Anchises¹¹ resulted in the birth of Aeneas, the forefather of Rome. Her famous legends are her love for Adonis and her promise of the most beautiful woman to Paris, which led to the Trojan War.

Apollo

God of Sun, Light, Youth, Beauty and Prophecy. Apollo was the son of Zeus and Leto (Latona), and the twin brother of Artemis. He was born on the island of Delos in the Aegean Sea. As the successor to Hyperion, he was often identified with Helius (Helios) as the god of the sun. Apollo was also the god of song, music and poetry. He charmed the gods with his playing at the banquets held in their palaces on Mount Olympus.

According to legends, in one of his earliest deeds, Apollo slew the deadly serpent Python of Delphi with his silver bow and a quiver of golden arrows. To commemorate this victory Apollo started the Pythian Games, which were held every four years in ancient Greece. Winners in feats of strength, foot races and in chariot races were crowned with wreaths of laurel leaves. At Delphi near the foot of Mount Parnassus, in a place sacred to both Apollo and the Muses, was the famous Oracle of Apollo. Here his priestess made known the future to all who consulted her. She gave guidance in matters of sickness, war and peace and in the building of new colonies. The tripod was dedicated especially to Apollo and it was sacred to him as the god of prophecy.

Ares (Mars)

Son of Zeus and Hera, twin brother of Eris, and God of War. He was considered murderous and blood-thirsty, and also a coward. He loved battle for its own sake. Like his sister Eris, he never favored one city or party more than another, but fought on this side or that, as he felt like, delighting always in the slaughtering of men and the sacking of towns. He was hated and detested by all the gods and goddesses, including his parents, with the only exception of Aphrodite and, maybe, Hades who welcomed the dead to his kingdom.

10 Hermaphroditus was a youth with womanish breasts and long hair.

11 Anchises was the son of Capys and Themis, who had such beautiful complexion that Aphrodite became interested.



Artemis (Diana)

The daughter of Zeus and Leto, the twin sister of Apollo, and the goddess of the hunter and wild animals. Like her brother Apollo, she loved hunting and hunted with silver arrows. Artemis was also a virgin goddess and a goddess of chastity, but later in her guise as Diana, the Roman goddess of the Moon, she was not so chaste. As Artemis, she presided over childbirth, for while she herself had been born pain free, her brother Apollo caused Leto great suffering. No sooner had she been born than Artemis served as midwife for the birth of Apollo, and so became known as the protector and helper of women at birth.

As a youngster Artemis had a boyish sense of adventure and was fiercely independent. She requested and was granted from her father a bow and quiver of arrows similar to that of the brother Apollo. But Zeus, the concerned father, also gave her a band of nymph maidens and pack of hounds to follow her. To aid her running and ensure her chastity, he also gave her a short tunic so she could run forever through the wilderness. She came to protect all wildlife and animals, and any human who asked for her aid, particularly women who had been raped or victimized by men, in which cases she was quick to punish offenders.

Her punishment of men is recorded in legend. Actaeon, a hunter who spied on Artemis and her nymphs as they bathed nude in a forest pool, was turned into a stag and torn to pieces by his own hounds. In another legend, she sent a boar to ravage the countryside of Calydon as punishment on King Oeneus because he forgot to pay tribute to her in the first sacrifice of the fruits of the harvest. Her most famous legend concerns the death of Orion, whom she killed with an arrow through the head. Orion was a great and handsome hunter who won the affection of Artemis, but her brother Apollo didn't like him and accused him of distracting her from her duties. Apollo then tricked Artemis into shooting him with the arrow. When she discovered the trick, the grieving Artemis honored Orion in the sky, after whom the star constellation "Orion the Hunter" was named. In another version, Artemis killed him because of his arrogance and out of jealousy over his feelings for Eos, Goddess of the Dawn.

