

Classical Mythology

LLCU/CMLT 316.010/080



Class 8

Apollo

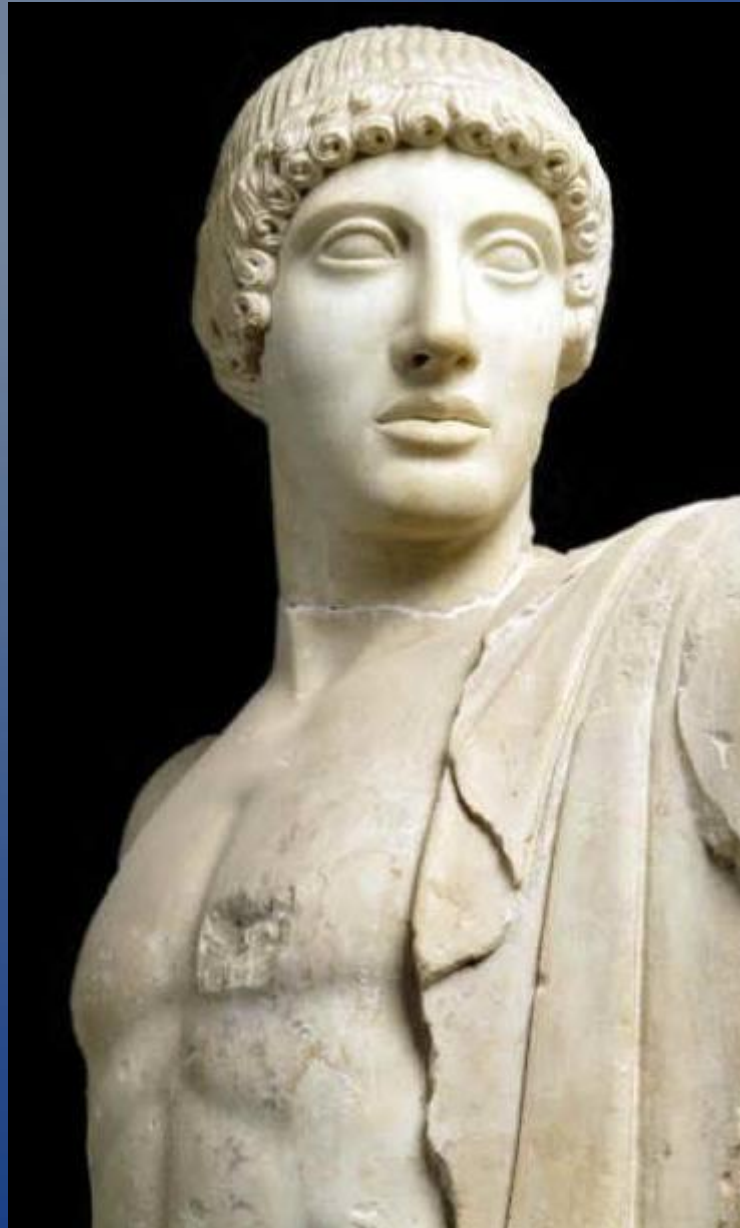
Hermes

Readings for Thursday

Classical Mythology 285-302

(**In class writing assignment, Thursday the 15th; topic announced beginning of next class)

Apollo



The Site of Delphi: Pythian Priestess



The Site of Delphi

- Significant debate about what role the Pythian priestess served
- Modern research is leaning towards offering the priestess a lot of autonomy in her 'divine inspirations'
 - Some have speculated that the high place of the Pythian Priestesses at Delphi is owing to an older tradition associated with the **Python** (perhaps an earlier Earth goddess-type)

Apollo's Relationships

- Both heterosexual and homosexual relations
- Several end tragically (for both sides)
- As god of (male) youth, his story often has been interpreted as relating the pain of young love (or “lust”)

Apollo's Relationships

- **Daphne** (and the origin of Apollo's sacred tree, the laurel)



