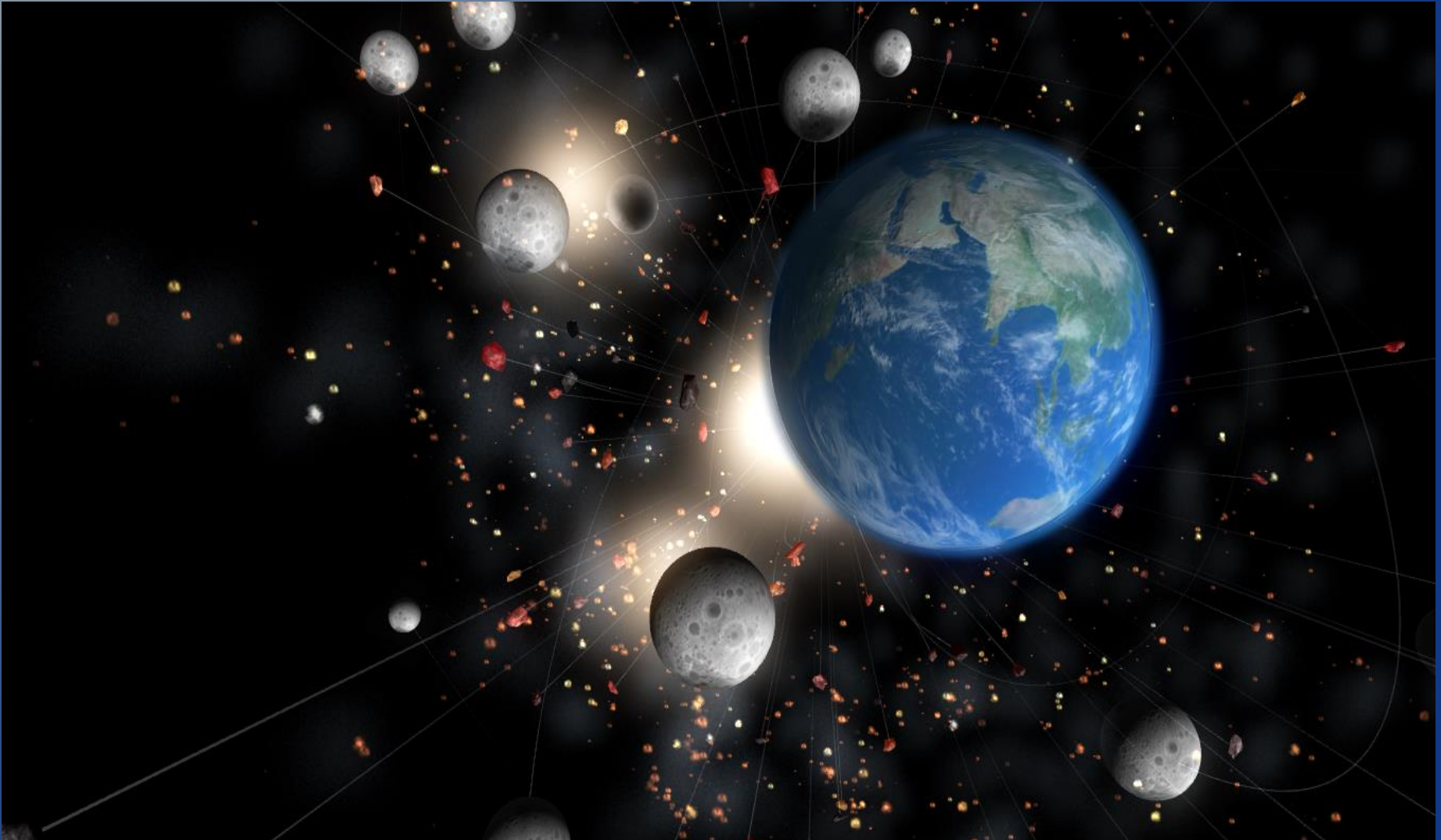


# Classical Mythology

## LLCU/CMLT 316.010/080



## Class 2:

(1) Changing Myths

(2) Cosmogony and Theogony

(3) The Creation of the Universe  
and the Succession of the Gods

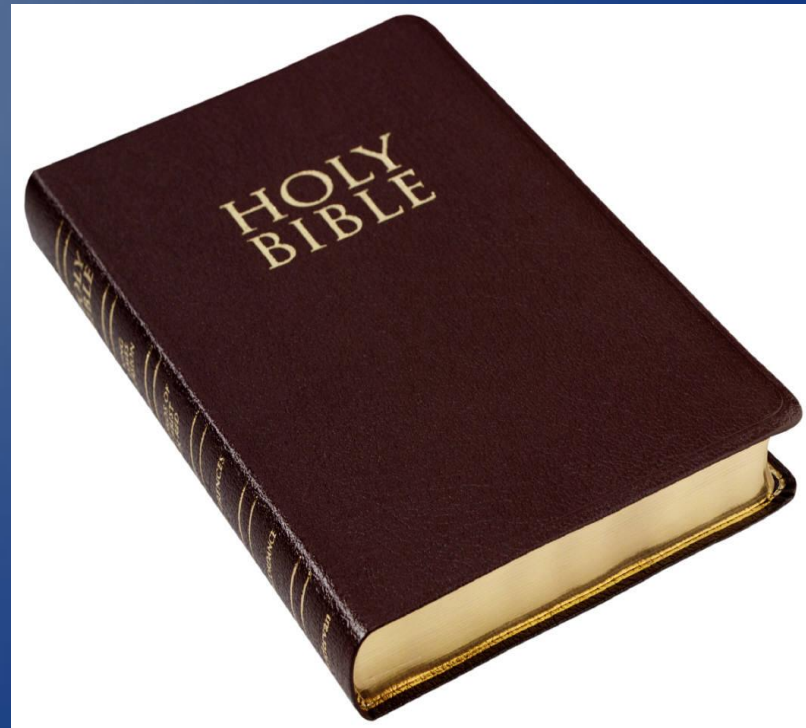
Today's Assigned Readings (for next Tuesday)

*CM 61-81*

(Following Reading: *CM 84-112*)

# Sources of Myths

Unlike, say, the modern Christian Bible, the Greeks and Romans lacked a single, authoritative, religious narrative



# Sources of Myths

Some important narratives did exist, for example:

