

Theogony

The Muses of HELIKON—let us begin with them, who live on the great and mystical mountain Helikon, and dance around the violet spring on light feet, and the altar of the mighty son of Kronos.^o Bathing their tender skin in the spring of Permessos, or the Spring of the Horse, or in sacred Olmeios, they make their dance on the highest peak of Helikon—lovely, desirable!—and they dance with power.^o 5

Leaping up from there, hidden in a thick mist, they go forth at night, sending forth their most beautiful song, singing of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish, and divine Hera of ARGOS, who walks in golden sandals, and the daughter of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish, flashing-eyed Athena, and Phoibos Apollo, and Artemis who thrills to shoot arrows, and Poseidon, who holds the earth, lord of earthquake, and holy Themis and Aphrodite, who twinkles with her eyes, and golden-crowned Hebe, and beautiful Dionê, and Leto, and Iapetos, and crooked-counseling Kronos, and Dawn, and great Helios and shining Moon, and Earth, and great Ocean, and dark Night, and the sacred race of the other deathless 15

3. . . . *son of Kronos*: This is Zeus, who must have had an altar on MOUNT HELIKON. Helikon is a snow-capped mountain around 6,000 feet high, ten miles inland from the north coast of the GULF OF CORINTH, halfway between THEBES and DELPHI. It is the tallest mountain in BOEOTIA. The Muses (perhaps “thinkers”) are goddesses personifying the spirit of the oral tradition that allows the singer to compose his song. Hesiod feels that his song comes from outside himself, a common impression among great artists. (Bob Dylan speaks of “that creative something out there.”) Hesiod’s *Theogony* begins with a poem that is similar to the *Homeric Hymns* to various gods, which also seem to have introduced other songs.

6. . . . *with power*: Permessos, Spring of the Horse, and Olmeios are local names for actual springs or watercourses near the top of Helikon. Later the name Spring of the Horse (*hippokrenê* in Greek) was explained as deriving from the winged horse Pegasus’ striking the earth there with his hoof, causing a spring to rise up.



Figure 4. A Muse playing the lyre. A bird perches on the ground before her. She wears a gown that shows beneath a robe wrapped around her waist. The lyre has seven strings and a wooden sounding box. Written on the rock, beneath her, is the word HLIKON, an explicit reference to Hesiod's poem. Above the Muse is a *kalos* inscription, "So-and-So is handsome." Of uncertain purpose, *kalos* ("handsome") inscriptions were part of the culture of sexual love between older men and boys in the Greek symposium and are often found on Athenian pottery between roughly 550 and 430 B.C. This one reads: AXEIOPEITHES [is] HANDSOME [and so is] ALKIMACHO[S]. Athenian white-ground oil jar, ca. 440–430 B.C. Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Munich (Photo: Bibi Saint-Pol; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/63/Mousai_Helikon_Staatliche_Antikensammlungen_Schoen80_n1.jpg)

ones, who never die.^o These Muses once taught Hesiod beautiful song while he looked after his sheep beneath sacred Helikon.

First of all the goddesses spoke this word to me, the Muses who live on OLYMPOS, the daughters of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish: “You, rough shepherds! Wretched objects of reproach—nothing but bellies!—we know how to speak many false things that look like the truth, and we know how, when we wish, to speak the truth.”

So spoke the eloquent daughters of great Zeus. They plucked and gave me a staff, the shoot of a blooming laurel,^o a thing of wonder, and they breathed into me a marvelous voice so that I might celebrate what came before and what will come after. And they commanded me to sing of the race of the blessed gods who never die, to sing of them first of all, and last.

But why do I talk about an oak or a rock?^o So come you, let us begin with the Muses, who delight with song the great mind of their father Zeus in Olympos, telling in harmony of how things are now, and how they will be, and how they once were. Untiring,

18. . . . *who never die*: The Muses’ song begins with Zeus and his wife, Hera, who had a famous temple near Argos. The meaning of the Greek *aigiochos*, “aegis-bearing,” here translated as “who carries the goatskin fetish,” is unclear, but it seems to refer to a magical shield usually carried by Zeus or worn as a cloak by Athena, made of goatskin (*aigis* means “goat”) with snakes for tassels. The Muses’ song passes then to Zeus’s daughter, Athena, and Zeus’s children, Apollo and Artemis. Then comes the great god Poseidon and the mighty goddesses Themis, “law” (she is actually a Titan), and Aphrodite, who suggests Hebe, “youth,” and Dionê, a feminine form of “Zeus,” who in Homer is Aphrodite’s mother (but in Hesiod she is some kind of nymph). Then comes the powerful goddess Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, and two Titans: Iapetos, probably the same name as the biblical Japheth (but they are not at all the same character), the father of Prometheus; and Kronos. Kronos’ epithet “Crooked-Counseling” (*angkylometis*) may originally have meant “he of the curved sickle.” Finally come the elemental gods: Dawn (*Eos*), Sun (*Helios*), Moon (*Selenê*), Earth (*Gaia*), Ocean (*Okeanos*), and Night (*Nyx*). Hesiod gives us a catalogue of gods in a generally sensible order. His poetry is much given to the making of lists, and there are several such in the *Theogony*.

26. *laurel*: The laurel was sacred to Apollo, the god of song. Ordinarily such hexametric poetry was sung to the lyre. Perhaps the meaning is that Hesiod is so rustic that he could not play the lyre.

30. . . . *a rock*: This phrase has never been explained, but must refer to some proverb. Its meaning is “why avoid our main topic by talking of irrelevant things.”

their sweet voice flows from their mouths, and the house of father
35 Zeus, the thunderer, laughs at the delicate voice of the goddesses
as it spreads across the room, and the peaks of snowy Olympos ring,
and the houses of the deathless ones.

And they, sending forth
an undying voice, celebrate first of all in their song the holy race
of the gods from the beginning, those whom Earth and broad Sky°
40 first begot, and the gods who came forth from them, the bestowers
of good things.

Second, they celebrate Zeus, the father of gods and men,
both in the beginning of their song and at its end: how he is the greatest
of the gods, and most mighty in power. And again, the Muses, the daughters
of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish, who dwell on Olympos,
45 delight the mind of Zeus in Olympos by singing of the race of men,
and of the powerful Giants.°

For Mnemosynê, who rules over the hills
of Eleutherai, bore the Muses in PIERIA after sleeping with the son
of Kronos, to be a respite from evil and a cessation of sorrow.°
For nine nights did Zeus the Counselor mix with her in love,
50 entering her holy bed set apart from the deathless ones. And when
a year had passed, and the seasons were turned as the months waned,
and many days came to completion, she bore nine daughters
of like mind who care for song in their hearts, their spirits

39. *Sky*: The Greek for Earth is *Gaia*; and for Sky, *Ouranos* (Latin *Uranus*); but they seem more principles than personalities.

46. *Giants*: But Hesiod never mentions the Battle of the Gods and the Giants, an important myth not clearly attested until the fifth century B.C. (in Pindar, *Nemean* 1.67–69), three hundred years after Hesiod. In Homer and Hesiod, the Giants are obscure, powerful beings about whom few details are told, seemingly halfway between men and gods.

48. . . . *of sorrow*: Mnemosynê, “memory,” is the mother of the Muses because the Muses pass on the stories of olden times, knowledge of which depends on memory. Eleutherai is on MOUNT KITHAIRON, near Helikon, in Bocotia. PIERIA is the region north of Olympos, sacred to the Muses, where the gods first alight when descending from MOUNT OLYMPOS. Apparently there was an ancient cult to the Muses in Pieria; they often are called *Pierides*.

without care, a little bit away from the topmost peak of snowy
Olympos. There are their brilliant dancing places and their beautiful
houses. Beside them dwell the Graces, and Desire,^o in joyous festivities. 55

Sending forth a lovely sound from their mouth, they sing of the laws
of all, and they celebrate the cherished habits of the deathless ones,
sending forth their lovely voice. Then they went to Olympus, rejoicing
in their beautiful voice, their ambrosial^o song, and the black earth 60
resounded about them as they sang, and a lovely sound rose up
beneath their feet as they went to their father. He ruled over the sky,
himself holding the thunderbolt and the flashing lightning, having
overcome through strength his father, Kronos. And he fairly allotted
every portion to the deathless ones, and he established their ranks. 65

So of these things the Muses sang, who have their houses on
Olympos, the nine daughters begotten of great Zeus—Kleio and Euterpê
and Thaleia and Melpomenê and Terpsichorê and Erato and Polyhymnia
and Ourania and Kalliopê, who is the foremost of all, for she too attends
upon respected princes.^o 70

Whomever of the god-nourished princes the daughters of great
Zeus honor and behold at birth, they pour sweet dew upon his tongue,
and from his mouth words flow like honey. All the people look toward him
as he settles cases with true judgments. And he, speaking convincingly,

56. *Graces and Desire*: The Greek terms are *Charites* and *Himeros*: They dwell beside the Muses on Mount Olympus, because they have much in common.

60. *ambrosial*: Usually “ambrosial” means “immortal,” but here probably just “pleasant,” “fragrant.”

70. . . . *respected princes*: Hesiod perhaps invented these names of the Muses, which correspond to the functions of song as Hesiod understands them. Later, the Muses were assigned to specific genres: Kleio (“making famous”), history; Euterpê (“giving delight”), elegiac poetry; Thalia (“blooming”), comedy; Melpomenê (“of sweet song”), tragedy; Terpsichorê (“delighting in dance”), dance; Erato (“of love”), lyric poetry; Polyhymnia (“much-hymned”), hymns; Ourania (“heavenly”), astronomy; Kalliopê (“of beautiful voice”), epic poetry. Hesiod’s poem is pitched to the social elite, the princes who require the services of the Muses in maintaining their hold on power.

quickly, and knowingly puts an end to even a great quarrel. For this reason
75 there are wise princes, who turn matters around when the people go astray
in assembly, persuading them with gentle words. And when the prince passes
through a crowd, people seek his favor with honeyed respect. He stands
out when people are assembled: Such is the sacred gift of the Muses to men.

From the Muses and Apollo, who shoots from afar, come singers
80 upon the earth, and the lyre players, but from Zeus come the kings:
That man is blessed, whomever the Muses love—sweet is the voice that flows
from his mouth. For if someone has recent pain in his breast and groans,
troubled in heart, but a singer, servant of the Muses, sings of the great deeds
of men of olden times and of the blessed gods who live on Olympos—
85 then quickly that man forgets his troubles, unconcerned with his sorrows.
The gifts of the goddesses quickly turn him away from these.

So greetings, children of Zeus! Give me lovely song! Celebrate
the holy race of the deathless ones, who last forever, who came forth
from Earth and starry Sky, and dark Night, and those whom salty Sea
90 nourished. Tell us how the gods and Earth first came into being,
and the rivers and the endless sea raging with swells, and the shining
stars, and the broad heaven up above. And tell which gods came from them,
the bestowers of good things, and how they divided their wealth,
and how they divided their spheres of influence, and how they first took
95 possession of Olympos with its many valleys.^o

Sing to me these things,
Muses who live on Olympos! From the beginning, tell me which
gods first came into being!

First of all Chaos came into being,
then broad-breasted Earth, the ever-safe foundation of all the deathless ones,
who live on the peaks of snowy Olympos, and shadowy Tartaros
100 in a hiding place of the earth with its wide ways, and Eros, who is the most
beautiful of all the deathless gods, who relaxes the limbs and overwhelms

95... *valleys*: Hesiod does not really fulfill this program, never again mentioning the gods' wealth or the division of powers or how the gods first took possession of Olympos.

the mind and wise counsel in the breasts of all the gods and men.^o

From Chaos came Darkness and black Night, and from Night came Brightness and Day, whom Night conceived and bore by uniting in love with Darkness. Earth bore starry Sky first, like to her in size, so that he covered her all around, everywhere, so that there might always be a secure seat for the blessed gods. And Earth gave birth to the blessed Mountains, the pleasant halls of the gods, the nymphs who live in the wooded hills. She bore the barren waters, raging with its swell, Sea, without making delightful love.

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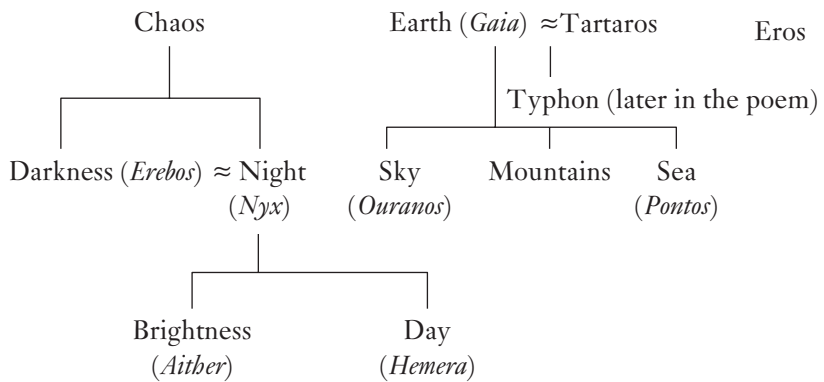
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But then, uniting with Sky, Earth bore deep-swirling Ocean, and Koios, and Kreios, and Hyperion, and Iapetos, and Theia, and Rhea, and Themis, and Mnemosynê, and golden-crowned Phoibê, and beloved Tethys. After them was born crooked-counseled Kronos, the youngest and most terrible of these children, who hated his powerful father.^o

102. . . . *and men*: Chaos means “chasm” and is related to the English word “gap.” Chaos is a being but embodies the notion that in the beginning there was a separation, as when you open your mouth and a gap appears. Earth and Tartaros then appear (out of Chaos?), both beings too, but also something that one can stand on (Earth), and a dark, mysterious place beneath that something (Tartaros). Eros is sex, the force that makes things happen in the world, that makes one forget what is wise. He is never mentioned again in the *Theogony* (except once in a different connection, in line 164) but is present throughout as the principle of generation.

