

VP THE ADVENTURE OF MAN

SECTION SIX: GODS AND HEROES

I. The Twelve Gods of Greece

Compiled and annotated by Dr. H. Loshry

Introduction

In the latter part of the sixth century BC the Athenians built in their Agora an altar to the Twelve Gods: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Demeter, Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Aphrodite, Hermes, Athena, Hephaestus and Hestia. This altar became so much the centre of things that distances to other parts of Greece were measured from it, as from Charing Cross or the Royal Exchange in London. Almost a hundred years later the Athenians set up on the Parthenon, not far from the Agora, a frieze on which these Twelve Gods were carved, with Dionysus taking the place of Hestia. Just over a hundred years later still Alexander built an altar in India to these same Twelve Gods, to mark the end of his journey eastwards, and his championship of Greek ideals.

In the western world poets and prose writers, playwrights, painters, sculptors and musicians have all been inspired more by the stories of these twelve gods than by most other subjects. Naturally the ancient Greeks themselves used the myths of their gods in their plays, poems, sculptures and vase-paintings. The Romans, when they took over Greek culture, took their gods with it, but gave them Roman names. Even during the Dark Ages, when the culture of the Greeks was almost forgotten in Western Europe, their gods were still dimly remembered. After the Renaissance, when Greek culture again fired men's minds, the Greek gods again took their place on the artists' Olympus. Much of the work of many artists of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, and especially the English literature of the period, cannot be properly understood without some knowledge of the mythology of the Greek gods. This filmstrip provides, in a simple way, a little of that vital knowledge; and it also makes some enquiry into the origins of this Pantheon.

The Minoans and other settled Mediterranean peoples from whom the Greeks inherited some of their mythology seem to have lived under a matriarchal system where queens were supreme on earth and goddesses in heaven. The chief deity was the great Mother Goddess, out of whose womb came all living things. She was worshipped in various forms, sometimes in secret places, often on mountain tops. Women were her priestesses and also heads of their families. Men could be sacrificed to the goddess, who was made fertile by a male god of the rain or the sea.

But the hunters and nomads from the north, who made the race that we now think of as Classical Greeks, lived under a patriarchal system,

where kings and priests were supreme on earth and gods in heaven. These Achaeans and Dorians, as they were called, at the time when they invaded the Mediterranean area worshipped, among other deities, the Sun and perhaps a Virgin Huntress and above all the sky-god Zeus. They established him as king on Olympus, and placed the conquered goddesses there in a subordinate position. Thus the Classical Greeks inherited a collection of myths about a whole family of gods on Olympus.

The Greeks freely identified foreign gods with their own Olympians, and also believed in local gods who had powers over rivers, mountains, woods, etc. These local powers they often attributed to the Olympian gods, and associated these gods with the animals that had once been worshipped as totems. So the myth became complicated, and even ancient writers recognised many forms of the same god.

The Greeks, with what Herodotus calls the genius for 'separating themselves from the foolish simplicity of their predecessors', tried to produce some sense of order on this overcrowded Olympus. 'Homer and Hesiod,' says the same historian, 'made the generations of the gods, distinguished their functions and skills, and portrayed their shapes.' In the third century BC scholars of the University of Alexandria collected the myths and tried to reduce them to an orderly system.

But it was the poets who gave the gods their essential Greek quality. The Greek gods were noble or rather 'aristocratic' beings in human form, but, still influenced by their primitive origin, they had almost sub-human vices. Did the Greeks at the height of their civilisation really believe in such gods? Could they seriously pray to beings who were immortal but promiscuous, unfaithful, deceitful and belligerent? Could such immoral gods control the morals of men?

The complete answer to these questions is outside the scope of this filmstrip. Briefly, religion to the ancient Greeks was not a matter of faith, but of placating the gods; morals were a matter for the state, and did not require divine sanctions. The gods had power which they used arbitrarily against men who committed the deadly sin of having ideas above their mortal station; beyond this the gods were not much concerned in human affairs. The more superstitious men found comfort in the worship of local deities and spirits. Those whose thoughts went deeper than this turned to the consolation of philosophy or of the mysteries.