## Greek

Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (circa 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE)

Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days* (circa 700 BCE)

The Homeric Hymns (7<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE?)

## Roman

Virgil's *Aeneid* (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE)

Ovid's writings (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE)



# Sources of Myths

But these are (more or less) works of literature

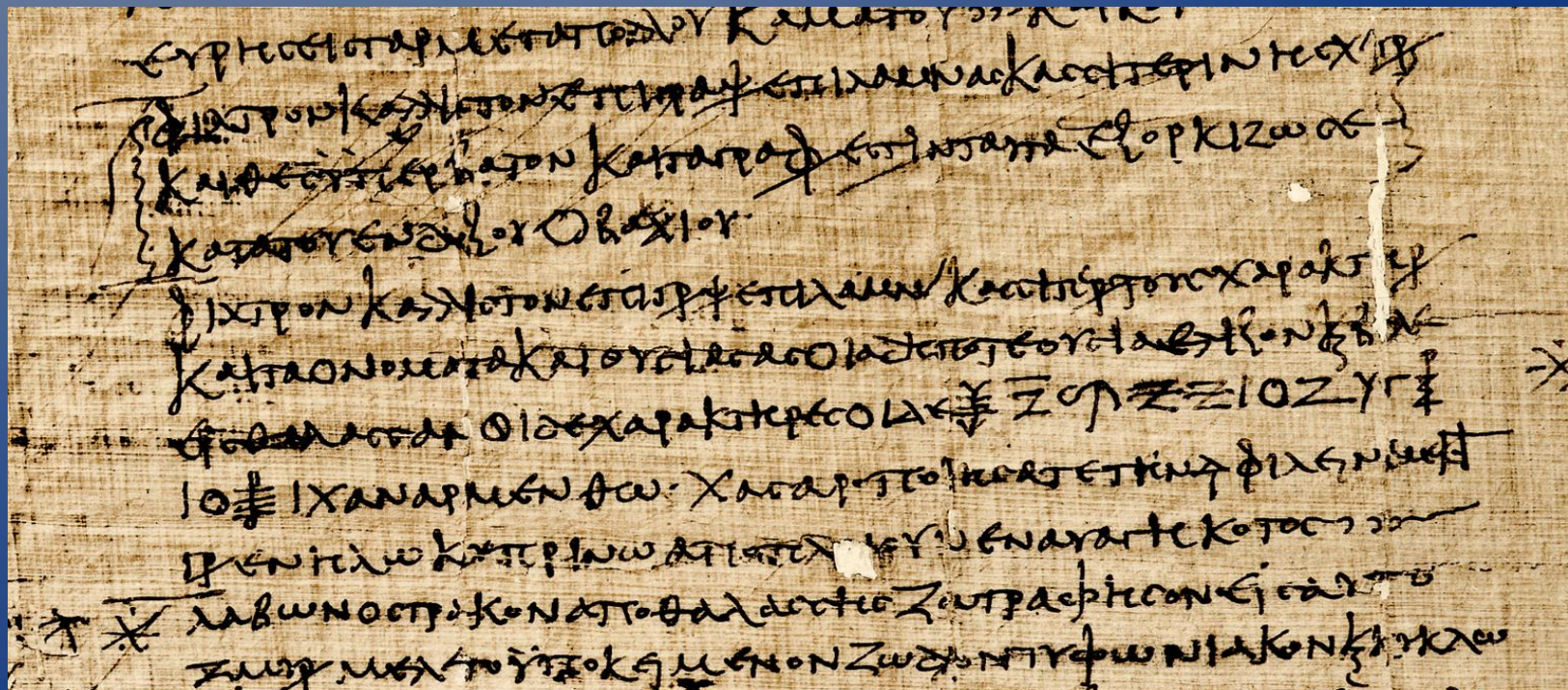
Manuscript of the *Iliad* -  
5-6<sup>th</sup> century CE