The worship of Artemis was prolific and flourished throughout the Mediterranean regions as far back as the Bronze Age. Later, especially since the Roman times, she became associated with the moon. As a moon goddess, she shared a lunar trinity with Selene and Hecate¹², but representing power over

12 Selene, the moon goddess, is another name for Artemis. Hecate, daughter of Perses and Asteria, is also another name for Artemis.



the earth she became revered as the patroness of witches. She personified the positive aspect of the moon, the main source of a witch, magical power, as well as woman's independence, self-esteem and aggressiveness. She was an eternal feminist, owned by none and beholden to none.

Athena (Athene, Pallas Athena or Pallas, Minerva)

Greek Goddess of Wisdom and War, she was also worshiped as the goddess of female crafts, especially those of spinning, weaving and needlework. In mythology, Athena was the favorite daughter of Zeus, and was said to have sprung from his head, fully grown and clothed in armor. She was often depicted as wearing a helmet and carrying a spear and shield. Like her father she also wore a magical aegis, a goatskin breastplate fringed with snakes that produced thunderbolts when shaken.¹³ As a goddess of war she represented the intellectual side of war, and that of defense rather than aggression, for she was not so much a fighter than a wise and prudent adviser.

Athena was regarded as the protector of all cities and states. She was wise not only in war but also in the arts of peace. Her main place of worship was the seaport city of Athens, which was named after her.

Demeter (Ceres)

A sister and wife of Zeus, Goddess of Corn, Grain, and the Harvest. She had a daughter, Persephone (Core), and a son Iacchus by Zeus. She also bore Plutus to the Titan Iasius, with whom she fell in love at the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia. Inflamed by the nectar flowing like water at the feast, the lovers slipped out of the house and lay together openly in a thrice-ploughed field. On their return, Zeus guessed from their look and the mud on their clothes what they had been doing, and in anger, he killed Iasius with a thunderbolt.

Demeter herself had a gentle soul, unless her rights were violated. Her legend is mostly centered on the story of her search for her lost daughter Persephone, who was kidnapped by Hades to the Underworld. It is said that Hades was in love with young Persephone. He asked Zeus for permission to marry her. Zeus was unwilling to offend his brother by a downright refusal, but he was sure Demeter would never forgive him if Persephone were to live in the Underworld forever. He therefore answered politically, saying that he could neither give

¹³ Some say it was Medusa's head that Athena was wearing on her aegis.



nor withhold his consent. This emboldened Hades to abduct Persephone, while she was picking flowers in a meadow. Demeter sought her daughter without rest for nine days and nights, neither eating nor drinking, and calling her name fruitlessly all the while. The only information she could get was from old Hecate, who early one morning had heard Persephone crying: “A rape! A rape!” but, on hurrying to the rescue, found no sign of her.

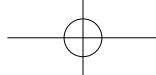
Later Demeter learned from the sons of the hospitable king Celeus that ten days before they had been out in the fields, feeding their beasts, when the earth suddenly gaped open, engulfing the pigs, and then, with a heavy thud of hooves, a chariot drawn by black horses appeared, and dashed down the chasm. The chariot-driver’s face was invisible, but his right arm was tightly clasped around a shrieking girl.

Hearing this, Demeter again called for Hecate. Together they approached Helius, the sun god, who saw everything under the sun, and forced him to admit that Hades had been the villain. Doubtlessly Zeus was behind this. Demeter was so angry that, instead of returning to Olympus, she continued to wander about the earth, forbidding the trees to yield fruit and the herbs to grow, until the race of men stood in danger of extinction. Zeus, too ashamed to visit Demeter in person at Eleusis, sent her first a message by Iris, of which she took no notice, and then a deputation of the Olympian gods, with gifts, begging her to reconcile to his will. But she refused to return to Olympus, and swore that the earth must remain barren until Persephone had been restored.

Zeus had to send Hermes with a message to Hades: “If you do not restore Persephone, we are all undone!” and another to Demeter: “You may have your daughter again, on the single condition that she has not yet tasted the food of the dead.”

Because Persephone had refused to eat so much as crust of bread ever since her abduction, Hades was obliged to let her go back. But as they were mounting the chariot for Eleusis, one of Hades’ gardeners, by the name of Ascalaphus, said that the girl had picked a pomegranate from a tree in the orchard and eaten seven seeds. Finally a compromise was reached that Persephone should spend three months of the year in Hades’ company, as queen of the Underworld, and the remaining nine months with Demeter. So, each year when her daughter returned from the land of the dead, Demeter made the earth bloom and bear fruit again.