The myths of the Greek gods are, then, complex. In order that they may be more easily understood this filmstrip deals with them as if they made a single, somewhat simplified, narrative. Since the myths of the Greek gods inspired people in all periods, it has been possible to illustrate this narrative not only with Greek and Roman works of art, but also by some created during the Renaissance and later.

The narrative : see centre section

The stories of the Greek Gods have inspired much literature and art. It is suggested, therefore, that the teacher should acquaint students with the narrative before making use of the further information. While showing the filmstrip he can either read the narrative, or tell it in his own words, or play the accompanying tape. The narrative has been printed in the centre of this booklet to enable the teacher to photocopy it, should he wish to give copies to the class.

Further information

The teacher should pass on to his students as much of this information relating to the story of the Twelve Gods of Greece as suits their age, ability and interests.

Roman equivalents for Greek gods and goddesses are:

Apollo = Apollo, also Phoebus	Dionysus = Bacchus
Aphrodite = Venus	Hephaestus = Vulcanus (Eng. Vulcan)
Ares = Mars	Hera = Juno
Artemis = Diana	Hermes = Mercurius (Eng. Mercury)
Athena = Minerva	Poseidon = Neptunus (Eng. Neptune)
Demeter = Ceres	Zeus = Iuppiter (Eng. Jupiter)

1. Clouds.

2. Statue of Zeus, Roman bronze, 1st/2nd century AD. British Museum.

It is generally supposed that the people we think of as Ancient Greeks lived originally somewhere north-west of the Balkan Peninsula. They migrated into Greece about 2000 BC, and found there a people who had a different religion. This may have been that of the Minoan civilisation which was then flourishing in the Aegean, and an essential part of it was that the god must die. The invading Greeks found it wise to make a compromise between their own religion and the Mediterranean one, so we find them allowing their sky-god, Zeus (Sanskrit = Dyaeus, Latin = Dies-piter), to have a grave in Crete.

The ancient Mediterranean peoples also had a number of tribal deities and fetishes, so we find another fusion of the old and new religions when Zeus, in the course of his many love affairs, turns himself into various human beings, animals and birds. One Roman writer even said that he had 300 guises. The Greeks combined with their sky-god, and also with their other gods, the deities and fetishes of the tribes and towns they conquered.

Zeus had a famous oracle at Dodona, where answers were given through the rustling of the leaves on his sacred oak. This links him with an ancient tree-god (see Section 5, part 1 in this series). He was often worshipped on hill-tops, as were the old gods, and on Mt Lycaeus in Arcadia there was a sanctuary where the priests prayed to Zeus for rain. It is known that human beings were sacrificed there as late as the second century AD.

The Greeks also called Zeus *Katambates* = 'descender', i.e. lightning, and altars to Zeus in their houses were the equivalent of lightning conductors. As 'cloud-gatherer' Zeus took on the powers of Ouranus, who gave rain to fertilise Mother Earth.

The Greeks of classical times, in their attitude to Zeus, carried the idea of a universal god further than anyone except the Jews. They thought of him as a supreme deity with many functions besides those mentioned in the narrative. He was also guardian of the home and its storehouses, and the defender of suppliants. Because he protected strangers and travellers, the Greeks always treated them as guests.

3. Detail of the North Frieze of the Siphnean Treasury. Marble relief. c.530 BC. Delphi Museum. At the left are Artemis and Apollo.

4. Zeus' hand holding thunderbolts. Detail of Black Figure vase from Vulci. 525-500 BC. British Museum.

But, however great the fusion between the two religions, the Greek prevailed in the end, as is symbolised in a myth which is a strange combination of the old and the new.

In the beginning, according to this myth, Ouranos, the Sky, married Gaea, Mother Earth. The pre-Greek gods were their offspring, among them Oceanus, god of the sea; Hyperion, who married his sister Theia, and produced the sun, the moon and the dawn; Iapetus, whose name may be connected with Japhet son of Noah; Rhea and Kronos. These old gods were called Titans, and were later thought of as giants.