105. *Darkness*: The Greek for Darkness is *Erebos*; Night is *Nyx*, Brightness is *Aither*, and Day is *Hemera*. In the beginning is darkness, but darkness produces its opposite, light, which is progress.

114. . . . *father*: These twelve gods are the mysterious Titans, a word of uncertain meaning. The story that once there were older gods, overthrown by a younger generation, originated in Mesopotamia, whence arrived much Greek myth and the general outlines of Hesiod's story. Except for Kronos and Rhea, who will replace Sky and Earth as masters of the universe, most of these gods are just names. Ocean was the river that surrounds the world, from which all other rivers come. All that we know of Koios is that he was the father of Leto, the sixth wife of Zeus and mother of Apollo and Artemis. Nothing is known about the obscure Kreios. Hyperion (“he who goes above”) is the father of Sun (*Helios*). Iapetos, evidently the same as the biblical Japeth, a son of Noah (but there are no other obvious connections), is the father of Prometheus. Theia (“goddess”) is the wife of Hyperion. Themis (“law”) and Mnemosynê (“memory”) are early consorts of



Genealogical Chart 1. The primordial gods.

She bore too the Cyclopês with their overweening spirit—Brontês 115
 and Steropês and mighty Argês, who gave to Zeus the thunderbolt
 and manufactured the lightning. These creatures were like the gods
 in all other ways, but they had a single eye in the middle of their foreheads:
 So they were called “Round-Eyes,” because there was a single round
 eye in their foreheads. Strength and power and device were in their works.° 120

Earth and Sky had three other children, great and strong,
 scarcely to be named—Kottos and Briareos and Gygês, prodigal children.
 One hundred arms sprang from their shoulders, scarcely to be imagined,
 and fifty heads grew out of the shoulders of each, mounted on powerful
 limbs. Their strength was unapproachable, mighty in their great forms. 125
 Of all the offspring of Earth and Sky, these were the most terrible children.

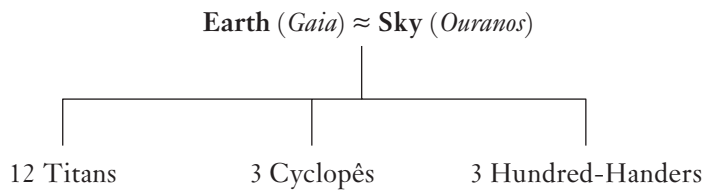
Their father, Sky, hated them from the beginning. And as soon
 as one of his children was born, he would hide them all away in a hiding place
 of Earth and would not allow them to come into the light, and Sky took
 delight in his evil deed. But huge Earth groaned within from the strain, 130
 and she devised an evil trick. Quickly making a gray unconquerable
 substance,° she fashioned a huge sickle, and she spoke to her dear children.
 She said, encouragingly, but sorrowing in her own heart: “My children,
 begotten by a mad father, if you are willing to listen to me,

(114. continued) Zeus. Phoibê (“brilliant goddess,” not to be confused with Phoibos Apollo) is the wife of Koios and mother of Leto. Tethys (“nourisher”?) is probably the same as Mesopotamian Tiamat, a goddess of the primordial waters from which the world emerged. Kronos’ epithet as “crooked-counseled” and as the youngest, and the last mentioned, mark him out as the successor to Sky; the meaning of his name is unknown.

120. . . . *works*: Cyclopês means “with round eyes.” Brontês means “thunderer”; Steropês means “flasher,” and Argês means “brightener.” Scholars have been unable to clarify the relation between these Cyclopês, the armorers of Zeus, and the race of lonely shepherds who persecute Odysseus (*Odyssey* 9). Homer never says that his Cyclops (named Polyphemos) has one eye, but the story requires it.

122. . . . *Gygês*: Briareos may mean “powerful one,” but the meanings of Kottos and Gygês are not clear.

132. *substance*: The “unconquerable substance” is *adamant*, probably meteoric iron or a kind of steel, but the meaning is unclear.



Genealogical Chart 2. The children of Earth and Sky.

let us take vengeance for your father's wicked outrage. For he first
devised unseemly deeds." 135

So she spoke, but fear seized them all, nor did
any of them speak. Then, taking courage, the crooked-counseling Kronos
answered his excellent mother: "Mother, I will undertake this deed,
and I will bring it to completion, for I do not like our father and his evil
name. It was *he* who first began unseemly deeds." 140

So he spoke,
and vast Earth rejoiced greatly in her heart. She took Kronos and hid
him in an ambush. She placed the saw-toothed sickle in his hands.
She laid out the whole plot. Great Sky came, dragging night, and he lay
all over Earth, wanting to make love, and he was spread out all over her.
Then the child reached out from his ambush with his left hand, 145
and with his right hand he held the huge sickle, long and saw-toothed,
and furiously he cut off his father's genitals, and he threw them away,
to fall backwards. They did not flee from his hand for nothing!

Earth received all the bloody drops that shook free, and as the years
rolled around, she bore Erinys and the great and mighty Giants, shining 150
in their armor and holding long spears in their hands, and she bore
the nymphs that people call the Ash Nymphs upon the boundless earth.^o
When he first cut off the genitals with his sickle made of an unconquerable
substance, he threw them from the land into the churning sea, where they

152. . . . *boundless earth*: The image is inconsistent. Sky and Earth are apparently locked in perpetual intercourse, so that her children cannot escape from her womb, the "hiding place," but still Sky comes along desiring sex. The castration of Sky, coming soon in the story, explains how Sky and Earth were separated and the children liberated. According to the pattern of the Succession Myth (see the General Introduction), the son, noted for his cleverness, will overthrow his stupid and brutish father. A sickle is the standard weapon against monsters, used by Perseus against the Gorgon Medusa, and by Herakles against the Lernaean Hydra. Drops from the severed genitals are like semen, fertilizing the Earth to produce Erinys (*er-in-is*), the vengeful spirit of violated oath (especially oaths of obligation toward one's parents), and the Giants, "Earth-born ones," distinguished not so much by their size as by their ferocity as warriors. The Ash-Tree Nymphs (*Meliiai*) are the spirits of ash trees, for some reason singled out here as primordial beings.

155 were borne for a long time over the waves, and a white foam [*aphros*]
arose around the deathless flesh. And in it a young woman was raised up.

She first came to holy CYTHERA, and then from there she arrived in
CYPRUS, wrapped in waves. She came forth an awful and beautiful goddess,
and around her slender feet grass grew. Men and gods call her Aphrodite,
160 a goddess born from the foam, and also lovely-crowned Cythereia—
because she was born of the foam, and Cythereia because she came
to Cythera. And Cyprogenea, because she was born on stormy Cyprus,
and Lover of Laughter because she came to light from the genitals.^o

Eros accompanied her, and beautiful Desire, when she first came
165 into being and went among the tribe of the gods. She has this honor from
the beginning, and has attained her portion among men and the deathless
gods—the whisperings of young girls, and their smiles and deceptions,
and sweet delight, and making love, and gentleness. Great Sky
called these offspring the Titans, insulting his own children, because,
170 he said, “tightening” with folly they undertook a great deed, for which
vengeance was soon to follow.^o

And Night bore hateful Doom and black
Fate and Death, and she bore Sleep, and she bore the tribe of Dreams.
Then she bore Blame and painful Misery—dark Night did, the goddess,

163. . . . *genitals*: Aphrodite is in origin the Eastern goddess of fertility and war, variously called Astartê, Ishtar, Inanna. Somehow “Aphrodite” comes from the Eastern name, but Hesiod provides a folk etymology for the name and derives it from the story of the castration of Sky, from *aphros*, the Greek word for “foam.” Aphrodite seems to have entered the Greek world via the island of CYPRUS, where Semitic-speaking people lived. She had a cult center at PAPHOS in the southwestern part of the island. There was also a cult of the goddess on the island of CYTHERA, off the southern coast of mainland Greece, no doubt brought by Semitic-speaking sailors—that is, Phoenicians. Her epithet “laughter-loving” (*philommeidês*) looks in Greek as if it means “genital-loving” (“genitals” in Greek is *medea*), hence Hesiod’s explanation that she came forth “from the genitals.” Hesiod is much interested in such folk etymologies.

165. . . . *of the gods*: Here Eros seems transmuted from the cosmic principle of generative energy into the Eros that means simply “sexual attraction,” which goes with Desire (*Himeros*) as a quality of Aphrodite.

171. . . . *to follow*: Again Hesiod puns, now on *titaino*, “to tighten,” which really means “to stretch,” as when drawing a bow.

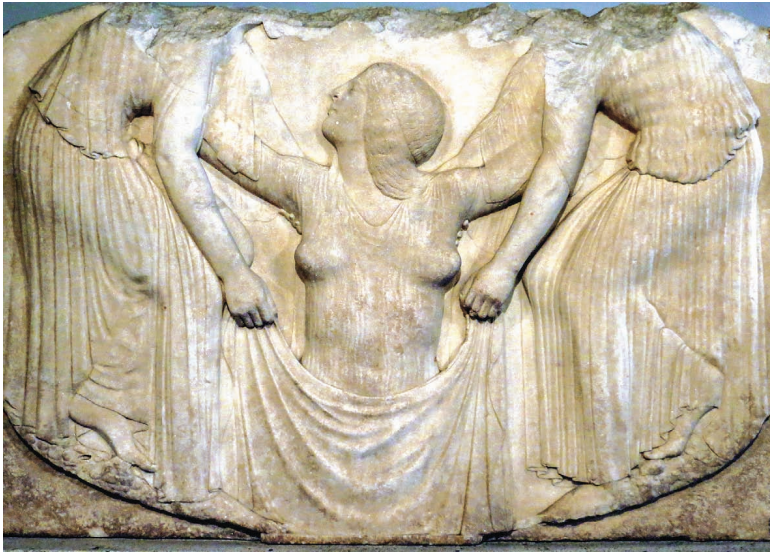
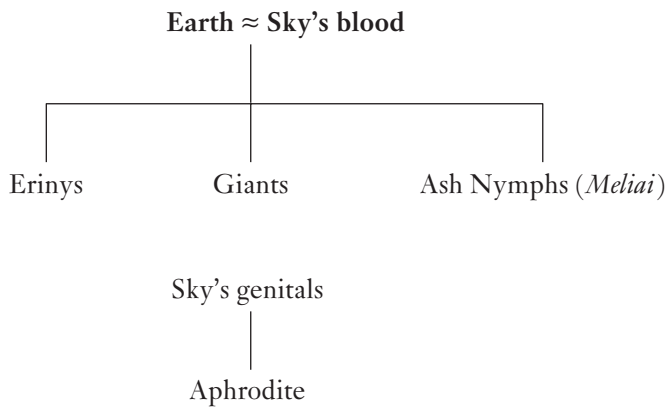


Figure 5. The birth of Aphrodite from the so-called Ludovisi Throne. Found in southern Italy, the marble slab was probably part of an altar. The naked goddess rises in the middle, received by two nymphs who stand on the rocky shore at either side. Museo Nazionale Romano of Palazzo Altemps, Rome (Photo: Sailko; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/98/Ludovisi_Throne_%288504016347%29.jpg)



Genealogical Chart 3. The offspring of Earth, the blood of Sky, and the birth of Aphrodite.

without having sex with anyone—and the Hesperidès, who care for the beautiful golden apples and the fruit-bearing trees beyond famous Ocean.° 175

And Night gave birth to the Destinies and the mercilessly punishing Fates [*Kêres*], Klotho and Lachesis and Atropos, who give good and bad to mortals at their birth, who follow the offenses of men and gods: Nor do the goddesses ever lay off their terrible anger before they take an evil vengeance against anyone who goes astray.° 180

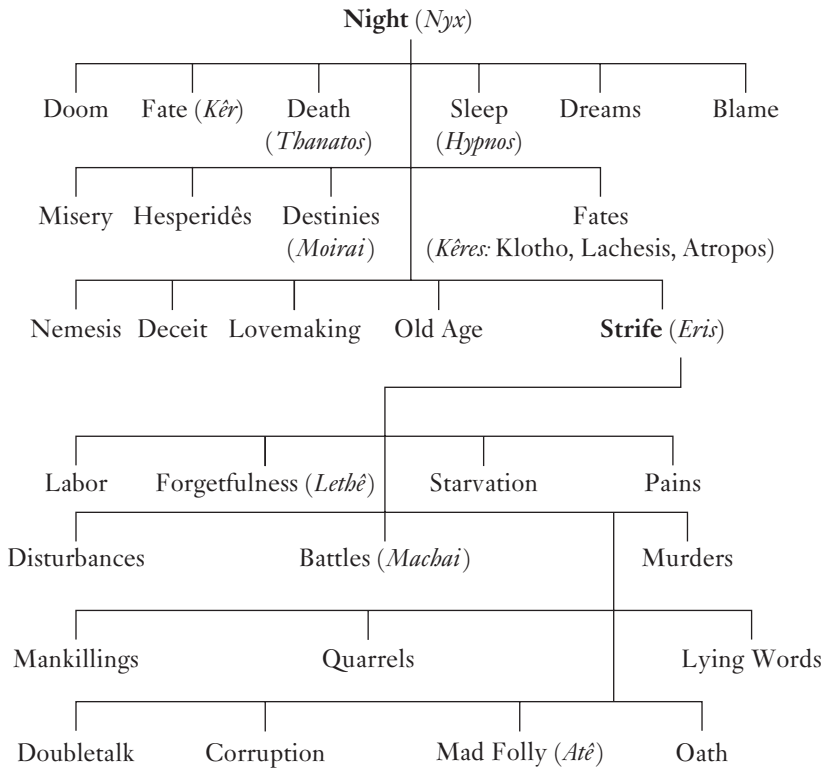
And dread Night bore Nemesis, a burden to mortal men, and afterwards Deceit and Lovemaking and wretched Old Age, and she bore soul-shaking Strife. And wicked Strife bore painful Labor and Forgetfulness and Starvation and tearful Pains and Disturbances and Battles and Murders and Mankillings and Quarrels and Lying Words and Doubletalk and Corruption 185 and Mad Folly—all related to one another; and Oath, which most afflicts mortals upon the earth with pain, when someone knowingly swears a false oath.°

And Sea begot Nereus, who never lies, and always tells the truth, the oldest of his children, but they call him the Old Man because he is unerring and kind, nor does he forget what laws are laid down, 190

175. . . . *famous Ocean*: Fate (*Kêr*) seems in origin to be a spirit of death, as we say “Lord Death,” a kind of being. Then *Kêr* comes to mean “mortal allotment,” “Fate,” and in the plural, the Fates. The Hesperidès, “nymphs of the West,” guarded a magical tree that grew in the west at the end of the world. On this tree grew the Golden Apples of Immortality. One of Herakles’ labors was to retrieve these apples. As dwellers in the western seas, where the sun sets, the Hesperidès were tantamount to spirits of death; hence they are the offspring of Night. Nemesis, “she who gives what is due,” is the spirit of retribution against excess, whether of good or evil.