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Greek Laurel, *Laurus nobilis*

Apollo's Relationships

- Laurel crown for athletes (Olympic Games) and poets



Apollo's Relationships

- **Hyacinthus** and the jealous Zephyr (West Wind)



Sibyl of Cumae (Roman)



<http://images.metmuseum.org/CRDImages/dp/web-large/DP800431.jpg>

Sibyl of Cumae (Roman)



Sibyl of Cumae (Roman)

- Depicted as raving, when inspired by the god:
- *Aeneid*
- ‘Not yet willing to endure Apollo, the prophetess raged within the cavern in her frenzy, trying to shake the mighty god from her breast; all the more he wore out her ravings, mastering her wild heart and fashioning her to his will by constraint.’

Sibyl of Cumae (Roman)

- Theme of a god's gift
- Ovid, *Metamorphoses*
- 'I picked up a heap of sand, showed it to him [Apollo] and asked for the vain wish that I might have as many birthdays as the individual grains in my hand. I forgot to ask for continuous youth along with those years.'

Cassandra (concubine of Agamemnon)

- Given gift of prophecy by Apollo if she gave herself to him
- Changed her mind: Apollo asked for a kiss and spit in her mouth
- Doomed to see the future, but have no one believe her



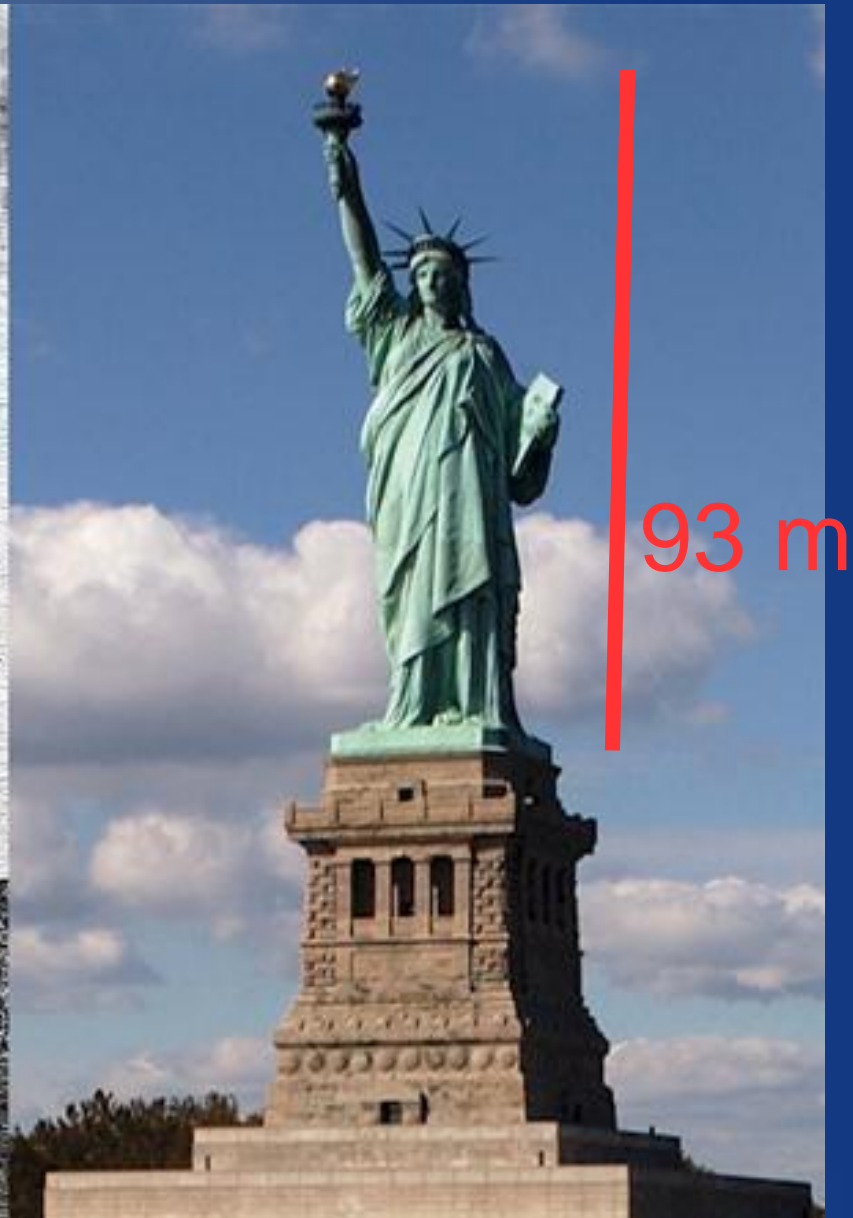
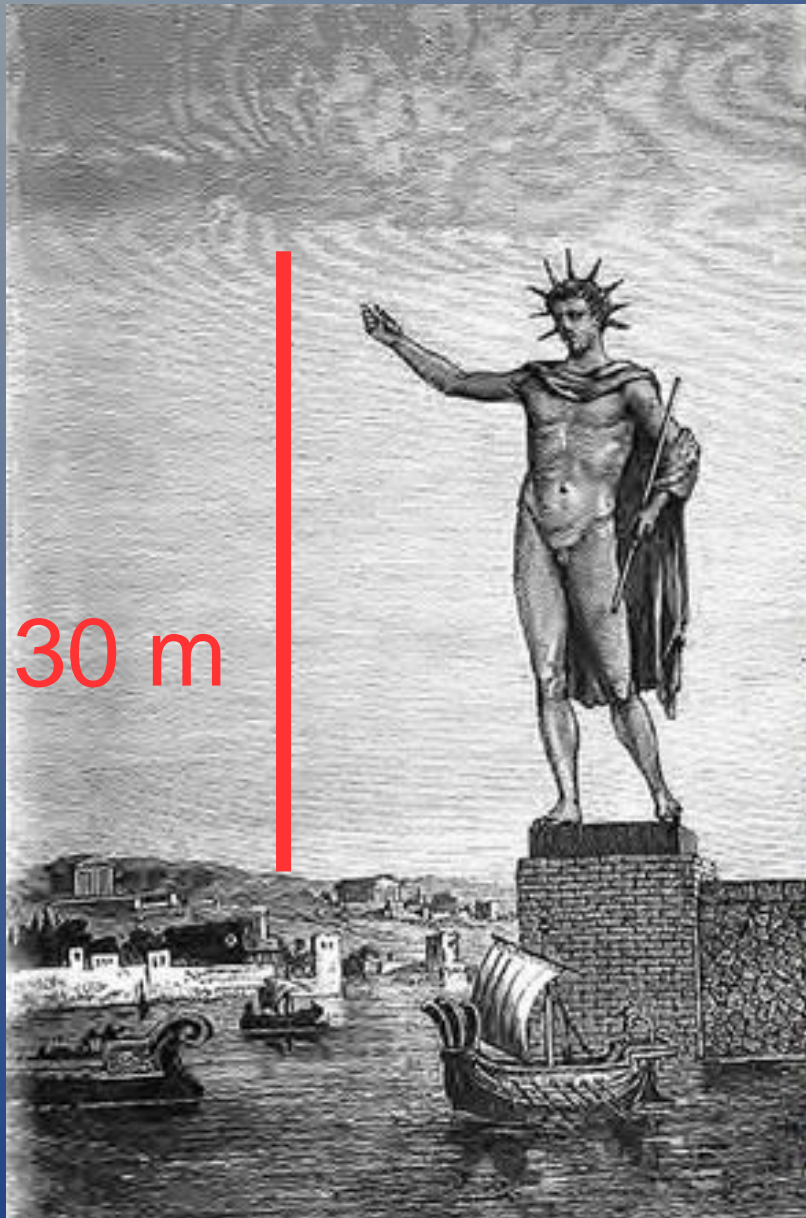
Apollo and Helos