Through this story the Greeks interpreted the miracle of the revolving seasons: spring came when Persephone returned after her winter in the Underworld, followed by summer, and her return into Hades in autumn led us



back to winter.

Demeter was also known for founding the Eleusinian Mysteries. These were huge festivals held every year. They were important events of many centuries. Yet, little is known of them as those attending were sworn to secrecy. The central tenant seems to have been that just as grain returns every spring after its harvest and wintry death, so too the human soul could be reborn after the death of the body.

Dionysus (Bacchus)

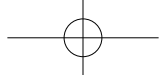
God of Nature, God of Vine and Wine, and also God of Ecstasy, whose cult was one of the mystery religions. He produced the first wine from the vine and spread the art of tending grapes. But he had a dual side to his nature. On the one hand, he could bring about joy and divine ecstasy, and on the other hand, he brought brutal, unthinking rage, both reflecting the nature of wine.

Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Semele, a daughter of Cadmus and Harmonia, and the only principal Olympian god to have a mortal parent. With his extraordinary birth, he became known as “the twice-born god” associated with death and rebirth. As a mortal-woman-born, Dionysus was accepted onto Olympus very late. He replaced the sweet Hestia, the Goddess of the Hearth, and became the youngest Olympian god.

Hades (Pluto, Dis)

King of the Dead or the Underworld, and God of Wealth. His wife was Persephone, whom he had abducted by force. He rarely left the Underworld, and guarded his dominion jealous of his rights over the dead. He never knew what was happening in the world above, or on Olympus, except for fragmentary information which came to him when mortals struck their hands upon the earth and invoked him with oaths and curses.

His most prized possession was the helmet of invisibility, given to him as a mark of gratitude by the Cyclopes when he consented to release them at Zeus' order. All the riches of gems and precious metals hidden beneath the earth were his, but he owned no property above ground, except for certain gloomy temples in Greece. And whenever he came up, he drove a golden chariot drawn by four black horses.



Hephaestus (Vulcan, Mulciber)

God of Smith. He was said to be a son of Hera and Zeus, but some say he was born all by Hera herself. He was so weak and ugly at birth that his disgusted mother threw him from the height of Olympus, to rid herself of the embarrassment and unpleasantness of his appearance. He survived this misadventure, however, because as he fell into the sea, the Titaness Thetis and Eurynome rescued him. These gentle goddesses brought him up and set up a smithy for him in the underwater. He rewarded their kindness by making them all sorts of ornamental and useful objects.

Nine years later, Hera happened to see a beautiful brooch Thetis was wearing. When she learned that it was made by her own son, she brought him back to Olympus and built a finer smithy for him. She even managed to persuade Zeus to give the most beautiful Aphrodite to her son as wife. Hephaestus deeply loved his wife, but the goddess was never sexually faithful to him.

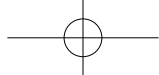
Hephaestus became so far reconciled with his mother that he dared to reproach his father for hanging her by the wrists from Heaven when she led the other Olympians to rebel against him. The angry Zeus heaved him down from Olympus a second time. He was falling for a whole day. On striking the earth of the island of Lemnos, he broke both his legs and, though immortal, had little life left in his body when he was found by the islanders. Afterward, pardoned and restored to Olympus, he could only walk with golden leg supports. Some other accounts say that he was born lame.

Hephaestus was the only ugly and disabled god. He was ill-tempered, but had great power in his arms and shoulders, and all his smith work was of matchless beauty and skill.

Hera (Juno)

Zeus' wife and sister, queen of the gods, and Goddess of Marriage. She was raised by the Titans Oceanus and Tethys. Most stories concerning Hera have to do with her jealous revenge for Zeus' infidelities and her punishment of her rivals. Iris, the Goddess of the Rainbow, was her attendant and messenger.