Kronos overthrew his father, made himself ruler of the universe, and married his sister Rhea. By her he had many children, among them Demeter, Hera, Hades and Poseidon. But Kronos swallowed all his children as soon as they were born, for he had been warned that one of his sons would depose him.

When Rhea was to bear her last child she hid in the cave of Dicta, in Crete. There she bore Zeus. She hid him in another cave on Mt Ida, where the Curetes and the nymphs looked after him. Kronos knew the child had been born, and demanded it from Rhea. But she gave him a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes; this he swallowed, thinking it was the child.

Zeus grew to manhood in Crete, returned home, and gave Kronos a drug which made him disgorge Zeus' brothers and sisters. 'Icy ... gratitude helped him make war on their father and the Titans.'

Kronos (Latin=Saturnus) came to be regarded as king of a bygone Golden Age. He may have been a god of the harvest: at Athens a festival was held in his honour at midsummer, when the corn was ripe. At this festival slaves became the equals of their masters, as in the Roman festival of the Saturnalia at the end of December.

The Phoenician name for Kronos was 'Israel'.

The cave of Dicta was sacred in pre-Greek times, and Rhea was one form of the pre-Greek Mother Goddess, whose worship in the eastern Mediterranean goes back as far as archaeology takes us. She survived as a separate village deity, among humble people, even after the Olympians had become the gods of their rulers.

Curetes means 'young men'. Some say there were three of them, others nine, and that they grew from the earth after a shower of rain. They carried swords, shields and cymbals, and performed a war-dance. In classical times this became an annual fertility-dance performed to invoke the great Kouros (Greek for 'young man'), who provided rain and was one aspect of Zeus. They held communion with this god by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of a bull, which was the god in animal form.

The priests at Delphi exhibited a stone which they said was the one that Kronos had swallowed. They treated it as a fetish, and poured oil over it, as Jacob did over the stone at Bethel (see Section 1, part 2).

One story says that Zeus, with the help of Rhea, became Kronos' cup-bearer and so was able to give him the drug; others say that Rhea herself gave it to her husband.

Cyclops means 'round-eye', or more probably 'round-brow', and it has

been suggested that the name originated in some men who had rings tattooed on their foreheads. Archaeologists in Russia claim to have dug up the very ancient skeleton of a man who had only one eye in the middle of his forehead. The Cyclopes were made famous by Homer in his *Odyssey* (see Section 5, part 2).

5. Atlas mountains with overlay of the Titan Atlas carrying the world.

The Atlas mountains in North Africa shown in this frame are named from this story. The Flemish geographer Mercator (1512-94) was the first to call a collection of maps an 'Atlas', because early books of maps had on their title page a picture of the Titan like this one. For Heracles' adventure with Atlas see Section 6, part 2. Hades in Greek means 'unseen', and is a fit name for a god who had a helmet that made him invisible, and who ruled over the murky underworld where spirits went after death.

6. The Story of Prometheus, detail, by Piero di Cosimo. 1462-1521.

Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

Prometheus was spared because he had helped the gods against his brother Titans. Hesiod says that after men had been created, there was a dispute about which part of a sacrificial bull should be offered to the gods, and which should be given to mortals. Prometheus was appointed abtler, and made two bags out of the bull's hide. Into one of them he put the meat with the membrane of the stomach on top, and into the other he put the bones covered with a layer of fat. Zeus was tempted by the fat and chose the second bag; that is why Greeks burned on the altars the thigh-bones of the animal covered in fat. But Zeus was shown at being deceived like this, and would not give men the gift of fire, so Prometheus stole it for them. (See also Section 1, part 2.)

7. Pandora, by H. Bates. Marble. Exhibited 1891. Tate Gallery, London.

8. Laconian kylix found at Vulci. detail. c.580 BC. British Museum.

The painting is in the Black Figure style. The artist painted the silhouettes of his figures in black, and showed internal details by scraping thin lines in the black paint with a fine pointed instrument. Red paint was used as well.