- Apollo's epithet "Phoebus" means 'shining'
 - may have encouraged a connection between him and Helios (association became more popular in the Roman period)
- Illustrates the elision of gods (i.e. on god merging with another in belief)

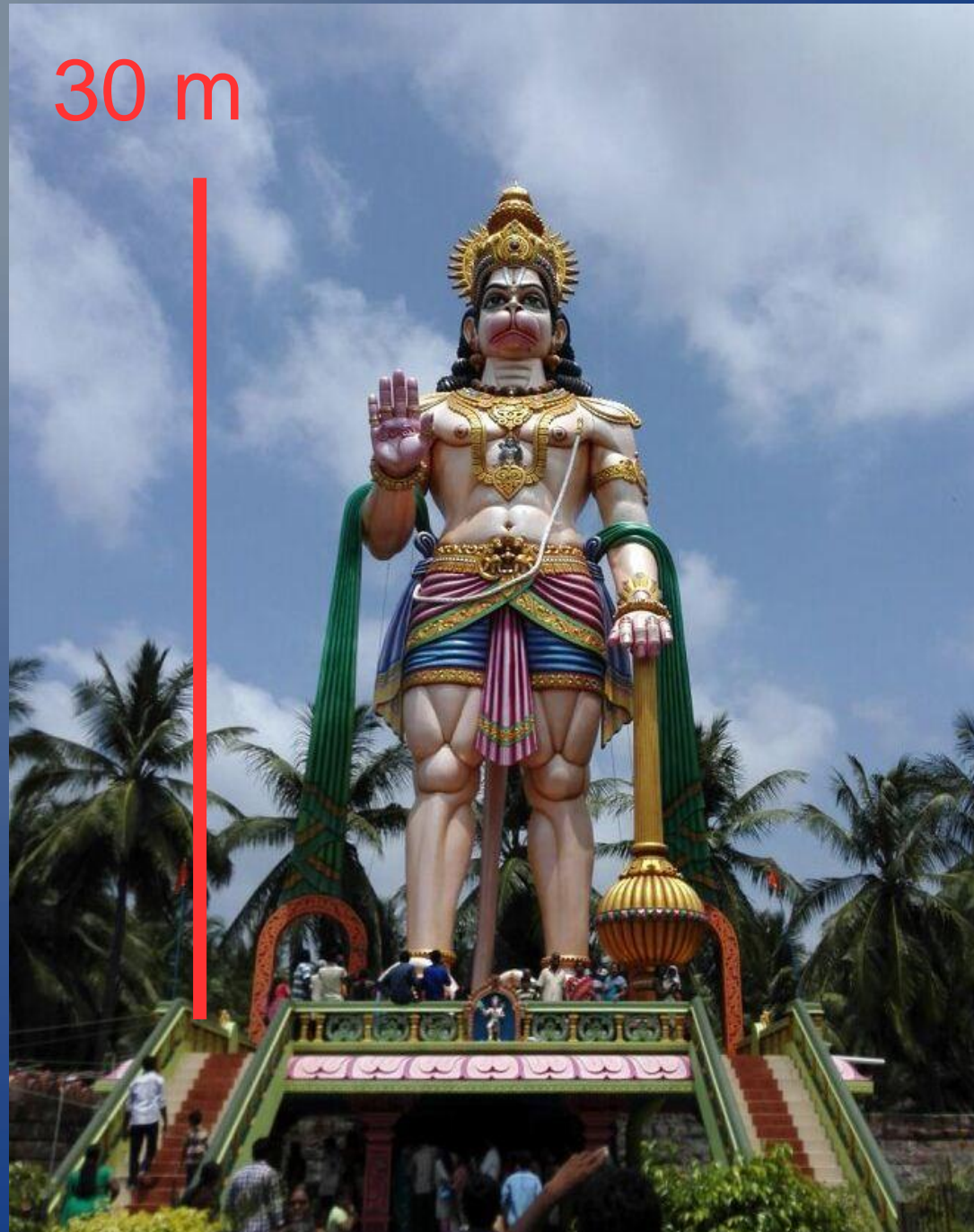
Apollo and Helios



Colossus of Rhodes (3rd cent. BCE)