It is said that Hera had at first rejected her brother Zeus' marriage proposal, but the latter had ravished her in the disguise of a drenched cuckoo, which she tenderly warmed in her bosom. To their wedding all the gods and goddesses brought gifts. Mother Earth gave Hera a tree with golden apples, which was later



guarded by the Hesperides in Hera's orchard on Mount Atlas. She and Zeus spent their wedding night on Samos, and it lasted three hundred years. Hera was said to bathe regularly in the spring of Canathus, near Argos, and thus renewed her virginity. With Zeus Hera gave birth to Ares, Hebe, and Hephaestus, though some legends include Eris, and some say that Hephaestus was produced all by herself.

Hermes (Mercury)

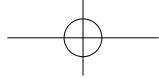
Hermes, the son of Zeus and young Titaness Maia, was the messenger of Zeus, or the gods. His attributes were the most complex and varied among those of any of the major gods. He was responsible for increase in the animal world. He was the god of thieves, commerce, travelers and trade, a patron of wrestling and other gymnastic exercises, the god of oratory and eloquence, and the guide for the dead to the Underworld.

His most famous legend concerns what he did on the first day of his life. The day he was born on Mount Cyllene, his mother Maia laid him in swaddling bands on a winnowing fan, but he grew with astonishing quickness into a little boy. As soon as his mother's back was turned, he slipped out. He went to Pieria where Apollo kept his cattle and stole a fine herd of cows. He made shoes with oak bark and grass for the cows and got them back without leaving a trace. He killed two cows and made himself a tortoise-shell lyre. When found out, he made peace with Apollo by giving him the lyre for the cows. Besides, he invented the winged sandals which were called talaria, made fire by rubbing sticks together, and killed some stolen cattle and made the first flesh offering to the gods. All this he did within the first 24 hours of his birth. Later his son Autolykus became the champion thief of the world.

Hermes was always seen in his talaria and petasus, a winged cap given by Zeus, and with his caduceus, a golden staff with wings at the top, intertwined with serpents, given by Apollo.

Hestia (Vesta)

Goddess of the Hearth and Virgin. It was Hestia's glory that, alone of the great Olympians, she never took part in wars or disputes. Like Artemis and Athena, moreover, she remained a virgin. After the dethronement of Cronus, when Poseidon and Apollo came forward as rival suitors, she swore by Zeus' head to remain a virgin forever. At that, Zeus gratefully awarded her the first victim of every public sacrifice, because she had preserved the peace of Olympus.



As the Roman goddess of the hearth in every private house and city hall, she protected people who fled to her for protection. Universal respect was paid to her, not only for her being the mildest, most upright and most charitable of all the Olympians, but for her having invented the art of building houses.

Poseidon (Neptune)

God of the Sea, God of Earthquake, and God of Horses. Sailors relied on him for a safe voyage on the sea and many drowned horses in sacrifice to his honor. He lived on the ocean floor in a palace made of coral and gems, and drove a chariot pulled by horses.

Poseidon was very moody and his temper could sometimes result in violence. When he was in a good mood, he would calm the sea and create new lands in the water; but in a bad mood, he would strike the ground with his trident and cause unruly springs and earthquakes to erupt, sinking ships and drowning sailors.

Poseidon was similar to his brother Zeus in his relation with goddesses and mortal women. He had many love affairs and fathered numerous children. One tale tells how he once married a Nereid called Amphitrite, and by her produced a Triton who, half-human and half-fish, became his father's messenger and trumpeter. He also had an affair with the Gorgon Medusa, from which she conceived the monster Chrysaor, and Pegasus, the flying horse. His rape of Aethra, a mortal woman, resulted in the birth of the famous hero Theseus¹⁴.

One of the most notorious love affairs of Poseidon involved his sister Demeter. As he continued to pursue her, Demeter disguised herself as a mare to avoid him, but Poseidon responded by transforming himself into a stallion and cornered her. Their mating resulted in the winged horse Arion.

Another story involved Poseidon and Athena, Goddess of Wisdom and War, in a competition to control the seaport city of Athens. To win the people of the city over, Poseidon threw a spear at the ground and produced the spring at the Acropolis. Athena won as a result of giving the people of Athens the olive tree.