180. . . . *goes astray*: Klotho means “spinner”; Lachesis, “disposer of lots”; and Atropos, “unbending.” The image of the Fates (here *Kêres*) is that they are like spinners, measuring out a length of thread, then cutting it off. They are also punitive spirits, aware of wrongdoing. Later (line 708–9) Hesiod says that Klotho, Lachesis, and Atropos are the names of the Moirai, “apportioners” or “destinies,” hence “Fates.”

188. . . . *a false oath*: These typical offspring of Night include Lovemaking because in adultery all manner of evils are made, including the Trojan War through the adultery of Paris with Helen. In origin an oath is a curse that one lays upon oneself, which will come to fruition if what one declares is false: If you swear falsely, then you invite punishment by Oath.



Genealogical Chart 4. The descendants of Night (*Nyx*) and Strife (*Eris*).

but his thoughts are just and kind. Uniting with Earth, Sea then begot
great Thaumatas and noble Phorkys, and Keto with beautiful cheeks,
and Eurybia, who has a heart of an unconquerable substance in her breast.°

Of Nereus and Doris of the lovely locks, daughter of Ocean, the circling
river, were born children in the restless sea, lovely among the goddesses— 195
Protho and Eukrantê and Sao and Amphitritê and Eudorê and Thetis
and Galenê and Glaukê and Kymothoê and swift Speo and darling
Thalia and Pasithea and Erato and Eunikê with arms like roses, and graceful
Melitê and Eulimenê and Agavê and Doto and Proto and Pherousa
and Dynamenê and Nesaiê and Aktaiê and Protomedeia and Doris 200
and Panopê and beautiful Galateia and darling Hippothoê
and Hipponoê with arms like roses, and Kymodokê, who together
with Kymatolegê and Amphitritê, who has fine ankles, easily calms
the waves on the misty sea and the blasts of savage winds, and Kymo
and Eionê and Halimedê with the fine crown, and Glaukonomê, 205
lover of laughter, and Pontoporeia and Leiagorê and Euagorê
and Laomedeia and Poulynoê and Autonoê and Lysianassa
and Euarnê, lovely in appearance and blameless in form, and Psamathê,
charming in her figure, and the divine Menippê and Neso and Eupompê
and Themisto and Pronoê and Nemertês, who has the mind 210
of her deathless father. These were the daughters of blameless Nereus,
fifty in number, knowing faultless crafts.°

Thaumatas united with Elektra,

193. . . . *in her breast*: Hesiod mixes up personifications with mythical figures: Thaumatas (“wonder”) is a personification of a quality of the Sea. Phorkys is an old spirit of the sea, its powers and dangers, just like Nereus, with whom he is often confused. Keto is “sea monster,” though with beautiful cheeks. Eurybia means “wide of strength,” but otherwise we know nothing about her.

212. . . . *faultless crafts*: The list of the fifty Nereids, the daughters of Nereus and Doris (a daughter of Ocean) is a tour de force, the sort of catalogue in which Hesiod excelled. The names mainly denote positive aspects of the sea: for example, Pasithea “all-divine”; Melitê “like honey”; Galenê “calm”; Kymothoê “wave-swift”; Pontoporeia “making for easy passage on the sea.” Mostly they are just names, but Thetis (of unknown meaning) is the mother of Achilles, and Amphitritê (meaning unknown) is the consort of Poseidon.



Figure 6. Amphitritê stands before Poseidon, her hand raised, as he holds a trident (most of the sea god is broken away). The inscription on the plaque reads, in Corinthian script, APHIRITAEMIPO—that is, “I am A[m]phirita [wife of] Po[seidon].” A[M]PHIRITA is Corinthian dialect for “Amphitritê.” Probably the letters in front of the trident, crowned with a circlet, spell out THR[IAINA]: that is, “trident.” Painted plaque, ca. 560 B.C., from Polyskoupia. Musée du Louvre, Paris (Photo: Marie-Lan Nguyen; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5f/Amphitrite_Penteskoupia_Louvre_MNC208.jpg)

the daughter of Ocean with his deep waves, and gave birth to swift
 Iris and the Harpies who have nice hair, Storm Wind and Fast Flier,
 who follow together the blasts of the winds and the birds on their
 swift wings, for they soar high in the air.^o 215

And Keto bore the Gray Old

Ladies, with beautiful cheeks, to Phorkys—gray from birth, whom
 the deathless gods and men who live on the earth call the Old Ladies,
 Pemphredo with the lovely gown and Enyo with the saffron gown—
 and the Gorgons, who live beyond famous Ocean at the edge of Night, 220
 where are the Hesperidês, with their high-pitched voices, Sthenno
 and Euryalê and Medusa, who came to a bad end. She was mortal,
 but the others were deathless and ageless, the two of them.

The Blue-haired god^o slept with Medusa on the gentle meadow
 amidst the spring flowers. And when Perseus cut off her head, 225
 great Chrysaor leaped out, and the horse Pegasos, so called because
 he was born near the springs [*pegai*] of Ocean. Chrysaor was called
 that because he held a golden [*chryseion*] sword in his hands.^o

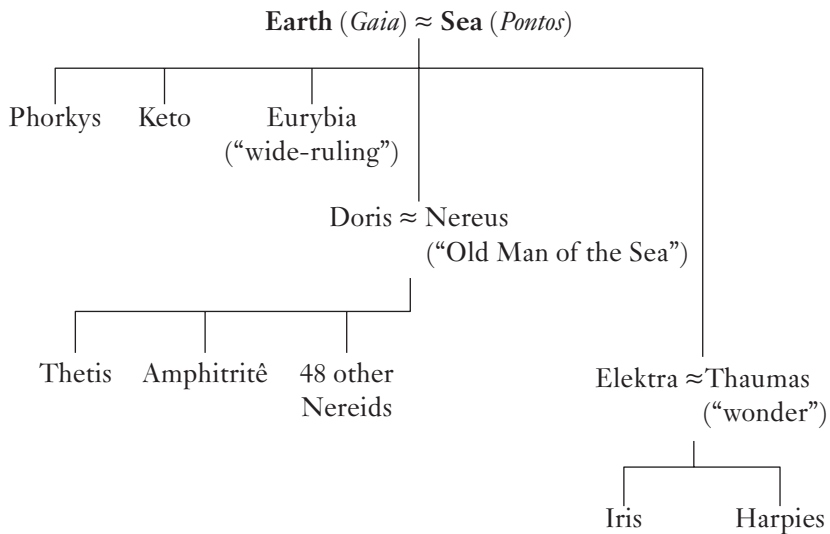
Now Pegasos flew off from the earth, the mother of sheep, and came
 to the deathless ones. He dwells in the house of Zeus, carrying the thunder 230
 and the lightning flash for Zeus the Counselor. Chrysaor begot three-headed
 Geryon, having united in love with Kallirhoê, the daughter of famous Ocean.

216. . . *high in the air*: Elektra the daughter of Ocean, is not to be confused with Elektra the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, or with Elektra the daughter of Atlas, one of the Pleiadês (*plê-a-dêz*). Elektra means “amber-colored.” Iris (“rainbow”) is the usual messenger of the gods in Homer’s *Iliad* (but not in the *Odyssey*). The Harpies, “snatchers,” are storm winds who, like the spirits of death, sweep one away. The Greek for “storm wind” is *Aello*, and “fast flier” is *Okypetê*.

223. . . *two of them*: The Gray Old Ladies are the *Graiai*, Pemphredo (perhaps “wasp”) and Enyo (“warlike”). Two of the Gorgons (“fierce ones”) are immortal: Sthenno (“strength”) and Euryalê (perhaps “she of the wide salt sea”). One is mortal: Medusa (“ruler”).

224. *Blue-haired god*: Poseidon.

228. . . *in his hands*: Perseus’ decapitation of Medusa is the central event in his legend. Chrysaor means “he of the golden sword.”



Genealogical Chart 5. The descendants of Earth and Sea.



Figure 7. The head of Medusa, from an Etruscan temple in Orvieto, Italy, ca. 380 B.C. The head is typical for its boar's tusks, lolling tongue, fearsome eyes and expression, and snaky hair. The temple in which the terra-cotta face was found appears to have been dedicated to Tinia, the Etruscan Zeus. The Etruscans admired Greek myth and adopted many of its main stories. Museo Claudio Faina, Italy (Photo: Sailko; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgoneia#/media/File:Gorgoneion_dal_tempio_di_belvedere,_orvieto,_fine_V_sec._ac..JPG)

The mighty Herakles killed Geryon beside his shamle-footed cattle
in Erytheia, surrounded by water, on the day when he rustled the broad-
235 browed cattle and drove them to holy TIRYNS, crossing the stream
of Ocean, and he killed Orthos and Eurytion the herdsman in the misty
farmstead beyond famous Ocean.^o

She^o bore another irresistible monster,
not like mortal men, nor like the deathless gods, in a hollow cave,
the divine and mighty Echidna, half a young girl with dashing eyes,
240 of beautiful cheeks, and half a savage snake, huge and terrible,
nimble and flesh-eating, beneath the hidden parts of the sacred earth.
There she^o has a cave deep under the hollow rock, far from the deathless
gods and mortal men, where the gods appointed a famous house
for her to live in.

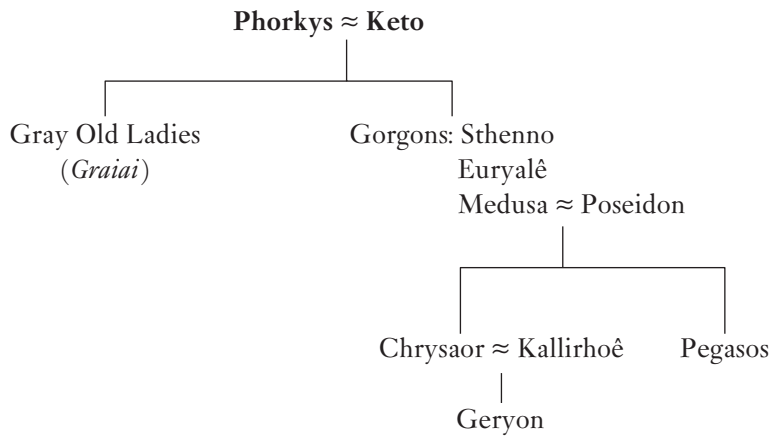
Gloomy Echidna dwells among the Arimoi
245 beneath the earth, the deathless young girl, ageless for all her days.^o
They say that Typhon—awful, violent, living without laws—made love
with the glancing-eyed girl, and that she conceived and brought forth
ferocious children. First she gave birth to Orthos, the hound of Geryon;
then she gave birth to Kerberos, irresistible, indescribable, the devourer
250 of raw flesh, the brazen-voiced hound of Hades with fifty heads,
ruthless and powerful. Third, she brought forth the Hydra of Lerna,
knowing only evil things, whom the goddess white-armed Hera

237. . . *famous Ocean*: Erytheia, “the red land,” is an island somewhere in the far West. Herakles, obeying the commands of his tyrannical cousin, Eurystheus, could reach it only by borrowing the “cup of the sun,” a special vessel by which the sun travels over the sky. Kallirhoë, “beautiful-flowing,” is an Oceanid, belonging to a group parallel to the Nereids but far greater in number (3,000: line 290). Orthos, “true,” was a savage, two-headed hound that with Eurytion (“easily flowing”) protected Geryon’s cattle (the meaning of “Geryon” is unknown).

237. *She*: Presumably Keto.

242. *there she*: Presumably Echidna, but because Hesiod goes on to speak otherwise of Echidna’s home, “she” may mean Keto.

245. . . *all her days*: It is unclear what is meant by “among the Arimoi,” but perhaps “among the Aramacans”: that is, the inhabitants of ancient SYRIA, from where this story may have come.



Genealogical Chart 6. The descendants of Phorkys and Keto.

raised up, being extremely angry with Herakles. Herakles, the son
of Zeus of the family of Amphitryon, killed the Hydra with his pitiless
255 bronze, joined by war-loving Iolaos, through the plans of Athena,
leader of the war host.^o

She^o gave birth to Chimaira, breathing deadly
fire, terrible, huge, swift-footed, and powerful. She had three heads:
one of a savage lion, one of a goat, one of a snake, a mighty serpent.
In the front she was a lion, in the back a serpent, in the middle a goat,
260 breathing out the awful strength of blazing fire. Pegasos and noble
Bellerophon killed her.