Hanuman Statue, Andhra Pradesh, India



Phaethon

Son of Helios (Sun) and Cyrene (mortal)

- Phaethon approaches Helios (in India), asking to know his true birthright
- Helios as a token of proof grants his son grants him a wish (swearing on the river Styx)

Phaethon



Phaethon

- Phaethon cannot control the horses
- Scorches Libya and threatens Olympus
- Zeus strikes him down with a thunderbolt
- Horses return to the West



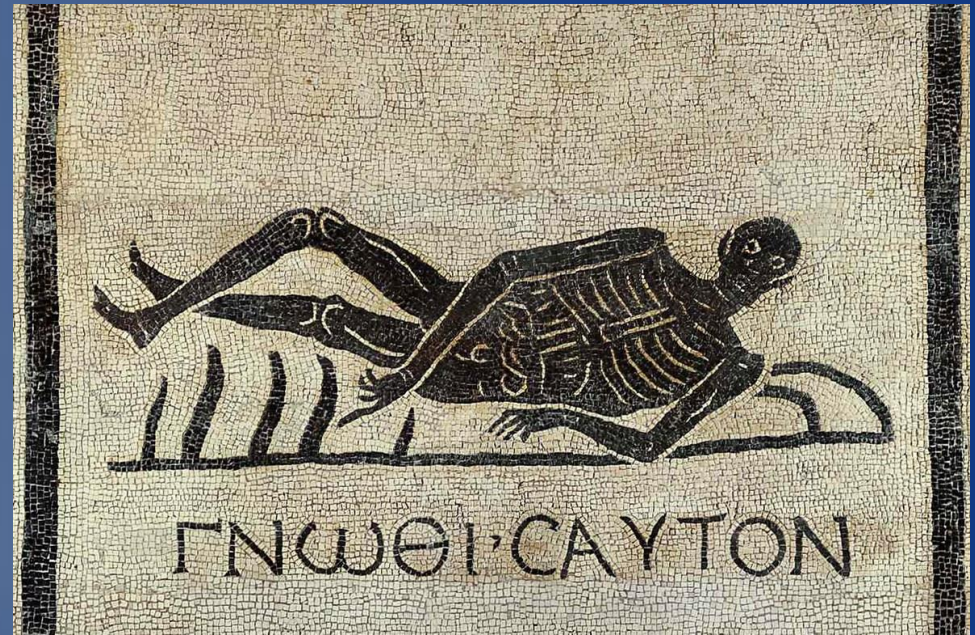
Gnothi Seauton



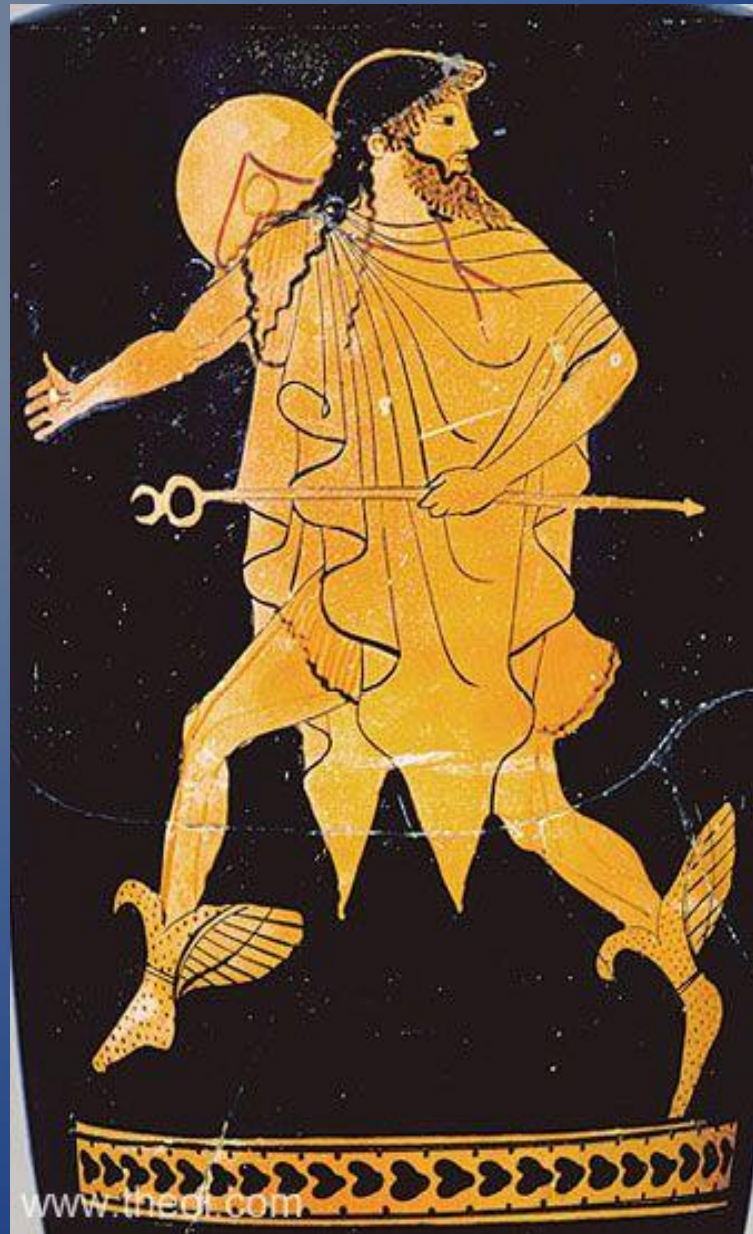
“Know Thyself”

Gnothi Seauton (Saying at Oracle of Delphi)

- A famous Greek expression
- On the surface, it means “know who you are” (often with the meaning “know your place”)
- a common motif in myth to reflect on a person’s place in the order of things



Hermes



<http://www.theoi.com/image/K11.11Hermes.jpg>

Hermes

Appearance:

- Winged shoes
- Traveler's hat
- **Caduceus**
- Young god (often younger than Apollo)



<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/e6/d7/59/e6d759ee6ec4552b73c7ed79399589d8.jpg>

Hermes

The god of boundaries

Spheres of influence:

- Herald/messenger of the gods (primary role)
- guide for travelers
- god of thieves
- god of herds (livestock)
- trickster god

Hermes

- The Caduceus (messenger's staff)