# Ancient Literacy

- Impossible to say for certain, but conservative estimates are that about 10-15% literacy in the *most* urban parts of the Greek and Roman worlds





# Oral Transmission of Myth

## “The Telephone Game”

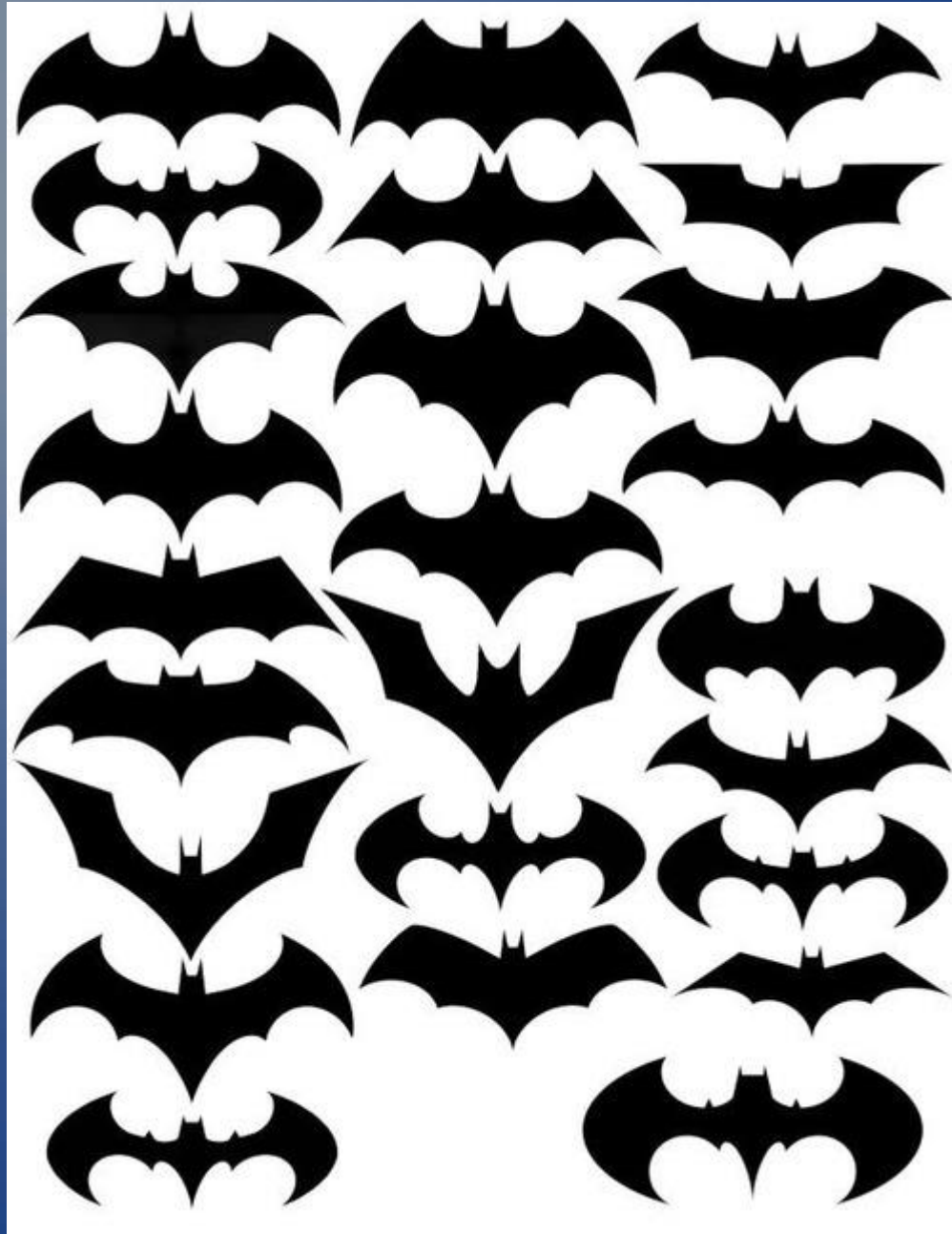




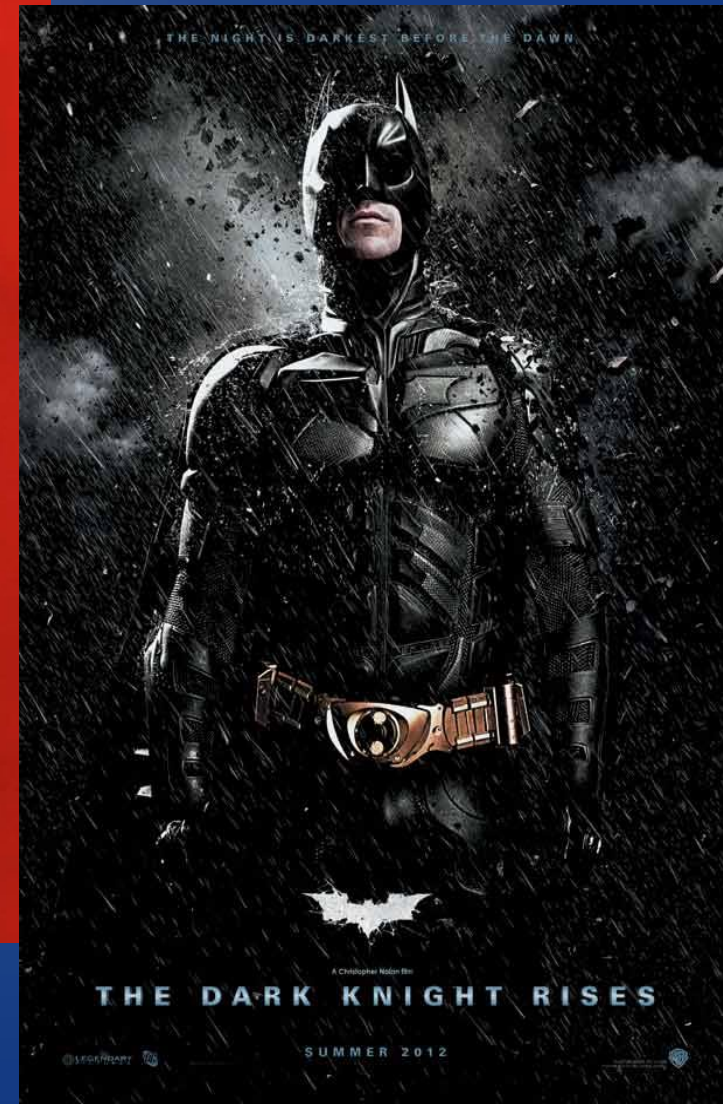
## Sources of Myths: Mutability

The lack of any single fixed 'authoritative' text – and the definition of these stories as 'literature' – meant that the details of each could be changed to some degree.

# Sources of Myths: Mutability



# Sources of Myths: Mutability





# Sources of Myths: Mutability

## Things that Can't (Shouldn't?) be Changed

### Batman/ Bruce Wayne



Parents are  
Murdered when  
he is a boy

Period of brooding/training  
(weird exposure to bat?)