Chimaira gave birth to the Sphinx, the bane
of the Kadmeians, seduced in love by Orthos; and the Nemean Lion,
that Hera, glorious wife of Zeus, raised up and settled in the hills of NEMEA,
a plague to men. Dwelling there he preyed on the tribes
265 of people, having power over Tretos in the territory of Nemea
and Apesas, but the might of Herakles overcame him.^o

Keto united
in love with Phorkys and begot as her youngest child the dreadful
snake that guards the apples all of gold in the crannies of the dark
earth at its great limits.^o These are the offspring of Keto and Phorkys.

270 Tethys bore to Ocean the swirling rivers, NILE and ALPHEIOS
and deep-eddying Eridanos and Strymon and Maiandros and beautiful-

256. . . . *of the war host*: It was not until the fifth century B.C. that the adventures of Herakles were canonized as twelve in number. Hesiod here mentions the contest with Geryon, Kerberos, and the Lernaean Hydra, all children of the monstrous Typhon, who later in the poem will be Zeus's most formidable enemy (lines 646–85.). Lerna is a swamp in the southwestern Argive Plain. Iolaos, who assisted Herakles on this adventure, is Herakles' nephew.

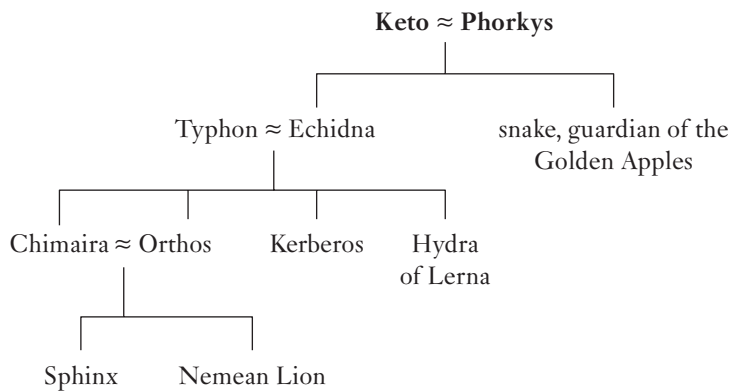
256. *She*: Echidna or Hydra; it is not clear which.

266. . . . *overcame him*: "She" could be Echidna or Chimaira ("she-goat") but is probably Chimaira. The Kadmeians, "descendants of Kadmos," are the Thebans, whom the Sphinx persecuted. Tretos and Apesas are mountains between MYCENAE and CORINTH. After killing the Nemean Lion, Herakles wore his skin as a cloak and helmet.

269. . . . *great limits*: That is, the snake who guards the Golden Apples of the Hesperidēs on the tree that grows at the edge of the world (elsewhere the snake is called Ladon, the name of a river that Hesiod is about to mention).



Figure 8. The Chimaira, a monster with the body of a lion, a goat growing from its back, and a serpent for a tail. South Italian red-figure dish, ca. 350–340 B.C., Musée du Louvre, Paris (Photo: Jastrow; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b3/Chimera_Apulia_Louvre_K362.jpg)



Genealogical Chart 7. Other descendants of Keto and Phorkys.

flowing Ister and Phasis and Rhesos and silver-swirling Acheloös
and Nessos and Rhodios and Haliakmon and Heptaporos and Granikos
and divine Aisepos and Simoeis and PENEIOS and broad HERMOS
and the fair stream of Kaïkos and great Sangarios and Ladon
and Parthenios and Euenos and divine Ardeskos and Skamandros.^o 275

She gave birth to a holy race of daughters, who care for youths
over the earth, along with Apollo the king, and the Rivers, and they
have this lot from Zeus: Peitho and Admetê and Ianthê
and Elektra and Doris and Prynno and godlike Ouraniê 280
and Hippo and Klymenê and Rhodeia and Kallirhoê and Zeuxo
and Klytiê and Eiduia and Pasithoê and Plexaurê and Galaxaurê
and lovely Dionê and Melobosis and Thoê and handsome Polydorê
and Kerkeïs, lovely in appearance, and cow-eyed Plouto, Perseïs
and Ianeira and Akastê and Xanthê and fair Petraïê and Menestho 285
and Europê and Metis and Eurynomê and Telesto with the saffron
gown and Chryseïs and Asiê and desirable Kalypso and Eudorê
and Tychê and Amphiro and Okyrhoê and Styx, who stood out
from all the rest.^o

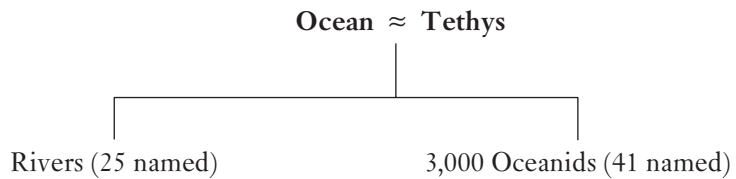
276. . . . *Skamandros*: The NILE is not mentioned in Homer, where the river is called *Aigyptos*, Eridanos was later identified with the PO RIVER in northern Italy; Strymon is in THRACE; Ister is the DANUBE; Phasis is a legendary river thought to be at the eastern end of the BLACK SEA; Rhesos is unknown but perhaps a tributary of the Granikos, northeast of TROY; several rivers were named Acheloös, but probably what is meant is the one in the southwestern mainland, the largest river in Greece; Rhodios is in the Troad, flowing down from Mount Ida; Haliakmon is in MACEDONIA; Heptaporos is in the Troad, a tributary of Skamandros; Granikos, Aisepos, and Simoeis are in the Troad; PENEIOS is in THESSALY; HERMOS is in LYDIA, flowing past Sardis, and the Kaïkos is farther north; Sangarios is in PHRYGIA; Ladon is in ARCADIA, a tributary of ALPHEIOS; Parthenios is a small river on the southern shore of the Black Sea; Euenos is in western mainland Greece, where Herakles fought the centaur Nessos, but the Nessos River appears to be in Thrace; Ardeskos is someplace in Thrace; Skamandros is in the Troad. There is little order in this list, reflecting Hesiod's ignorance of real geography.

289. . . . *all the rest*: The Oceanids listed here have a variable importance, or none at all; many seem to have been invented for this catalogue. Some may be the names of real springs; some have no connection with water at all. Their only function, according to Hesiod, is to care for the young. Peitho, "persuasion," is a nymph who adorns Pandora, along with the Graces (*Works and Days*, line 75); Admetê, "unbroken," is appropriate to a nourisher of

These were the oldest offspring of Ocean and Tethys,
 290 but there are many more besides. There are three thousand slender-ankled
 Oceanids, who, dispersed abroad over the earth and the depth
 of the waters, in every place serve alike, the glorious children
 of goddesses. As many other rivers as there are, babbling along,
 the sons of Ocean, whom the revered Tethys bore—of them
 295 it would be hard for a mortal man to tell all the names, but those people
 know who live near them.

And Theia, submitting in love to Hyperion,
 bore great Helios and shining Moon and Dawn, who shines for all
 upon the earth and for the deathless gods who possess broad heaven.
 Eurybia, the awesome goddess, mixing in love with Kreios begot
 300 great Astraios and great Pallas and Persês, who stands out among

(289. continued) youths; Ianthê, “violet,” may refer to the color of a spring; Elektra, “amber-colored,” was wife of the sea god Thaumas and the mother of the messenger goddess Iris and the Harpies; Doris, “giver,” was the mother of the Nereids; Prymno, “undermost,” was perhaps a nymph of the groundwater; Ouraniê, “heavenly,” was also the name of one of the Muses. Aquatic deities are often associated with horses, or represented as them, hence Hippo, “horse.” Klymenê, “famous one,” was the wife of the Titan Iapetos and mother of Prometheus; Rhodeia means “rose-colored”; Kallirhoê, “fair-flowing,” was the mother of Geryon; Zeuxo’s name, “she who joins,” marks her as a goddess of marriage; Eidoia, “knowing,” was wife to King Aietês of COLCHIS and the mother of Medea, perhaps a goddess of witchcraft; Pasithoê, “all-swift,” may refer to a fast-flowing spring; Plexaurê perhaps means “water-weaver,” and Galaxaurê means “water like milk”; Dionê, “female Zeus,” was Zeus’s consort at the oracular shrine of Dodona in northwestern Greece; Melobosis, “sheep feeder,” is probably a nymph of grassy pastures; Thoê means “swift”; Polydorê is “much-giver,” and Plouto is “wealth”; Kerkeïs is obscure; Perseïs, “destroyer,” is the mother by Helios of the Eastern despot Aietês and the witch Circe (“hawk”); Ianeira is perhaps goddess of the Ionians; Akastê, “irregular,” Xanthê, “yellow,” Petraîê, “rocky,” and Menestho, perhaps “lasting,” refer to qualities of springs; Europa is goddess of the continent and the name of a spring in Dodona. Metis, “mind,” is Zeus’s first consort; Eurynomê, “wide-ruling,” is Zeus’s third consort and mother of the Graces; Telesto means “accomplisher”; Chryseïs is “golden”; Asia, perhaps “muddy,” is the goddess of the territory of Lydia, the sister of Europa, and the wife of Prometheus; Kalypso, “concealer,” is probably not the Kalypso (the daughter of Atlas, not of Ocean) who imprisoned Odysseus for seven years in the *Odyssey* (7.259); Eudorê is “well-giving”; Tychê is “chance,” “luck,” a great goddess in later times; Amphiro is “flowing-around,” and Okyrhoê is “swift-flowing.” Styx, “hateful,” is the famous river of the underworld.



Genealogical Chart 8. The children of Ocean and Tethys.

all wise men.^o

Dawn bore to Astraïos the powerful winds,
the brightening West Wind and swift North Wind and South Wind,
a goddess lying in love with a god. After these Early-Born bore the star
Dawn Bringer and the shining Stars that crown the heaven.^o

And Styx,

305 the daughter of Ocean, sleeping with Pallas, begot Emulation
and Victory, with slender ankles, in the house. And Styx begot Strength
and Power, splendid children.^o They have no house apart from Zeus,
nor any seat, nor any path except that whereon the god leads them,
but always they take their seat beside loud-thundering Zeus.

310 For so did Styx, the deathless Oceanid, decide on that day when
the Olympian who hurls the lightning^o called together all
the deathless gods to high Olympos, and he said that whoever
of the gods would fight along with him against the Titans,
that they would not be deprived of their reward, but would have,
315 each of them, the honor that he had before among the deathless gods.
He said too that whoever was without honor and reward under
the reign of Kronos would receive honor and reward, as is right.

Deathless Styx first came to Olympos with her children through
the devising of her father. Zeus honored her and gave her exceptional
320 gifts. He made her to be the great oath of the gods,^o and her children

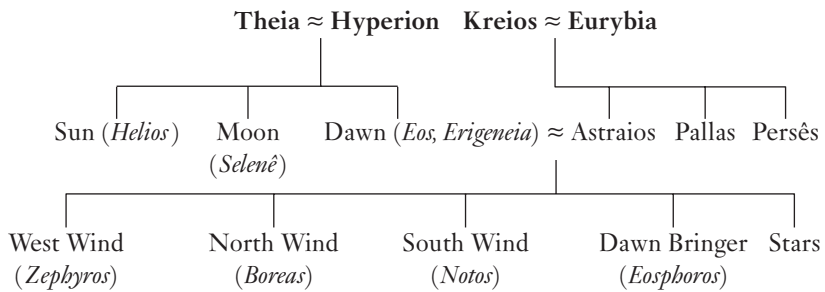
301. . . . *all wise men*: The Sun is *Helios*, the Moon is *Selenê*, and Dawn is *Eos*. The children of Kreios are nonentities: Astraïos, “starry,” is perhaps invented as the father of the stars. Pallas is utterly obscure, as is his relationship to Pallas Athena, to a Giant of the same name whom she killed, and to an early Athenian hero of the same name. Persês is the father of Hekâtê.

304. . . . *the heaven*: West Wind is *Zephyros*; North Wind is *Boreas*; South Wind is *Notos*. Early-Born is *Erigenëia*, a title of Dawn (*Eos*); Dawn Bringer is *Eosphoros*: that is, Venus, the only planet mentioned in Greek literature before the fourth century B.C., the brightest star in the sky, appearing only in the morning and evening.

307. . . . *splendid children*: Emulation is *Zelos*; Victory is *Nikê*; Strength is *Kratos*; Power is *Bia*.

311. . . . *lightning*: Zeus.

320. *oath of the gods*: Only gods could swear by Styx; such an oath could never be broken.



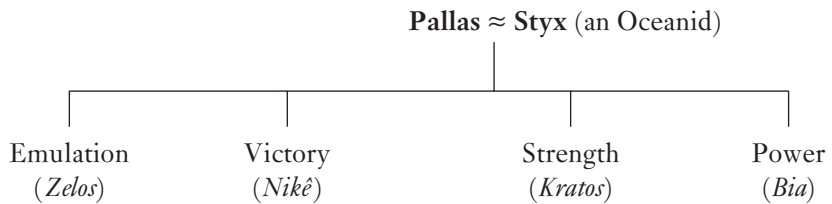
Genealogical Chart 9. The descendants of Theia and Hyperion and of Kreios and Eurybia.

to live with him for all their days. And just as he promised,
he brought it about fully for all, for he himself reigns and rules
with power.