Hesiod tells how Zeus asked the gods to endow Pandora with all the qualities that attract men. Athena taught her to spin and weave, and Aphrodite gave her charm and beauty. But Hermes made her quick to anger, shameless and treacherous. This tendency in the myths to blame women for all the ills that befall mankind may be a relic of the struggle between matriarchy and patriarchy. (For the freeing of Prometheus see Section 6, part 2.)

9. Wedding of Zeus and Hera. Black Figure vase attributed to the painter Amasis. 580 BC. British Museum.

As a wedding present Hera brought the tree which bore the golden apples. She planted it in a garden somewhere in the far west, where it was tended by four nymphs called the Hesperides, and guarded by a dragon. One of the labours of Heracles was to fetch one of these apples; and another of them caused all the trouble at Troy (see Section 6, parts 2 and 4).

Hera was always jealous of Zeus' intrigues, and often persecuted the

women involved. To get her own way with him she used love charms, and once borrowed Aphrodite's girdle for this purpose.

Hera was the goddess of marriage and childbirth. Her most important shrine was at Argos, and at Olympia there was a girls' race in her honour. At Samos she had a famous temple said to have been founded by the Argonauts: here she was identified with a primitive nature-goddess, and so seems to be a survival of a matriarchal religion. Her marriage to her brother Zeus represents perhaps a compromise between matriarchy and patriarchy.

10. Trevi Fountain, by Salvi, 1732-62, Rome.

11. Poseidon with his trident, Vase from Nola, painted in the Red Figure style, c.560 BC, British Museum.

The vase painting is in the Red Figure style. The artist drew the outlines of the figure with a sharp instrument and then painted round them with a fairly thick brush. Once he had secured the outlines, he, or an apprentice, quickly blacked in the background. The lines showing the details inside the red silhouette were painted with a very fine brush, and each line was made in one continuous movement.

Poseidon was brought down to the Mediterranean by the Greeks. His name means 'Husband of Earth', and originally he was a male spirit of fertility, a god of rain and springs who made the earth fertile. He was not originally a sea-god, for the Greek invaders from the north had never seen the sea, and had no word for it in their language. When they first tasted it they gave it the name 'salt'. Poseidon's ancient name 'Earth-Shaker' was given him not as a sea-god whose mighty waves shake the earth, but because he lived under the earth, like his brother Hades.

Poseidon was usually associated with the horse. It was said that he struck the earth with his trident, and so produced the animal. Bulls were sacrificed to him. An example of what happened when he was annoyed can be found in Section 5, part 2.

12. Birth of Athena, Red Figure vase from Vulci, c.560 BC, British Museum.

The full story of Athena's birth is that she was the child of the goddess Metis, 'Wisdom', who could turn herself into anything she pleased. Zeus had married Metis, but he had been told that her child would be greater than his father. So he persuaded Metis to turn herself into a fly, and he swallowed her. (This looks like another version of the myth of Kronos.) Metis was never heard of again, but Athena was born out of Zeus' head, a fitting place for the goddess of arts, crafts and civilisation to emerge from.

This queer story of turning one's enemy into a convenient size and then swallowing him occurs also in Celtic mythology, and in the Arabian Nights.

13. Athena with her shield and aegis, Black Figure vase from Rhodes, 520 BC, British Museum.

Athena was the patron of Minoan and Mycenaean princes, and was connected with their snake-goddess. She was also a goddess of the household, and so promoted weaving, spinning and other women's crafts. She was not originally warlike, but became so as the defender of the fortified Mycenaean palaces. The Acropolis at Athens may originally have been called Athena, and the goddess may have been the pre-Greek defender of this fortified rock.

The aegis is said to have originated from the skin of a goat sacrificed to the goddess. In mythology it is the skin of the goat Amalthea, who suckled Zeus as a baby. From its powers comes the phrase 'under the aegis of' = 'protected by'.