In his anger over the decision, Poseidon flooded the Attic Plain. Eventually, however, Athena and Poseidon worked together by combining their powers. Even though Poseidon was the god of horses, Athena built the first chariot. She also built the first ship to sail on the sea over which Poseidon ruled.

¹⁴ Refer to Unit 7 for the story.



Poseidon often used his powers of earthquake, water and horses to inflict fear and punishment on people as revenge. And though he could be difficult, he could also be cooperative. It was Poseidon who helped the Greeks during the Trojan War.

Zeus (Jupiter)

God of the Heavens, and father of gods and mankind. Widely considered one of the greatest gods in Greek mythology, he was also the protector of kings, the inventor of courts, laws, peace and order, and the avenger of broken oaths and other offenses. He watched over the state, the family and strangers. His hand wielded lightning and guided the stars. He gathered rain clouds, ordained the changes of the seasons and regulated the whole course of nature. And with the other gods on Mount Olympus, Zeus ruled over the affairs of mankind.

According to legend, after a ten-year struggle on Mount Olympus, Zeus overthrew his father Cronus and expelled him and the rest of the older dynasty of the Titans to Tartarus. He also withstood the attacks of the Giants and Typhon¹⁵, and the conspiracies of the other gods led by Hera.¹⁶

Zeus is said by some to have had seven wives, among whom were Metis (Athena), Themis (Eunomia, Dike, Eirene, the Horae and the Fates), Eurynome (the Charites or Graces), Demeter (Persephone), Mnemosyne (the Muses) and Hera (Ares, Hebe, Hephaestus, Eris, or/and Eileithyia). His marriage with Hera, queen of the gods, was regarded as the divine prototype of all earthly marriages, despite the fact that he was not always faithful to Hera.

It is said he had fifty love affairs outside wedlock, but some mythologists explain his numerous indiscretions by saying that many adventures of the other gods were ascribed to him. Among his affairs the best known are those with Danae, Europa, Io, Leda, Leto, Maia, Semele, and Alcmene.

In ancient Greek myth and art, the Olympian gods and goddesses were often portrayed with a specific set of symbols and attributes so as to distinguish one

15 Typhon was the youngest son of Gaia, and the most monstrous of the Giants, born after the Titans were defeated by Zeus. He attacked Zeus, cut the sinews of his hands and feet, and imprisoned him in a cave where a dragon guarded him until he was rescued by Hermes and Pan. Zeus then conquered Typhon with his thunderbolts and buried him under Mount Aetna. Typhon was said to be the father by Echidna of many monsters, among them were Ladon, Orthrus, Cerberus, the Nemean Lion, the Sphinx, the Chimera, and the Lernaean Hydra.

16 Once, Hera led the other gods fighting against Zeus, but he was able to suppress the rebellion. He hung Hera up and forced her and the others to promise eternal loyalty to him.

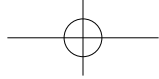


figure from another as shown by the following table:

Name	Related Places	Animals/ Plants	Accompanying Objects	Attributes/ Responsibilities
Aphrodite (Venus)	Cyprus, Cythera	dove, swan myrtle, rose	cestus	beauty, love, sex
Apollo	Delos, Delphi	snake, laurel, hyacinth	lyre, bow & arrow	prophecy, medicine, archery, music, law, moderation
Ares (Mars)	Thebes, Thrace	vulture, dog	chariot, armor, spear	war
Artemis (Diana)	Delos, Delphi, Brauron	bear, deer	bow & arrow, the moon	chastity, hunting, protecting young, childbirth
Athena (Minerva)	Athens	owl, snake, olive tree	aegis, armor	wisdom, war, weaving, chastity
Demeter (Ceres)	Eleusis		grain, wheat	grain, harvest, fertility, immortality
Dionysus (Bacchus)	Thebes, Delphi, Asia	bull, snake, panther, ivy, grape vine	chalice, thyrsus, wine, fawn skin	agriculture, prophecy, tragedy, ecstasy, violation of limits
Hades (Pluto)			helmet of invisibility	lord of the Dead
Hephaestus (Vulcan, Mulciber)	Lemnos, Athens		anvil & forge, axe	craftsmanship, blacksmith
Hera (Juno)	Argos	cow, peacock	scepter, diadem	marriage (monogamy), childbirth, magic
Hermes (Mercury)	Mt. Cyllene, Arcadia		petasus, talaria, caduceus	messenger, traveler, thief, athlete, trade, guide of the dead
Hestia (Vesta)			sacred hearth	chastity, domesticity
Poseidon (Neptune)	Athens, Crete	horse, bull	trident	earthquakes, sea, horses
Zeus (Jupiter)	Olympia, Crete	eagle, bull, oak	thunderbolt, aegis, throne	prophecy, weather, kingship, justice, hospitality and oath