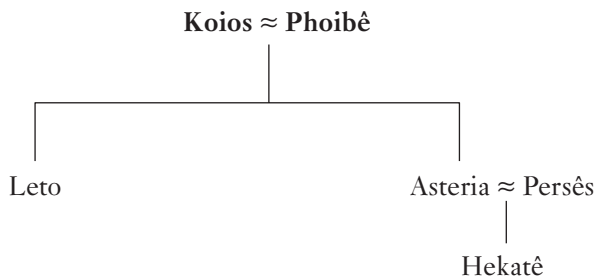
Then Phoibê came to the much-beloved bed of Koios.
The goddess, sleeping with the god, conceived and gave birth
325 to dark-gowned Leto, always gentle, sweet to men and the deathless
gods, gentle from the beginning, the most kindly of those in Olympos.
Phoibê begot the honored Asteria, whom Persês led into his great
house to be called his dear wife.

And Asteria conceived and gave birth
to Hekatê, whom Zeus, the son of Kronos, honored above all others.^o
330 He gave her splendid gifts, to have a share of the earth and of the barren sea.
He allotted her honor in the starry heaven, and she is honored
especially by all the deathless gods. And even now, when someone
of earth-dwelling men makes a lovely holy sacrifice, and prays for favor
according to custom, he calls out to Hekatê. Much honor easily
335 follows him whose prayers the goddess eagerly follows, and she sends
wealth to him, for she has the power to do so. For among as many
as were born from Earth and Sky, and have received their apportionment
of honor, she has her due. Nor did the son of Kronos do her violence
nor take anything away from what she had been apportioned among
340 the former Titan gods, but she holds her reward upon the earth
and in heaven and on the sea, as much as was the first division
from the beginning. Nor, because she was an only child, did the goddess
receive less honor, but she holds even much more, because Zeus
honors her. As she wishes, she stands at one's side and assists
345 with all her power. She sits beside respected chiefs in judgment

329. . . . *above all others*: Asteria was also a name of the island of DELOS, where Leto gave birth to Apollo and Artemis. In later times Hekatê was a goddess of the crossroads, of witchcraft, magic, and the occult arts, but in Hesiod she is a great goddess of boundless benevolence, with whom Hesiod perhaps had a personal relationship. Her cult seems to come from CARIA, in southern Asia Minor, where Hesiod's father may have had connections. Perhaps for this reason he named Hesiod's brother Persês (in *Works and Days*), the name of Hekatê's father. Hekatê plays little role in Greek myth.



Genealogical Chart 10. The children of Pallas and Styx.



Genealogical Chart 11. The descendants of Koios and Phoibê.

and, in the assembly, that man stands out among the people, whomever she wishes.

And when men arm themselves for man-destroying war, then the goddess is there, and she happily grants victory and extends glory to whomever she wishes. Good is she to stand by horsemen,
350 whomever she wishes, and also when men contend at the games: There the goddess stands at their side and gives assistance. And when someone conquers with strength and power, he easily carries the noble contest, rejoicing, and he brings glory to his parents.

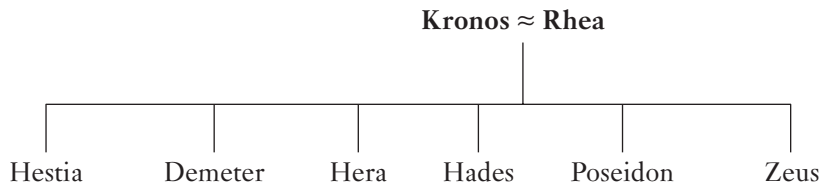
And to those who work the blue
distempered sea, who pray to Hekatê and to the loud-crashing Earthshaker,^o
355 the reverend goddess easily grants an abundant catch, and she easily takes it back when it appears, if she wishes. She is good at increasing, with the help of Hermes, the flocks in the fold. She increases from a few the herds of cattle and the broad herds of goats and the flocks of fleecy sheep, if she wishes, or makes the many to be less.

Thus, though
360 her mother begot but one child, she is honored by all the deathless gods. The son of Kronos made her to be a nurse of youths who after her see with their eyes the light of the all-seeing Dawn. And so from the beginning she is the nurse of the young, and such are her spheres of influence. Rhea, sleeping with Kronos, bore splendid children, Hestia and Demeter
365 and Hera with the golden sandals and powerful Hades, who dwells beneath the earth with his pitiless heart, and loud-crashing, earthshaking Poseidon, and wily Zeus, the father of gods and men, who shakes the broad earth with his thunder.^o

And great Kronos swallowed them

354. *Earthshaker*: Poseidon.

368. . . . *with his thunder*: Hestia is the goddess of the hearth, the *focus* (Latin for “hearth”) of household activity; she has few myths. Demeter is the goddess of the grain harvest, whose daughter, Persephone, was snatched away by Hades (“unseen”), god of the underworld, to be his bride. Hera is the wife of Zeus, the goddess of marriage, who persecutes Zeus’s illegitimate offspring (especially Herakles). Poseidon is lord of the sea and is besides god of earthquakes and horses. Zeus is the Greek storm god. All ancient pantheons had a storm god, the power that causes rain and lightning.



Genealogical Chart 12. The children of Kronos and Rhea.

down as each came forth from the holy womb at the knees of its mother.^o
370 His intention was to prevent one of the illustrious descendants of Sky
from taking the kingly honor among the gods. For Kronos had learned
from Earth and starry Sky that he was destined to be overthrown
by his own son, strong though he himself was, through the devices of great
Zeus. He kept no blind man's watch, but keeping alert he swallowed
375 down his children.

Unceasing pain took hold of Rhea. But when
she was about to give birth to Zeus, the father of gods and men,
then she begged her own dear parents, Earth and starry Sky,
to concoct some plan whereby she might secretly conceal the birth
of her dear child, and make the great wily Kronos pay the Erinyes
380 of her father, Sky, and of the children whom he had swallowed.^o

They readily listened to their daughter and obeyed her, and they
advised her about what was destined to happen to King Kronos
and his powerful son. They sent her to LYKTOS, in the rich land of CRETE,
when she was about to give birth to her youngest child, great Zeus.
385 Great Earth received him from Rhea in broad Crete to raise up
and to nourish. There Earth came, carrying him through the swift
black night, to Lyktos first, and she took him up in her hands and hid
him in a remote cave beneath the crannies of the holy earth, in a wood,
thick with trees, on Mount Aigaion.^o But for the great ruling son of Sky,

369. . . . *its mother*: Greek women gave birth in a squatting position.

380. . . . *he swallowed*: Erinyes (or the Erinyes) came into being when Kronos castrated his father, Sky, emerging from the drops of blood that fell on Earth (lines 149–50). Erinyes represent (sometimes) the spirits of vengeance when a wrong has been done, in this case by a father against his children. Sky and Kronos' children have Erinyes because of Kronos' evil behavior.

389. . . . *Mount Aigaion*: Hesiod's Succession Myth, inherited from the Near East, here attaches to local Cretan traditions, wherein a male year-spirit, who is born and dies annually, is raised in a cave and celebrated by young men banging shields. The Greeks identified this Minoan, non-Greek god with their own Zeus; the supposed grave of Zeus was shown in Crete during the Classical period. LYKTOS is in east-central Crete, on the western slope of Mount Lasithi. The cave that Hesiod refers to may be the Psychro Cave, off the high plateau of Mount Lasithi fairly near Lyktos, where votive offerings have been

king of the earlier gods, she wrapped a huge stone in swaddling clothes 390
 and gave it to him. He took it in his hands and pushed it down into his belly
 —the wretch! He did not know in his heart that, instead of the stone,
 his own son was left behind safe and sound. That son was soon to overcome
 Kronos by force and might and take away his office and himself rule
 among the deathless ones. 395

Then the strength and shining limbs of this king
 increased quickly. And as the year rolled around, the great wily Kronos,
 deceived by the eloquent suggestions of Earth, vomited up his offspring,
 overcome by the arts and power of his own son.^o First he vomited
 up the stone, which he had swallowed last. Zeus set it up in the wide-pathed
 earth in most holy Pytho,^o beneath the valleys of PARNASSOS, to be a sign 400
 in later times, a wonder for mortal men.

And he loosed his uncles,
 the children of Sky, from their deadly bonds, whom their own father
 had bound in his madness. They were mindful of his kindness, and they
 gave him the thunder and the shining thunderbolt and the lightning.
 Before that, huge Earth had hidden them. Trusting in them, Zeus rules 405
 over mortals and the deathless ones.^o

Iapetos took to wife the nymph
 Klymenê with the slender ankles, daughter of Ocean, and he went up
 into her bed. She gave birth to the child Atlas with his powerful mind,
 and she bore the very famous Menoitios and the versatile Prometheus,
 his mind filled with tricks, and scatterbrained Epimetheus, who from 410
 the beginning gave birth to evil for bread-nourished men. For he first

(389. continued) found, but others place the cave on Mount Ida, in central Crete. Mount Aigaion, “goat mountain,” is otherwise unattested but may be an ancient name for Mount Lasithi.

398. . . . *own son*: Hesiod does not say how Zeus forced Kronos to vomit up his children, but later reports say that he administered an emetic drug.

400. *Pytho*: Delphi.

406. . . . *deathless ones*: Zeus’s uncles are the Cyclopês, who forged the thunderbolt by which Zeus overcame the Titans. Earlier they were imprisoned in Tartaros by Sky.

received from Zeus the molded virgin as his wife.[°] Far-seeing Zeus
threw down the violent Menoitios into Erebos,[°] hitting him with a smoking
thunderbolt because of his foolishness and his horrendous pride.

415 Atlas holds the broad sky from powerful necessity, standing at the ends
of the earth near the shrill-voiced Hesperidēs, with his inexhaustible
head and arms; for wily Zeus assigned this fate for him.

He bound

the clever Prometheus in unbreakable bonds, savage chains, and drove
a shaft through his torso, and he sent a long-winged eagle upon him,
420 who devoured his immortal liver. But it grew back in the night,
as much as the long-winged bird ate in the whole day. Herakles,
the powerful son of Alkmenē with the beautiful ankles, killed the eagle
and warded off the evil affliction from the son of Iapetos, freeing
him from his suffering, and not against the will of Olympian Zeus,
425 who reigns on high, so that the glory of Theban-born Herakles might
be still more than before upon the rich earth.

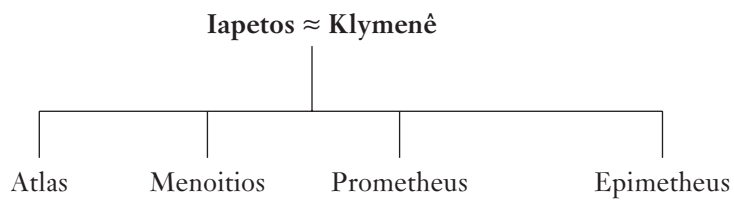
Thinking of this, Zeus honored

his excellent son, and though he was angry he gave up his anger that
he held before because Prometheus had matched wits with the mighty
son of Kronos. For when gods and mortal men disputed at Mekonē,
430 Prometheus divided up and set before them the portions of a great
bull with eager heart, deceiving the mind of Zeus.[°] For he set out before him

412. . . . *as his wife*: Atlas is later punished—we do not know why—by being forced to hold up the sky on his shoulders. Menoitios (the same name as the father of Patroklos in the *Iliad*) is utterly obscure. The etymology of “Prometheus” is unclear, but Hesiod seems to have understood it as “forethinker.” Epimetheus, who may be Hesiod’s invention, means “afterthinker.” Epimetheus acts like a man, not a god, and in other accounts he is the husband of Pandora and the father of Pyrrha, who marries the son of Prometheus, Deukalion, the Greek Noah. Pandora is “molded” because Hephaistos made her from earth.

413. *Erebos*: Darkness: that is, the underworld.

431. . . . *mind of Zeus*: Mekonē is an old name for SIKYON, a town to the west of Corinth on the Gulf of Corinth in the PELOPONNESUS. This etiological myth, set in a time when men and gods dined together, explains why in Greek sacrificial ritual the gods are given the bones wrapped in fat, but men eat the delicious flesh and the entrails. The myth marks the division between men and gods.



Genealogical Chart 13. The descendants of Iapetos and Klymenê.



Figure 9. The punishments of Atlas and Prometheus. Atlas, accompanied by a snake, holds the world on his shoulders. Prometheus is bound to a pillar surmounted by a crow while an eagle plucks at his chest. Athenian black-figure wine cup, ca. 550 B.C. Vatican Museums, Vatican City (Photo: Karl-Ludwig G. Poggemann; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a8/Atlas_Typhon_Prometheus.pdf/page1-1258px-Atlas_Typhon_Prometheus.pdf.jpg)

on the hide the flesh and the entrails rich with fat, concealing them with the bull's stomach, and then he set out before him in turn the white bones of the bull as a cunning trick, attractively concealing them with shining fat. Then the father of men and gods said to Prometheus: "O son of Iapetos, most excellent of all the gods—wow! How you have divided the portions unequally!" So Zeus spoke with a sneer, knowing all things forever. 435

But wily Prometheus answered him, with a slight smile, not forgetting his cunning deception: "Most glorious and greatest of the everlasting gods, of this offering take whatever your spirit within urges you to." 440

So he spoke, keeping his trick in mind. Zeus, who knows all things forever, knew and recognized the trick, but he intended evil for mortal man, which was to come to pass.^o He took up in both his hands the white fat, and he was angry in his heart, and anger overcame his spirit when he saw the white bones of the bull cunningly decked out. And this is the reason that the tribes of men upon the earth burn the white bones to the gods on the smoking altars. 445

Greatly enraged, cloud-gathering Zeus spoke to Prometheus: "O son of Iapetos, always up to your tricks! So, you have still not let up from your trickery!" Thus spoke Zeus in anger, who knows all things forever. From that time, always mindful of the trick, he has not given to ash trees the strength of untiring fire for mortal men.^o 450

But the brave son of Iapetos deceived him when he stole the far-seeing gleam of untiring fire in a hollow stalk of fennel.^o This act stung him to the depths of his spirit, Zeus, who thunders on high,

443. . . . *to pass*: No doubt in an earlier version Zeus was deceived by the trick, but Hesiod wants to preserve the great god's omniscience.