“Golden Boy” Atop Manitoba Legislature



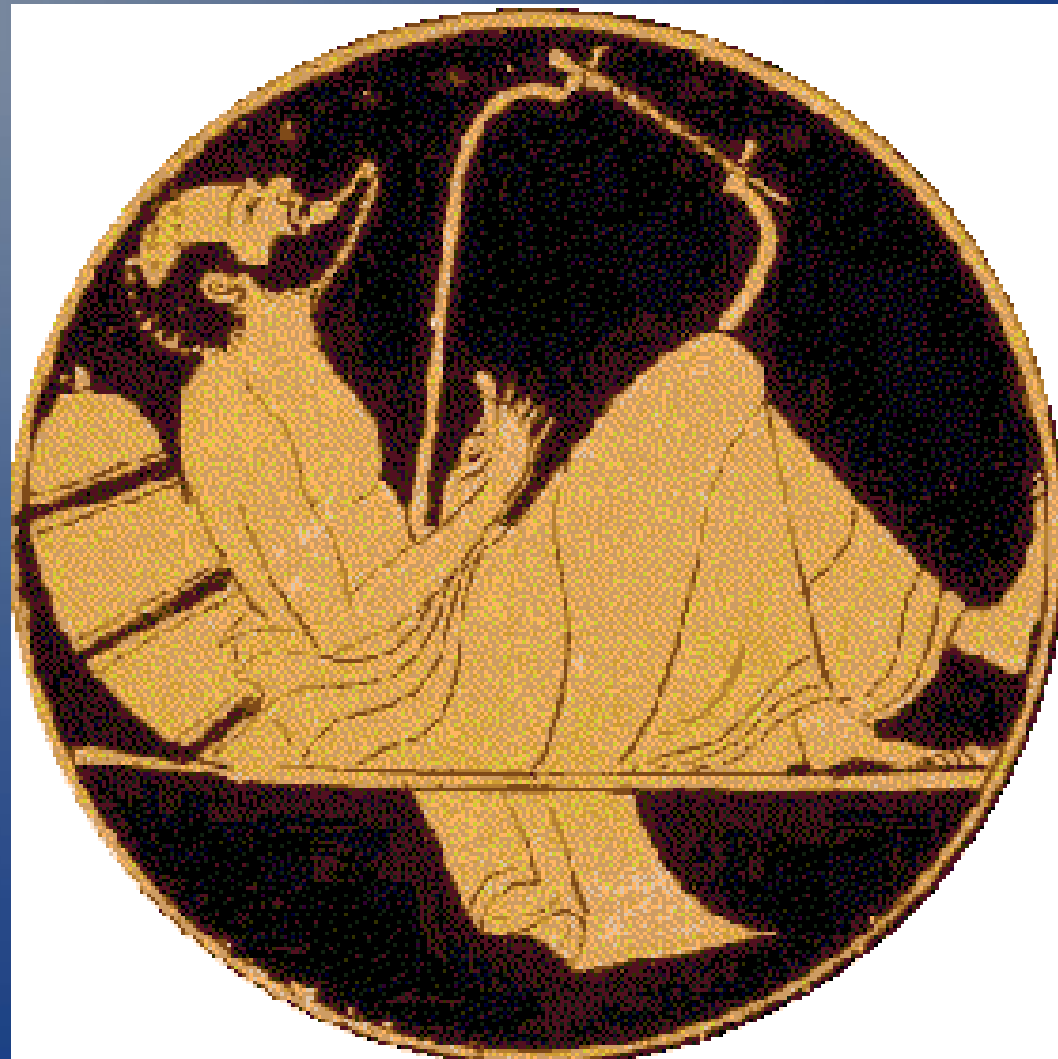
Hermes

Hermes as Messenger of the gods

- Acts as an intermediary between humans and gods (mainly Zeus) – also helps Zeus in carrying out his various extramarital relations
- Function mirrors that of contemporary Greek and Roman heralds

Hermes

The Homeric Hymns as Origin Stories



Hermes

“Gotham”



<http://images.hngn.com/data/images/full/137631/gotham.pn>

Hermes: The Origin Story

The Homeric Hymn to Hermes



Hermes: The Origin Story

Child of Zeus and Maia (daughter of Atlas)



Hermes

The Invention of the **Lyre** (from tortoise)



Hermes

The Invention of the **Lyre** (from tortoise)



Hermes

The Invention of the **Lyre** (from tortoise)



Kerameikos Cemetery, Athens

Hermes

The Theft of Apollo's Cattle



Hermes

Hermes gives Apollo the Lyre



Hermes

- Hermes as *Psychopomp* (Spirit Guide)



Hermes

- Hermes a god who is “**liminal**”; he is at the edges of boundaries and is able to move freely from one to another
- The Homeric Hymn to Hermes suggests why he has these roles
- (an individual's youth is formative, or we have innate qualities within us that come to light)