Minor Gods and Goddesses and Demigods

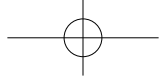
Besides the well-known Olympian gods and goddesses, there were also minor divinities in Greek mythology. They included such groups as the Charites, the Fates, the Furies, the Harpies, the Hesperides, the Horae, the Muses, Nymphs, river gods and Nereids, the Sirens, and the wind gods, and individual deities like Persephone, Eros, Eris, Eos, Pan, Hebe, Hymen, Iris, Nike, Hecate and others, all of whom came from the Titans and the Olympians.

There were also in Greek myth great heroes and demigods, whose origin was partly divine. These were divided into two classes: the earlier heroes, such as the Argonauts, Bellerophon, Chiron, Daedalus, Heracles, Meleager, Oedipus, Perseus, and Theseus; and the later heroes of Thebes and Troy. Among them were contributors to mankind and men of great strength, fine form and noble courage. They were adventurers, servants of civilization, founders of great families, and destroyers of monsters. After a long struggle and final victory, they were translated after death into gods or demigods and entitled to sacrifice and worship.

The greatest individual heroes among them were Perseus, Heracles, Jason, Theseus, Bellerophon, Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, Aeneas, and Oedipus. Their greatest expeditions were the journey of the Argonauts, the Calydonian boar hunt, the campaign against Thebes, and the Trojan War. And the greatest and most interesting adventure stories were those of Odysseus' return journey to Ithaca and Aeneas' journey to Italy. Apollo, Bellerophon, Daedalus, Perseus, Heracles, Theseus, Jason, Oedipus, and Odysseus were the greatest destroyers of monsters. Some of the most terrible monsters they had killed or conquered were the Calydonian boar, Cerberus, the Chimera, the Cyclopes, the Harpies, the Hecatoncheires, the Lernaean Hydra, Medusa, the Minotaur, the Nemean Lion, Python, and the Sphinx.

Famous families in the mythology were the descendants of the Titans and the Olympians. They included the families of kings of Thebes (Cadmus, Amphion, Zethus, Europa, Laius, Jocasta, Oedipus, Eteocles, Polynices, Antigone), the house of Atreus (Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, Orestes, and Electra), and the house of Troy (Priam, Hecabe and their children).

The Western classic mythology is also replete with great love stories, such as Aphrodite and Adonis, Aphrodite and Ares, Apollo and Daphne, Ariadne and Dionysus, Ceyx and Alcyone, Clytie and Apollo, Echo and Narcissus, Eros and Psyche, Helen and Paris, Hero and Leander, Hyacinthus and Apollo, Odysseus



and Penelope, Orpheus and Eurydice, Perseus and Andromeda, Pygmalion and Galatea, Pyramus and Thisbe, Selene and Endymion, Tithonus and Eos, and numerous love affairs between the Olympian gods and nymphs or mortal women.



Questions for Discussion

1. What psychoanalytical motifs can be found in the birth stories of Cronus and Zeus? What role did Mother (Gaia and Rhea) play in the birth story of Cronus and Zeus?
2. How do you interpret the war between the Titans and the Olympians?
3. In what specific ways do the old and the new divine families resemble a human family?
4. What characteristics of humanity do the gods and goddesses have? List some and comment on their meanings to human nature and life.

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