Medusa was a Gorgon, who turned into stone everyone who looked at her. In spite of this, the hero Perseus managed to cut off her head. Athena had given him a shield that was so highly polished that everything could be seen reflected in it. So he did not look straight at Medusa, but only at her reflection in his shield. He cut off her head and gave it in gratitude to Athena.

14. Obverse and reverse of Athenian drachma, Cheltenham College, Glos.
Athena brought to Athens the olive tree, and the city grew rich on the oil from its fruit. The Athenians made the tree sacred to her, and built on the Acropolis in her honour as a virgin goddess the famous Parthenon (Parthenos is Greek for 'virgin'). In Argos maidens offered locks of their hair to her on the day before their marriage.

15. Aphrodite rising from the sea, Central panel from the Ludovisi throne, c.470 BC, Terme Museum, Rome.

It was said that Aphrodite, when Cythera became too small for her fame, moved to Cyprus. She was worshipped in many regions in the Aegean, especially near the sea, and may have been a survival from Minoan religion. Golden models of her shrine have been found in royal graves at Mycenae. Pillars and horns, which were Minoan religious symbols, were sacred to her. So also were doves. In other ways Aphrodite resembles the Assyrian goddess Ishtar, and the Phoenician Astarte. Her sanctuary at Paphos was founded by the Phoenicians. Human beings were sacrificed in her temple at Salamis on Cyprus, but oxen were later substituted. In Classical Greek times, when religion arose more from an awareness of beauty, poets and artists made Aphrodite their ideal.

There is a survival of her cult at Kuklia on Cyprus, where each year the peasants still anoint the stones of her temple in honour of the 'Maid of Bethlehem'.

16. Venus and Adonis, by Titian, c.1560, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

The death of Adonis was mourned, and his resurrection celebrated in Western Asia as well as in Greece. He is the equivalent of Tammuz, and so a symbol of the destruction of vegetation by the hot summer sun, and of its renewal in spring.

There was a story that Aphrodite, when hurrying to rescue Adonis, trod on the thorns of some roses, which till then were all white. But after that roses were made red by her blood.

Another story of Aphrodite is that she deceived her husband Hephaestus with the war-god Ares; but Hephaestus forged an unbreakable metal net and caught the pair in it. Aphrodite bore to the mortal Anchises a son called Aeneas, who was the legendary founder of Rome (see Section 6, part 4 and Section 10, part 3).

17. Vase in the Red Figure style, c.490 BC, Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.
For the Shield of Achilles see Section 6, part 4.

Smith-gods in other mythologies are lame, e.g. Wayland (Volund) in Norse mythology (see Section 15, part 4). It has been suggested that this

22. Red Figure Lekyros from Gela, c.460-450 BC. Asinoleon Museum, Oxford.

When the Greeks came down into the Mediterranean, they found in many places a goddess who was a virgin mistress of animals and also a version of the Great Mother. Her cult was too deeply rooted for the Greeks to abolish, so they adopted her as a virgin-mother, pure, young and beautiful, but cruel at times. Human beings were sacrificed to her, and many local legends and fetishes were attached to her worship. Thus at Athens girls who served in her temple from the age of nine until they were marriageable were called *arktoi*—she-bears.

Her oldest cult was probably at Ephesus, where she was worshipped as a mother goddess ('Greci is Diana of the Ephesians'), and her exuberant fertility was displayed by her statue with its many breasts.

There is a story that the hunter Actaeon saw Artemis one day while she was bathing in a woodland stream. To punish him the goddess turned him into a stag, so that he was torn to pieces by his own dogs. Actaeon's fate is the subject of many pictures.

23. Statue of Niobe, Parian marble, from the Gardens of Sallust, c.440 BC. Terme Museum, Rome.

24. Red Figure vase from Capua, c.430-420 BC. British Museum.

Triptolemus is seated in the chariot and holds a bunch of wheat and a libation bowl. On the right is Persephone with a torch and a wine jug. Behind her stands Eleusis holding a flower. Demeter is holding ears of wheat.