452. . . . *for mortal men*: Evidently referring to a widespread belief that fire lies hidden within trees, so that when you rub pieces of wood together vigorously you can start a fire. Also, lightning that strikes trees will often start a fire. The ash is a common tree in Greece.

453. *fennel*: Not actually a fennel, the Giant Fennel (*narthex*) is a common plant near the Mediterranean. It has a brilliant yellow flower and a thick stalk whose pith can hold a coal without burning through to the outer rind. It was often used, and still is, to transport fire.

455 and his heart grew angry when he saw the far-seeing gleam of fire
among men. He immediately fashioned an evil for men, to balance
out the fire.

The famous crippled god, Hephaistos, made from earth
the likeness of a modest young woman through the devisings of the son
of Kronos. Flashing-eyed Athena wrapped and adorned her in silvery
460 cloth, and with her hands she drew down over her head an embroidered
veil, a marvel to see. And around her head Pallas Athena placed garlands,
the flowers of fresh-blooming grass, seductive. And around her head
she placed a golden band that the very clever lame god himself had made,
working it in his hands, giving pleasure to Father Zeus. He worked
465 into it many ingenious designs, a wonder to see, of wild animals
of the kind that inhabit the sea and the dry land—of these wonderful
things he placed many examples, like living things with voices,
and a great beauty shone from it.

But when he had made the beautiful
evil as the price for the good,^o he brought her forth to where the other
470 gods were, and men, rejoicing in the finery of the flashing-eyed daughter
of loud-thundering Zeus.^o Amazement filled the deathless gods and mortal
men when they saw the bitter deception, which men could not withstand.
From her comes the race of tender women, who dwell among men as a great
affliction for mortals, not bearing up well in Poverty, but happy in Plenty.^o

475 As when bees in roofed hives feed the drones, always up to their evil
deeds—the bees are busy by day, and all day long until the sun goes down
they lay out the white honeycombs while the drones stay inside the roofed
hives and gather the labor of others into their bellies—even so Zeus,
who thunders on high, made women an evil for mortal men, conspirators
480 in harsh deeds.

And he gave a second evil in return for the good:

469. *for the good*: The gift of fire.

471. . . . *loud-thundering Zeus*: The “daughter” is Athena.

474. . . . *Plenty*: Here Poverty and Plenty are personified, as if they were gods.

For whoever flees from marriage and the oppressive ways of women
 and wishes not to marry, then a wretched old age comes upon him,
 and no one to care for him. And although he lives with sufficient substance,
 when he dies distant relatives divide up his estate. As for the man
 who chooses marriage as his lot, and takes a pleasant wife suited 485
 to his own mind, from the beginning evil goes with the good.
 Whoever happens to have a troublemaking wife, he lives with
 endless sorrow in his heart and his breast—this evil cannot be cured!

And so you cannot deceive or get around the mind of Zeus.
 For not even the generous Prometheus, the son of Iapetos, escaped 490
 his heavy anger, but by necessity, though he knew many things, great
 bonds hold him down.

When first Father Sky grew angry in his heart
 at Briareos and Kottos and Gygēs,^o he bound them in powerful bonds,
 amazed at their extraordinary manliness and their good looks and their size.
 He made them live beneath the wide-wayed earth. There, dwelling beneath 495
 the earth at the end of creation, at the limits of its greatness, they were
 afflicted for a long time, having great suffering in their hearts.
 But the son of Kronos and the other deathless gods, which bright-haired
 Rhea begot in lovemaking with Kronos, brought them up again
 into the light on Earth's cunning advice. 500

Earth went through the whole
 thing thoroughly with them, explaining how they could be victorious
 and win splendid fame; for the Titans and the gods, as many as were
 begotten by Kronos, were fighting furiously with one another, the bold
 Titans from forested MOUNT OTHRYS, and the gods, the givers of good
 things, from MOUNT OLYMPOS—those whom bright-haired Rhea 505
 had given birth to, after bedding with Kronos.^o They had fought

493. . . . *Gygēs*: The Hundred-Handers. Apparently Sky imprisoned them in Tartaros at the time of his oppression of Earth and her children.

506. . . . *bedding with Kronos*: MOUNT OTHRYS (6,560 feet high), lies on the southwestern plain of THESSALY, and Mount Olympos (9,600 feet high) to its north, so that the battle between the gods and the Titans, the Titanomachy, must have taken place on the plain itself.

with one another in bitter rage continually for more than ten years,
but there was no resolution or end to their hard anger on either side,
and the outcome of the war hung in the balance. But when Zeus provided
510 the Hundred-Handers with all things required, nectar and ambrosia,^o
the food of the gods, the bold spirit increased in the breasts of them all.

And when they had eaten the nectar and the lovely ambrosia,
then the father of men and gods addressed them: "Listen to me,
you, glorious children of Earth and Sky, while I speak what is in my heart.
515 Already for a long time, all day long, we—the gods born of Kronos—
have struggled with the Titans, trying through strength to gain victory.
So show forth your great power and your unconquerable hands
and fight against the Titans in mournful battle. Remember our kind
friendship and all that you suffered before coming back to the light from
520 your cruel bonds in the misty gloom, thanks to our devising."

So he spoke.

And blameless Kottos answered him immediately:^o "Divine one,
you do not speak what we do not know. We know by ourselves
that your wisdom is superior, that your mind is superior, and that
you have become the defender of the deathless ones from a gory doom.
525 Through your plots we have come back from the misty darkness,
away from our cruel bonds, O King, son of Kronos, experiencing
what we had never hoped for. For this reason we will now
assist your power in dread battle with a fixed purpose and a deliberate
will to fight against the Titans in mighty war."

530 So Kottos spoke,
and the gods, the givers of good things, shouted approval when they
heard his speech, and their spirits longed for war still more than before.
All stirred hated battle on that day, the females and the males, both
the Titan gods and those begotten of Kronos, and those whom Zeus

510. *ambrosia*: Usually *nectar* is the drink, and *ambrosia* is the solid food, of the gods. The meaning of *nectar* seems to be "what overcomes death"; *ambrosia* means "undying."

521. . . . *immediately*: It is not obvious why Kottos should be spokesman.

brought to the light from the Dark Place beneath the earth, those terrible
and powerful ones, capable of overwhelming violence. One hundred arms 535
sprang forth from their shoulders on each alike, and each had fifty heads
growing from his shoulders on top of his powerful limbs.

Well then,
the Hundred-Handers stood against the Titans in grim war, holding jagged
rocks in their mighty hands. But the Titans, on their side, eagerly formed
up into ranks, and each side showed forth the strength of their hands. 540
And the vast sea echoed terribly, and the earth crashed loudly,
and the broad heaven, shaken, groaned. High Olympos wobbled
on its foundations under the charge of the deathless ones, and a heavy
quaking came to shadowy Tartaros from the deep sound of feet
and the loud noise of horrid rout and the powerful missiles. 545
And so they cast their groaning shafts at one another. The voices
of either side reached the starry heaven as they shouted. They came together
with a great battle cry. Nor did Zeus any more hold back his strength,
but his whole mind was filled with power, and he showed forth all his might. 550
Straightaway he came from the sky and from Olympos, constantly
hurling the lightning. The bolts flew thick and fast from his powerful
hand, accompanied by thunder and flashing, rolling along a sacred fire.
The life-bearing earth, groaning, was burned up, and the endless forest
burst into huge flames. The whole earth was boiling and the currents of
Ocean and the tireless sea. 555

A hot breath surrounded the Titans, the children
of Earth, and an unending fire rose into the shining sky, and the coruscating
brilliance of the thunderbolt and lightning blinded their eyes, though they
were powerful. A wondrous heat took hold of the region below the earth.
To see it with one's eyes, and to hear the sound with one's ears, was as if
Earth and broad Sky had come together—so great would have been the roar 560
of the one being fallen upon, and of the other falling down: So great
was the roar of the gods clashing in anger. The winds raised up a bustle
of dust and thunder and lightning and the shining thunderbolt—the shafts
of great Zeus—and they carried the shouting and the crash of battle

565 into the midst of the two sides. A great hubbub of savage strife arose
and mighty deeds were done.

And then the battle turned. Before then
they lay on one another and fought continuously in horrid contention.
And among the foremost Kottos and Briareos and Gygês, insatiate of combat,
waged bitter war. From their powerful hands they sent forth three-hundred
570 rocks, one after another, and with their weapons they threw a shadow
over the Titans. And they sent them beneath the broad-wayed earth
and bound them in agonizing bonds, overcoming them with their hands,
though they were very strong, as far beneath the earth as the earth
is from the sky: So far is it from the earth into misty Tartaros.

For nine nights
575 and days an anvil of bronze might fall from the sky, and on the tenth
it would arrive on earth; for nine nights and days an anvil of bronze
might fall from the earth, and on the tenth it would arrive in Tartaros.
A fence of bronze runs all around it, and night is poured all around
in three layers, and above are the roots of the earth and of the restless sea.
580 There the divine Titans are imprisoned in the misty darkness,
through the will of cloud-gathering Zeus, in a dank place at the ends
of the huge earth. There is no way out, but Poseidon has set up doors
of bronze, and a wall surrounds it from all sides. There Gygês
and Kottos and great-spirited Briareos dwell, the trusted guards
585 of Zeus, who carries the goatskin fetish. There, all in order, are
the sources and the bounds of gloomy earth and misty Tartaros
and the restless sea and the starry sky—loathsome, dank!—which even
the gods hate, a great chasm.

If a man were to come inside the gates,
he would not reach the floor even after a full year, but cruel blast
590 upon blast would carry him this way and that. This marvel is terrible
even to the deathless gods. There stands the house of horrid Night,
wrapped in dark clouds. And before it stands, immovable, the son of Iapetos,^o

592. *son of Iapetos*: Atlas.

holding up the broad sky with his head and tireless hands, where Night and Day come close and greet each other as they pass the great bronze threshold. While the one descends downward and within, the other comes out by the door, nor does the house ever hold them both within, but always the one outside the house passes over the earth, and the other, remaining within, waits until the hour of her journey arrives. The one holds all-seeing light for mortals on the earth; the other holds Sleep in her arms, the brother of Death—I mean evil Night, wrapped in misty cloud. 595

There the children of gloomy Night have their house, Sleep and Death, savage gods. Nor does shining Helios ever look with his rays upon them, either going up into the sky, nor coming down from the sky. Of the two, Sleep roams peacefully over the earth and the broad back of the sea and is sweet to men, but Death has an iron heart, and the spirit within his breast is as pitiless as bronze. 600
Whomever of men he once has taken, he holds him fast: He is hateful even to the deathless gods. 605

There, as you go further, stands the echoing house of the god of the underworld, of powerful Hades and of dread Persephone, and a fearful dog stands guard in front,^o pitiless, and he has a wicked habit: He fawns with his tail and both his ears at those who enter, but he does not permit them to go out again. He keeps a careful watch and devours whomever he catches going out of the gates of powerful Hades and dread Persephone. 610

There lives the god hated by the deathless ones, the hideous Styx, the eldest daughter of Ocean, who flows back upon himself. She lives in her wonderful house apart from the gods, roofed over by tall rocks, propped up all around by silver pillars, reaching to the sky. Rarely does swift-footed Iris, the daughter of Thaumas, bring a message to her across the broad back of the sea. But when strife and quarrel arise among the deathless ones, and one of the dwellers in the house of Olympos tells a lie, then Zeus sends Iris to bring back from afar the great oath of the gods 615
620

609. . . . *in front*: Kerberos.

617. *Iris*: "rainbow" a messenger of the gods.



Figure 10. Hades and Persephone. Hades wears a crown of ivy leaves and carries a cornucopia filled with grapes: His other name, Ploutos, “wealth,” reflects the richness that comes from the earth: in this case, wine. He holds a staff and stands before his wife, Persephone, who holds a dish for sacrificial libations in her right hand and in her left hand a jug of wine. Athenian red-figure wine jug, ca. 470 B.C. Musée du Louvre, Paris (Photo: Jastrow; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/92/Amphora_Hades_Louvre_G209_n2.jpg)

in a golden goblet, the celebrated cold water that drips down from a steep high rock.^o

Far beneath the broad-wayed earth a branch of Ocean runs out of holy Styx through the black night. A tenth part of its waters is split off from her: In nine silver streams Ocean winds about the earth and the broad back of the sea before falling into the deep, but a tenth flows from the rock, a great affliction for the gods. Whoever of the deathless ones, who live on the peaks of snowy Olympos, swears falsely after pouring a libation from the water of Styx, he lies breathless until a year is passed, nor does he come near to tasting ambrosia or nectar as food, but he lies without air, unable to speak on a strewn bed, shrouded in an evil sleep. 625 630

But when he has been sick for a long year, then he has to undergo another ordeal, worse. For nine years he is kept apart from the gods, who are for ever, nor does he ever participate in their councils or banquets for a whole nine years. But in the tenth year he again participates in the assemblies of the deathless ones, who inhabit Olympos.^o Such an oath have the gods made of the eternal and primordial waters of the Styx, which runs through the rugged land. There are the sources and bounds of the shadowy earth and misty Tartaros and the untiring sea and the starry sky, all in a row, hated and dank, which even the gods detest; there are the gleaming gates and the bronze threshold, immovable, fitted with endless roots, growing by itself. Beyond live the Titans, apart from all the gods, outside gloomy Chaos. But the glorious followers of loud-sounding Zeus have their houses on the foundations of Ocean, Kottos and Gygēs. Briareos, because he was good, the deep-sounding Earthshaker has made his son-in-law, giving him his daughter, Kymopoleia.^o 635 640 645

622. . . . *high rock*: That is, you can tell which god is lying by having each swear by the water of Styx, when the oath will bring punishment to the liar.