The Athenians said that Demeter gave grain first to them, and afterwards took it to less-favoured cities. Hence all the tales and subjects of Athens, and even other Greek cities too, offered the first fruits of the harvest to Demeter at Eleusis.

25. Rape of Persephone, by Bernini, Marble, 1621-2. Borghese Gallery, Rome.

26. Demeter of Chidos, Marble, from the Temenos of Demeter, c.370 BC. British Museum.

Note the expression of despair on the face.

27. Hermes leads Persephone out of the Underworld, Black Figure vase, c.550-500 BC. British Museum.

In the Rape of Persephone we can see more clearly than in other legends the underlying nature-myth. Demeter was originally the goddess who caused the corn to grow, and some scholars say that her name is made up of ancient Greek words meaning either 'Earth-Mother' or 'Mother of Barley' (see Section 1, part 2). Her symbols were bread or ears of grain. At the Thesmophoria, the sowing festival in Athens, cakes and pigs were offered to her, and at a later festival called Thargelia the decomposed remains of these pigs were scattered over the fields to ensure their fertility. Primitive peoples believed that the grain-spirit lived in pigs. At threshing time Demeter was offered the 'first-fruits'.

In mystical religion Persephone symbolised resurrection after death. Thus Demeter had her special ritual in the Mysteries at Eleusis. Those who were initiated into these Mysteries swore not to reveal them, and we know

is because the smith, being the most valuable craftsman in the tribe, was lamed to stop him running away.

18. ~~Mars~~ Roman statue, 3rd/4th century AD. British Museum.
Ares seems to have been a Thracian god. He symbolises the berserk frenzy worked up by Celtic and Norse warriors before going into battle.

19. Black Figure vase from Vulci, c.540 BC. British Museum.

Facing left are Dionysus and Hermes. Leto may be the same as the Lycian goddess Leda, whose name means 'woman'. During her wanderings she was threatened by several enemies, including the giant Tityos. Apollo shot him, and the giant was sent down to Tartarus. There he lies stretched out over a vast area of ground with vultures continually feeding on his entrails.

20. Statue of Apollo, Pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, c.460 BC. Olympia Museum, Greece.

Apollo was a pre-Greek god of either northern or Asiatic origin. One story makes him the ever-young god of the Hyperboreans, who lived 'beyond the north wind'; he came down to the Mediterranean in summer, and returned north in winter. In one of the Delphic festivals a procession with a youth as its leader, representing the god, went north to the Vale of Tempe, where they received crowns of laurel in commemoration of the northward journey of the god.

But the name Lykos, which is applied to him, could mean either that he originated in Lycia, or that he was the 'wolf-god' placated by shepherds in Asia Minor, whence came the art of music. Perhaps he derived from Apuluna, the Hittite god of gates. Apollo also protected gates and doors, and he certainly had many shrines in Asia.

He was definitely a late-comer to Delphi, where he succeeded other gods, and it was only late in his career that he was associated with the sun.

In general Apollo embodied the Classical Greek spirit; he personified beauty of every sort. But as the inscriptions in his temple at Delphi showed—'Know Thyself', 'Nothing too Much'—he also personified moderation and the golden mean, and so was beyond the reach of Nemesis. It was with this in mind that Greek sculptors made their 'ideal' statues of him, like this from the pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia.

21. The Sanctuary at Delphi.
In the foreground is the Odeon, and in the centre the pillars of the temple of Apollo.

On Delos and at Delphi Apollo was worshipped as a fertility god, and received the first-fruits of gold and silver models of them. From his shrine on Delos sacred fire was sent to Lemnos, where it must have had some connection with the worship of Hebeaestus. Sacred fire was also sent from Delphi to Athens, where it was received with great ceremony.

Leto had also been persecuted by Python, a dragon which grew out of the muddy water left by the Flood. Hera had set this monster on her rival, but Apollo shot it. The place where the dragon died became known as Pythian games. Apollo's priestess was also lamed after the dragon.

almost nothing about them. Apparently there was a cave in which serpents, symbols of fertility, were kept. A reaped ear of grain was exhibited, and the worshippers shared a meal of bread and wine. Persephone was mourned for forty days, and a kind of play was performed concerning a sorrowing mother. The worshippers were given some sort of revelation of life after death.

28. **Hermes. Black Figure vase, c.540 BC. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.**

29. **Hermes with lyre. Red Figure vase from Vulci, 550-510 BC. British Museum.**

Hermes was originally the simple god of Arcadian shepherds, but he was soon credited with all manner of cunning and cleverness. He invented the lyre by stretching strings of sheep-gut across a tortoise-shell. He gave the lyre to Apollo, who presented him in return with his herald's staff. Zeus gave him his round hat and winged sandals.

Hermes was also the god of 'the stone-heap', which seems to have had religious significance in Mycenaean times. Legend says that when the gods tried Hermes for killing Argus, the hundred-eyed guardian of Io, they acquitted him and threw their voting-pebbles at his feet. Thus a heap of stones grew up round the god. Adding a stone to a cairn is still thought to bring good luck.

Statues of Hermes. Usually consisting of a bust of the god on a stone pillar with a heap of stones at the base, stood in front of most Athenian houses. These statues were perhaps also boundary stones, just as heaps of stones by the wayside were equivalent to modern milestones. Hence Hermes became the god of travellers and traders, and protector of boundaries and cross-roads. Because he relied on his wits he was also the god of thieves.

30. **Birth of Dionysus, from a late 5th century vase, Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, USA.**

31. **Dionysus as the God of Wine. Black Figure vase painted by Pamphaios, from Vulci, c.510 BC. British Museum.**

32. **A Bacchant. Detail from Red Figure vase by the Kleophrades painter, c.500-490 BC. State Museum of Antiquities, Munich.**

The legend says that when Hera recognised Dionysus as Zeus' son, she drove the young man mad. He wandered all over the world, including Asia, Egypt and even India. In the East he discovered the vine and brought it back to Greece. Wine does in fact appear to have come to Europe from Babylonia.

Semele, the name of the daughter of Cadmus, king of Thebes, is derived from Zemelo, the Phrygian Earth-Mother. Dionysus seems to have been originally a god of vegetation with countless names all over Asia and in Egypt. Like Zeus with his Curetes he had nurses called Thyades, who cradled the child in a winnowing basket. He may have been the equivalent of Zeus for the Minoans in Crete, and the Mycenaean worshipped him as a tree-god.

His worship came into Greece through Thrace, and he was regarded as a Thracian god. Thebes was the centre of his cult by the fifth century BC, and he was officially recognised as assuming power at Delphi during the time of the year when Apollo was absent.

10

Primitive stories of Dionysus make Demeter his mother. In the form of a bull he was torn to pieces by the Titans, and pomegranates grew from his blood. Demeter put his body together again, and he was brought to life by Zeus. All this reminds us of Isis and Osiris in Ancient Egypt.

The coming of Dionysus was sufficiently recent to be part of Greek folk memory. The Greeks still thought of it as a terrifying incursion from the barbarian world. Hence the stories of resistance to his ritual, followed by madness.

The Satyrs are thought to have been spirits of the woods. Dionysus as the wine-god was often portrayed as an effeminate young man; another name for him was Bacchus, and his priestesses were called Bacchantes or Maenads, from the Greek word *maenain* 'to be mad'. Euripides wrote a famous play about them.

Dionysus was also the patron of drama, and the theatre in Athens was dedicated to him (see Section 8, part 2 in this series, and also VP's *Greek Theatre*). In Athens at vintage time boys whose parents were both alive ran a race from the sanctuary of Demeter to that of Athena, carrying bunches of grapes. The winner received a cup of olive oil, wine, honey, cheese and groats.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The publishers' acknowledgements and thanks are due to the following for permission to photograph and/or reproduce:

British Museum, London
Tate Gallery, London
Cheltenham College, Glos.
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
Staatsbibliothek, Berlin
Alte Pinakothek, Munich
State Museum of Antiquities, Munich
Borghese Gallery, Rome
Terme Museum, Rome
Delphi Museum, Greece
Olympia Museum, Greece
Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, USA
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, USA

Suggestions for students' work

After the narrative, and while dealing with the further information, teachers should encourage students' creative response. Points in the filmstrip will be found where it is convenient to do this, and suggestions are given below for work suited to a wide range of ability. Teachers will naturally select those ideas that suit their students, and will add their own. Of course, the best work comes after adequate discussion.