635. . . . *Olympos*: No god ever actually undergoes this punishment, so far as we know.

645. . . . *Kymopoleia*: Hesiod's description is confused and hard to understand. Apparently the universe is made of four components: Earth, Sea, Sky, and Tartaros. Their sources are separate, but the roots of Earth and Sea lie above the prison of the Titans, located at the farthest end of Tartaros. Tartaros lies as far beneath the earth as the earth is beneath the

But when Zeus drove out the Titans from heaven, huge Earth gave birth to her youngest son, Typhon, mixing in love with Tartaros^o through the agency of golden Aphrodite. His hands were strong, capable of great deeds, and the feet of the powerful god were tireless. From his shoulders
650 grew one hundred serpents, a monstrous dragon, flickering with gloomy tongues, and fire flashed from under the brows of his eyes in his wondrous heads, and fire burned from all his heads as he glared. There were voices in all his terrible heads that uttered every kind of unspeakable sound. At one time they spoke with a voice that the gods could understand,
655 but at another the voice was that of a proud, ungovernable bull whose anger cannot be stopped, and at another time came the voice of a lion, who has a ruthless heart. At another time it sounded like a pack of pups, amazing to hear, and at another time he would hiss, and the high mountains echoed.

A deed beyond repair would have happened on that day,
660 and he would have taken the rule over mortals and immortals, except that the father of men and gods quickly perceived it. He thundered mightily and with power and the earth around resounded terribly, and the broad sky above, and the sea and streams of Ocean and the deepest parts of Earth. Great Olympus trembled beneath his deathless feet
665 as the king arose, and the earth groaned.

Beneath the two of them the heat of thunder and lightning took hold of the purple sea, and from the fire of so great a monster, and from the scorching wind and the blazing thunderbolt.

(645, continued) sky. In front of Tartaros are Atlas; the houses of Night, Day, Sleep, and Death; the House of Hades, the hound Kerberos, and the river Styx. The gates and the threshold are the entrance to the underworld, from which there is no escape. The Hundred-Handers are set as guards over Tartaros. Chaos here seems to be an open space between Tartaros and Earth. Kymopoleia, "wave walker," is found only here.

647. *Tartaros*: Here thought of not as a place but as a god. The offspring of Earth and Tartaros is Typhon.

The whole earth boiled, and the sky, and the sea. The long waves raged around the headlands at the rush of the deathless ones, and an unstoppable quaking arose. Hades trembled, who rules over the dead below, and the Titans down in Tartaros, who dwell with Kronos, at the unquenchable clamor and the dread battle. 670

Then, when Zeus heaped up his strength and took his armor, thunder and lightning and the shining thunderbolt, he leaped from Olympos and struck him. He burned all the godlike heads of the savage monster. But when he had conquered him and lashed him, Typhon was hurled down, a cripple, and the huge earth groaned. Flame shot from King Typhon, struck by lightning in the murky, rugged groves of the mountain when he was hit. A great part of the huge earth was burned by the divine vapor and melted, just as tin is melted under the art of skilled men in vented pots, or as iron, the strongest of all elements, is dissolved in the groves of the mountain under blazing fire, melted in the divine earth at the hands of Hephaistos. 675
So the earth was melted by the heat of the burning fire. 680

Raging in his heart, Zeus cast down Typhon into the broad earth. From Typhon comes the moist power of rowdy winds, except for South Wind and North Wind and the wild West Wind. The origin of these winds is from the gods, to mortals a refreshing boon. The other gusts of wind blow erratically upon the sea. Some fall upon the misty waters, a great evil to mortals, raging with wicked blast. At different seasons they blow and scatter ships and destroy sailors. There is no defense against this evil for men, who meet them across the sea. Others across the boundless flowering earth destroy the lovely works of men who dwell below, filling them with dust and awful tumult. 685
But when the blessed gods had finished their labor, and settled by violence their struggle with the Titans for honors, then they urged far-seeing Olympian Zeus, through the devices of Earth, to be king and to rule over the deathless ones. And so he divided up their offices among them. 690
695

Zeus took to wife Metis first, who knew the most things among gods and mortal men. But when she was about to give birth to flashing-eyed Athena, then he deceived her by a trick with clever words and placed her in his belly, accepting the advice of Earth and starry Sky. For thus



Figure 11. Zeus fights Typhon. Zeus, whose name is written, holds a thunderbolt in his right hand while he takes aim with his left. Typhon is winged, bearded, has pointed ears, and snakes for his lower body. Chalcidian black-figure water jar, ca. 560 B.C. Staatliche Antikensammlung, Munich, Germany (Photo: Bibi Saint-Pol; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/Zeus_Typhon_Staatliche_Antikensammlungen_596.jpg)

they advised him, so that no other but Zeus might hold the kingship
 over the gods, who live forever. It was destined that Metis give birth
 to children most wise: first of all, the daughter flashing-eyed Tritogeneia,
 having an equal power to her father and the same wise understanding. Though
 afterwards Metis was to give birth to a son with an overbearing spirit, Zeus,
 king of gods and men, placed her instead in his belly first so that the goddess
 might give him good and bad advice.^o

Next he took to wife shining Themis,
 who gave birth to the Hours—Good Order, and Justice, and blossoming
 Peace, who supervise the labors of mortal men—and the Fates, whom Zeus
 the Counselor endowed with the most honor—Klotho and Lachesis and
 Atropos, who give to mortals good things and bad.

Eurynomê, the daughter of Ocean
 who has a pleasing form, gave birth to the Graces, who have beautiful cheeks,
 Aglaia and Euphrosynê and lovely Thalia. From their glancing eyes drip
 sexual attraction, the looser of limbs, and beautiful is the glance from beneath
 their brows.^o

Then he went to the bed of bountiful Demeter, and she gave birth
 to white-armed Persephone, whom Hades snatched away from her mother.
 For Zeus the Counselor gave her to him. And straightaway he fell in love

706. . . . *bad advice*: Metis, an Oceanid, means “mind.” There was a prophecy that a child of Metis would be greater than the father (“a son with an overbearing spirit”), according to the logic of the Succession Myth (see the General Introduction). By swallowing Metis, Zeus interferes with this logic, making “mind” one of his own qualities. Athena, called here Tritogeneia—the meaning of the epithet is unknown—is therefore the child of Zeus alone, a powerful daughter with no mother.

714. . . . *their brows*: Themis is a Titan; her name means “law” or “natural order,” the way things are. The Hours (*Horai*) are usually thought of as the seasons, the regular, unchanging progression of the year, but their names—Good Order (*Eunomia*), Justice (*Dikê*), and Peace (*Eirênê*)—indicate broader qualities. The Fates are here the *Moirai*, the “divisions,” originally of meat at a feast, but in myth the allotments that all people receive at birth (for their names, see note on line 180, above). The three Graces (*Charites*) are the feminine qualities that please the male and excite sexual desire (*eros*): Aglaia (“adornment”), Euphrosynê (“merriment”), and Thalia (“joyous festivities”). Eurynomê, an Oceanid, means “with wide rule.”

with Mnemosynè of the beautiful tresses, on whom were begotten the nine
Muses who wear fillets of gold, who take delight in feasts and the charm
of oral poetry. Then Leto, mixing in love with Zeus, who carries the goatskin
fetish, gave birth to Apollo and Artemis, who delights in arrows, the most
720 pleasing offspring of all those who live on Olympus.

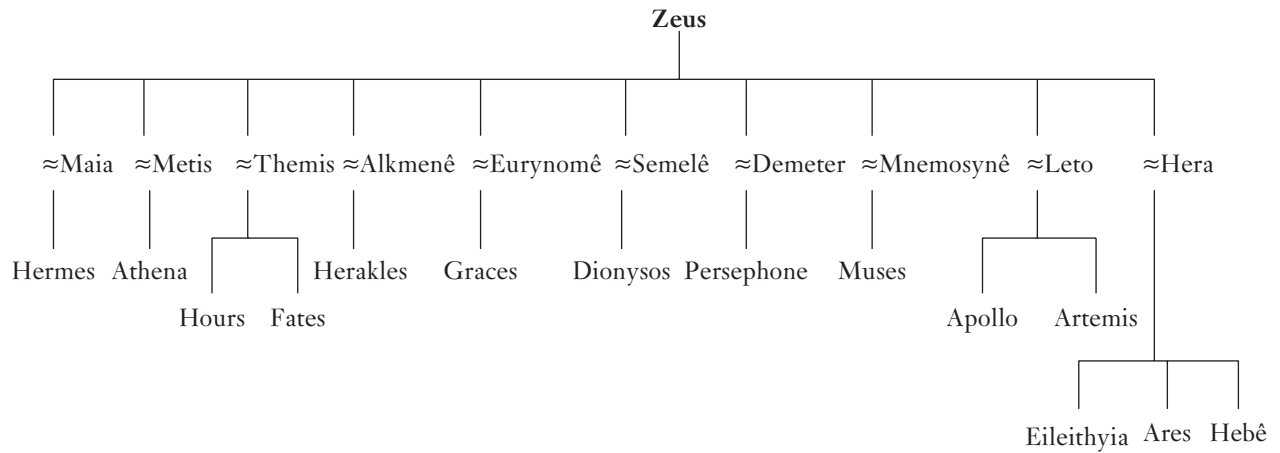
Last of all, he made
buxom Hera his wife, who gave birth to Hebe and Ares and Eileithyia,
mixing in love with the king of gods and men. He gave birth from his own
head to the flashing-eyed Tritogeneia—terrible, stirring the cry of war,
725 leading the horde, tireless, revered!—who delights in the hullabaloo
of wars and battle.

And Hera gave birth to famous Hephaistos without
the benefit of sexual intercourse—for she was angry with her bedmate
and quarreled with him—who surpasses the Olympians in all crafts.
Because of this quarrel she bore the glorious son Hephaistos, without
730 making love with Zeus, who carries the goatskin fetish, and he surpassed
in skill all the descendants of Sky.^o

From Amphitritè and the loud-thundering

731. . . . of Sky: Demeter is Zeus's sister. The union of Hades and Persephone is the only sterile coupling of divine beings in Hesiod. Mnemosynè means "memory," mother of the nine Muses, referring to the power by which the oral poet composes. Leto may be the name of a primordial mother goddess; with her children, Apollo and Artemis, she heads up a divine family, though in their origins the gods Apollo and Artemis were unrelated. The children of Zeus and Hera play little role in Greek myth: Hebe, "youth" personified, married Herakles after his divinization. Ares is a Thracian god known for his marriage to Aphrodite. Eileithyia is a Cretan goddess of childbirth (her name is probably not Greek). Athena, born without a mother from Zeus's head, is rivaled by Hephaistos, born without a father by Hera to get even with her husband.

Many scholars think that Hesiod's *Theogony* ends someplace around here, but there is no agreement about where. The last two lines of the transmitted text of the *Theogony*—"And now, O sweet-voiced Muses of Olympus, / daughters of Zeus, who carries the goatskin fetish, sing of the tribe of women"—are the beginning of what is called the *Catalogue of Women*, which described the genealogies of the heroes. Over 1,300 mostly fragmentary lines (not translated here) of this poem survive in papyri and in quotations of later authors, perhaps a third of the original poem. The theory is that someone composed a transition to the *Catalogue* and attached it to the end of the *Theogony*. Then, for mysterious reasons, the



Genealogical Chart 14. The offspring of Zeus and his many wives.

Earthshaker came great Triton, whose power is wide, who commands the depths of the sea and lives with his mother and his father in their golden house, an awful god.^o

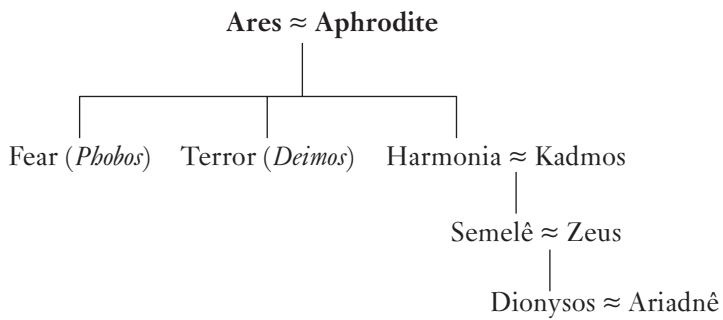
735 And Cythereia bore to shield-piercing Ares terrible Fear
and Terror, who drive on the thick lines of battle in bloody war along
with city-sacking Ares, and Harmonia, whom brave Kadmos took to wife.
Maia, the daughter of Atlas, bore bold Hermes to Zeus, the herald
of the deathless ones, after she went into his holy bed. Semelê, the daughter
of Kadmos, mixing in love with Zeus, bore the shining, delightful Dionysos,
740 a mortal woman giving birth to an immortal son. And now both are gods.^o

Alkmenê gave birth to powerful Herakles, mixing in love with Zeus,
who gathers the storm clouds. Hephaistos—famous, with crippled legs—
made Aglaia his blooming wife, youngest of the Graces. Dionysos,
golden of hair, made yellow-haired Ariadnê, the daughter of Minos,
745 his blooming wife, and Zeus, the son of Kronos, made her deathless

(731. continued) *Catalogue* itself was lost, and an unknown author created a new *Catalogue of Women*, fragments of which survive. In this scholastic approach to what, after all, was an oral poem, with its expected irregularities, it is never explained why a second unknown author would have wanted to replace the original poetry with an inferior imitation, or where exactly the hypothetical transition to the *Catalogue* begins. The argument is based on flimsy observations about style, when a survey of the epic language in the surviving fragments suggests that the *Catalogue of Women* is in fact very early, perhaps contemporary with Hesiod, or by Hesiod himself.