After frame 8

1. Who were: the Titans, the Cyclopes, Atlas, Prometheus, Pandora, Epimetheus?
2. Which English word is derived from Titan, and what does it mean?
3. What other ills do you think flew out of Pandora's box?
4. Write a short play in two scenes: (i) Epimetheus tells his brother about Pandora, and Prometheus warns him not to open her box; (ii) Epimetheus does not obey, and what follows.
5. Write a story about how fire really came to mortals.
6. Draw a picture of Prometheus chained to a rock.
7. Prometheus tells Heracles his story, beginning: 'In early days men did not have fire, and were very uncomfortable. So I thought I would help them....'

After frame 18

1. Zeus is called the 'Thunderer'; what name would you give to Poseidon, Hades, Hephaestus, Athena and Aphrodite?
2. Make a list of the children of Zeus.
3. What is a trident?
4. What are the Latin names of the Greek gods described so far?
5. Write a short play describing how Zeus complained about headaches, and what happened.
6. Hephaestus tells the Cyclopes a story about why he is lame, beginning: 'I wasn't always lame like this. But one day Zeus was in a vile temper....'
7. Who was Medusa?

After frame 23

1. What other famous twins do you know of?
2. Can you suggest why the Greeks thought the arrows of the sun-god brought pestilence and death?
3. A Theban mother tells her children the story of Niobe, beginning: 'Once upon a time there was in our city a proud queen....' Finish the story.
4. Draw a picture of one of the gods described in these frames.
5. Find out more about oracles in Greece.

After frame 32

1. Find out more about the Underworld.
2. Persephone tells her mother the story of her kidnapping, beginning: 'I was picking flowers with my friends. There were some lovely ones a little way off along a stream, so I went after them on my own....' Can you finish this story?
3. What is a pomegranate?
4. Write about another instance of Hera's jealousy.
5. Draw a lyre and describe it in words.

Teaching notes

Among all the possible topics for debate and discussion, the following are some suggestions.

Frame 1. After seeing frame 2 also, students might be able to decide why Zeus 'gathered clouds' on the mountain top.

Frame 3. This was the conventional Greek way of drawing thunderbolts. Do students think it satisfactory?

Frame 4. Students' attention should be drawn to the qualities of this relief, e.g. the pattern made by the shields, and the line of the god's left leg which is echoed in reverse by that of the goddesses' bodies.

Frame 5. Students might like to discuss how the legend of Atlas holding up the sky originated.

Frame 7. Students might debate whether there is anything better than Hope that might have remained in the box.

Frame 9. Teachers could lead students to discuss the qualities of this picture. Are there too many figures? Are the horses well drawn? At a second showing of the strip students could identify Hera, Zeus, Poseidon and Hermes.

Frame 11. Students might decide why the god is carrying a dolphin.

Frame 14. This frame gives an opportunity for a discussion on Greek coins.

Frame 15. Students' attention might be drawn to the effect of the drapery.

Frame 16. Students might compare Titan's style with that of, say, frame 8, which portrays the same sort of movement. Is Titan's work too opulent, 'fleshy', or decadent?

Frame 17. This frame provides an opportunity to find out more about Greek armour and weapons.

Frame 20. Students' attention should be drawn to the serene simplicity of this statue, which some authorities think is unequalled.

Frame 23. Do students prefer this dramatic statue to that in frame 7? If so, why?

Frame 25. This statue is also full of vigour and movement. Do students prefer it to that in frame 23? Is it too clever?

Frame 26. The calm, deep sadness of this statue might well be contrasted with that in the previous frame and compared with the serenity of the statue of Apollo in frame 20.