734. *awful god*: For Amphitritê, see fig. 6. Triton is a merman, half man, half fish, often portrayed in Greek art of every period.

740. . . . *are gods*: Cythereia, “she of Cythera,” is an alternative name for Aphrodite; Cythera is an island off the south coast of mainland Greece, where there was a temple to Aphrodite. The sons of Ares and Aphrodite, Fear (*Phobos*) and Terror (*Deimos*), are today the names of the moons of the planet Mars (that is, Ares). Maia was one of the seven Pleiadês, the children of Atlas and the Oceanid Pleionê, today the name of one of the most prominent constellations in the sky. Hermes was a messenger of the gods (along with Iris) and presided over boundaries, including the boundary between life and death (*Hermes Psychopompos*, “soul guide”). Kadmos, the founder of Thebes, killed a dragon who was a son of Ares, then married Ares’ daughter, Harmonia. Semelê was a lover of Zeus and the mother of Dionysos; she was struck by lightning, but Zeus saved the unborn Dionysos from her burning body.



Genealogical Chart 15. The descendants of Ares and Aphrodite.

and ageless for him. Herakles, the brave son of Alkmenê, whose ankles
are beautiful, made Hebê his graceful bride in snowy Olympos, the child
of great Zeus and Hera of the golden sandals, after completing his dangerous
contests. Blessed is he who having accomplished a great deed lives among
750 the deathless ones without pain and ageless for all his days!°

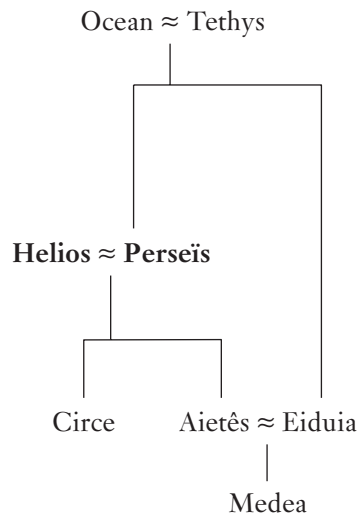
Famous Perseïs,
the daughter of Ocean, bore Circe to untiring Helios, and Aietês the king.
Aietês, son of Helios, who shines for men, married Eiduia with the beautiful
cheeks, the daughter of Ocean, the circling river, following the gods' will.
And Eiduia, submitting in love through the arts of Aphrodite, gave birth
755 to Medea with beautiful ankles.

And now, farewell to you who have your homes
on Olympos, and you islands and the mainland and all within the bitter sea.
Now sing of the tribe of goddesses, sweet-voiced Muses who live on Olympos,
the daughters of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish, those deathless ones
who slept with mortal men and begot children like the gods!

The bright goddess
760 Demeter gave birth to Ploutos, having lain in love with the hero Iasion
in sweet love in a thrice-plowed field in the rich land of Crete, a noble man
who goes everywhere on the earth and the broad back of the sea. He makes
rich the man who finds him, into whose arms he comes, granting him
much wealth.°

Harmonia, the daughter of golden Aphrodite, bore to Kadmos
765 Ino and Semelê and Agavê with the beautiful cheeks and Autonoe, whom
Aristaios with thick, long hair married, and Polydoros in well-girt THEBES.°
And Kallirrhoê, the daughter of Ocean, mixed in the love of golden

750. . . . *all his days*: Zeus extended the night on which Herakles was conceived, making it three times its normal length, thus explaining Herakles' great strength. In the *Iliad* (18.362) Hephaistos is married to Charis, another of the Graces. In the usual version, Ariadne, daughter of Minos, king of Crete, helped Theseus to defeat the Minotaur but was then abandoned on the island of NAXOS, where Dionysos found her, married her, and conceived by her many children. Herakles' marriage to Hebê, "youth," is another way of saying that he achieved eternal life as the reward for his labors.



Genealogical Chart 16. The descendants of Helios and Perseïs.

770 Aphrodite with bold-hearted Chrysaor and bore the strongest child
of all mortals, Geryon, whom mighty Herakles killed in Erytheia in the midst
of the water, for the sake of his shamle-footed cattle.

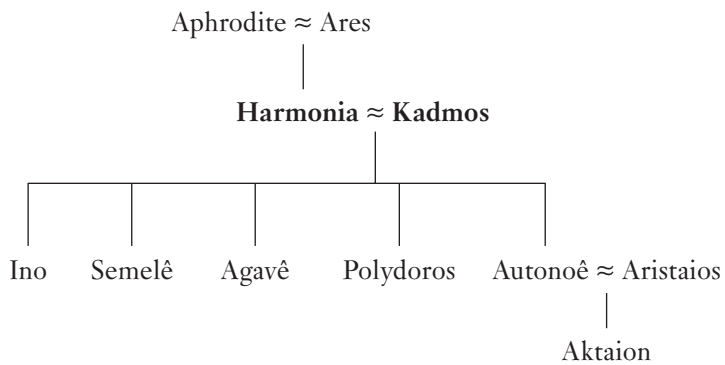
Dawn bore to Tithonos
Memnon with helmet of bronze, king of the Ethiopians, and King Emathion.
And she bore to Kephalos a bold son, powerful Phaëthon, a man like the gods.
Laughter-loving Aphrodite snatched him up when he was young, in the tender
flower of glorious youth, having childish thoughts, and she made him a keeper
775 of her sacred shrine in the night, a shining spirit.^o

Jason, the son of Aison,
led away the daughter of Aietês, the god-reared king, through the will
of the everlasting gods, after he had accomplished the many dangerous
contests that the great boastful king, violent and foolish Pelias, the doer

764. . . . *much wealth*: Homer mentions Demeter's union with Iasion in "a thrice-plowed field" (*Odyssey* 5.125–28), evidently a reference to a ritual to enhance the fertility of the fields. Ploutos means "wealth": that is, the wealth of agriculture. He is often identified with Hades.

766. *well-girt Thebes*: Kadmos is the founder of Thebes. Ino was the wicked stepmother of Phrixos and Hellê, who flew away on a golden ram. Ino was transformed into the goddess Leukothea, the "white goddess," who saved Odysseus from drowning (*Odyssey* 5.333–53). Agavê was the mother of Pentheus, torn to pieces by the followers of Dionysos. The obscure Polydoros ruled Thebes after the death of Pentheus. Autonoe was the mother of Aktaion by Aristaios; Aktaion was torn to pieces by his own hounds after he saw Artemis naked.

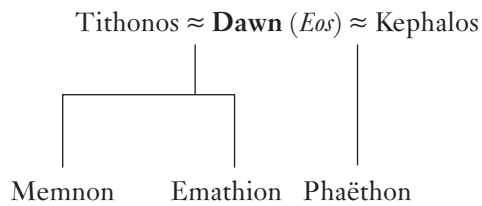
775. . . . *shining spirit*: Dawn was famous for her lust. Her son by Tithonos, Memnon, was king of the Ethiopians, who came to Troy as an ally against the Greeks. Achilles killed him in a celebrated duel. Herakles killed the obscure Emathion, also an Ethiopian king. Zeus granted Dawn's wish that Tithonos, a Trojan prince, be made immortal, but she forgot to ask for eternal youth to accompany his immortality; he shriveled up into a cicada, babbling in a back room of Dawn's house. Kephalos ("head") was an Athenian prince who accidentally killed his wife, Prokris, while hunting. (She thought that he had gone out to meet Dawn.) Here Phaëthon is snatched up by Aphrodite, but in a better-known story his father was the Sun (*Helios*), and he was burned up when he drove his father's chariot across the sky.



Genealogical Chart 17. Other children of Kadmos and Harmonia.



Figure 12. The winged Dawn (*Eos*) pursues the Trojan prince Tithonos, who holds a lyre. Their son will be the great Ethiopian fighter Memnon, famous in the Trojan Cycle. Dawn requested from Zeus eternal life for Tithonos but forgot to ask for eternal youth: He shriveled up like a cicada. Athenian red-figure vase, ca. 470 B.C. Musée du Louvre, Paris (Photo: Marie-Lan Nguyen; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tithonus#/media/File:Tithonos_Eos_Louvre_G438_detail.jpg)



Genealogical Chart 18. The children of Dawn (*Eos*).

of violent deeds, placed upon him. When the son of Aïson had accomplished
780 them, after long suffering, he arrived at IOLKOS, carrying the glancing-eyed
daughter of Aietês on his swift ship, and he made her his blooming bride.
And she bore a son, Medeos, to Jason, shepherd of the people, submitting
to him in love, whom Cheiron, the son of Philyra, raised in the mountains.^o
So was the plan of great Zeus brought to pass.

Of the daughters of Nereus,
785 the Old Man of the Sea, the shining goddess Psamathê gave birth to Phokos,
uniting with Aiakos in the love of golden Aphrodite. And the silver-sandaled
goddess Thetis, submitting to Peleus, gave birth to Achilles, the breaker
of men, with a heart like a lion.^o

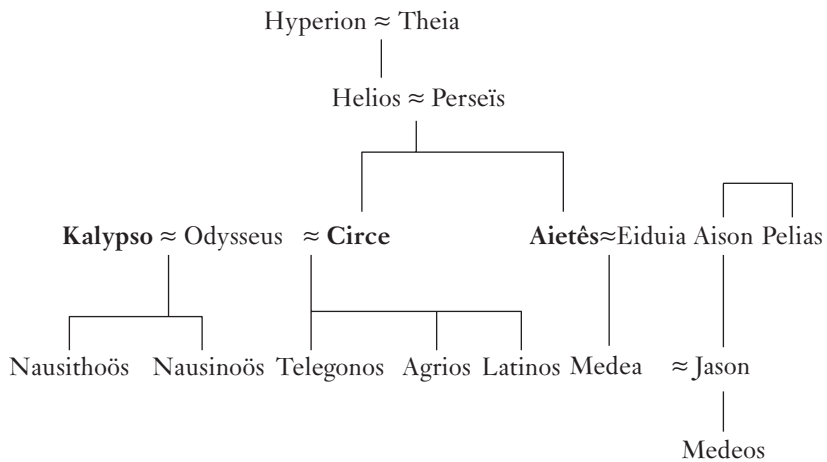
And nicely crowned Aphrodite gave birth
to Aeneas, having mixed in sweet love with Anchisês on the peaks of Ida,
790 wooded, with many gullies.^o

Circe, the daughter of Helios, son of Hyperion,
mixing in love with steadfast Odysseus, gave birth to Agrios and Latinos,
blameless and powerful. She also gave birth to Telegonos, through the agency
of golden Aphrodite. And they ruled over all the famous Tyrsenians,

783. *in the mountains*: Pelias was Jason's evil uncle who compelled him to lead the Argonauts to seek the Golden Fleece in Colchis, at the eastern end of the Black Sea. Medea, the daughter of Aietês, who controlled the fleece, betrayed her father and ran off with Jason. She tricked Pelias' daughters into killing their father when she and Jason returned from Colchis. Medeos is eponym of the Medes: that is, the Persians, who famously attacked Greece in the fifth century B.C. The good centaur Cheiron, who raised Medeos, also raised Jason and Achilles.

788. . . . *like a lion*: Aiakos was king of AEGINA, the island just off Piraeus, the harbor of ATHENS. His son by the Nereid Psamathê, Phokos, was murdered by his half-brothers Telamon, the father of Ajax in the *Iliad*, and Peleus, the father of Achilles, because they were jealous of his athletic prowess. Thetis, mother of Achilles, is a major figure in Homer's *Iliad*. Zeus fancied her but learned of a prophecy that the son would be greater than his father; thus he arranged that she marry Peleus. The son, Achilles, did become greater than the father.

790. *many gullies*: The union of goddesses with mortal men is rare, but the offspring of this union, the great hero Aeneas, founded the Roman race, as told in Vergil's *Aeneid* (ca. 19 B.C.).



Genealogical Chart 19. The descendants of Kalypso, Circe, and Aietês.

very far off in a recess of the holy islands.^o The shining goddess Kalypso was joined to Odysseus in sweet love and begot Nausithoös and Nausinoös.^o

These are the goddesses who slept with mortal men and gave birth to children like the gods. And now, O sweet-voiced Muses of Olympos, daughters of Zeus who carries the goatskin fetish, sing of the tribe of women!^o

794. . . . *holy islands*: In the *Odyssey* Circe does not bear children to Odysseus. Agrios may be the same as the Faunus of Roman myth. Latinos is king of Latium when Aeneas arrives in Italy, according to the account in Vergil's *Aeneid* (7.45). According to the tradition that Circe also bore Telegonos, Telegonos was said to have traveled to Ithaca in search of his father, Odysseus, but killed him accidentally. The Tyrsenians are the Etruscans, who lived north of ROME. By saying that they lived in "a recess of the holy islands," Hesiod betrays his ignorance of western geography.

795. . . . *Nausinoös*: Kalypso, "concealer," was probably an invention of Homer. In the *Odyssey* she keeps Odysseus imprisoned on her island, Ogygia, "the navel of the sea," for seven years (*Odyssey* 7.259). In the *Odyssey* Nausithoös was the first king of the Phaiakians on Scheria, the never-never land that Odysseus visits after escaping from Kalypso (*Odyssey* 6.4–5, 7.56–66, 8.564). Nausinoös is otherwise unknown.

798. *of women*: Here begins the lost *Catalogue of Women*.