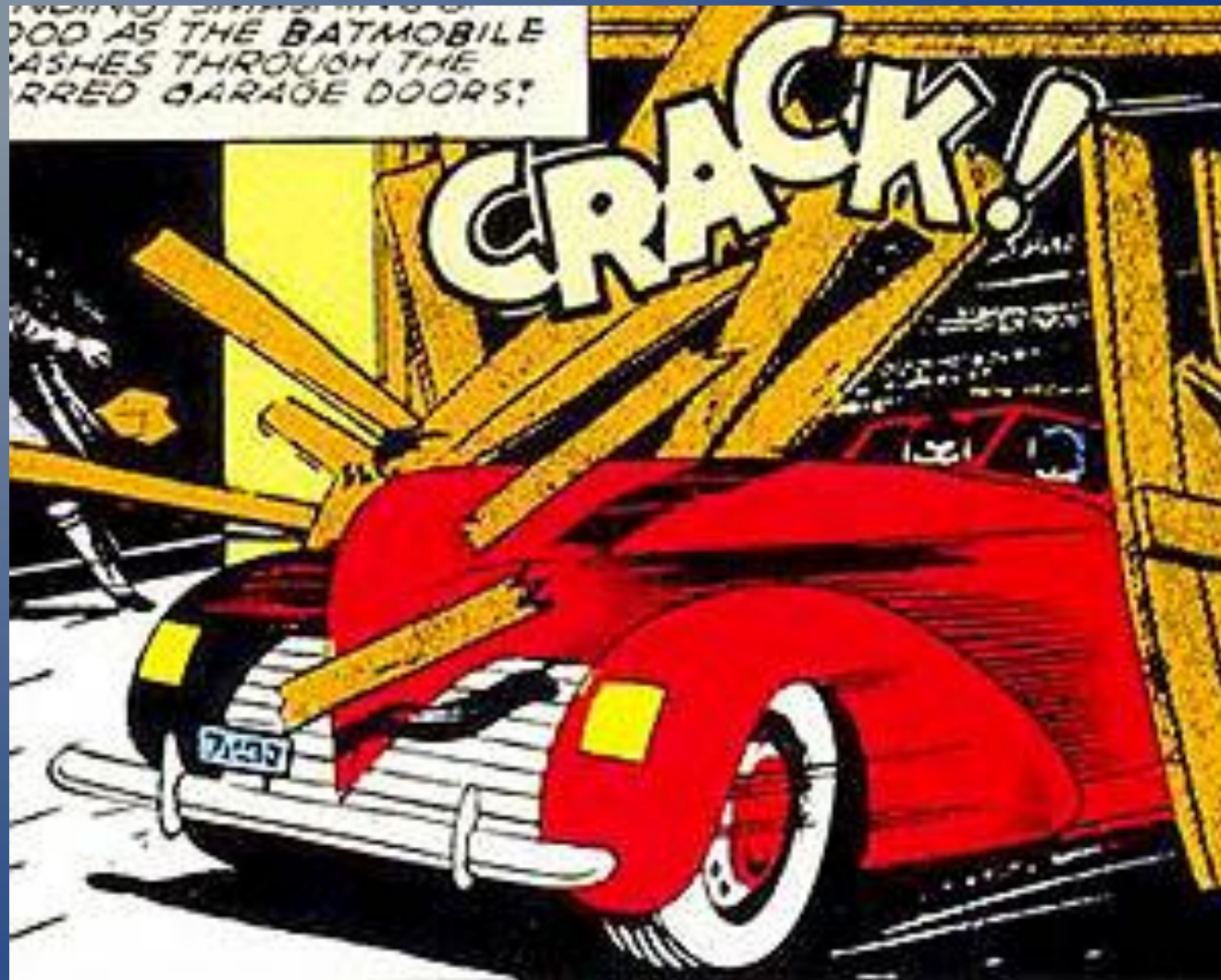
Decides to avenge parents' deaths  
through crime fighting



- Parents rich
- Only child (orphan)
- Bruce has “playboy” persona



# Sources of Myths: Mutability



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/0/07/Original\\_Batmobile.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/0/07/Original_Batmobile.jpg)



# Sources of Myths: Mutability



<http://news.entertainmentearth.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/batmobile-1966.jpg>



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/6/65/Batmobile\\_\(Batman\\_v\\_Superman\\_-\\_Dawn\\_of\\_Justice\).jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/6/65/Batmobile_(Batman_v_Superman_-_Dawn_of_Justice).jpg)



# Sources of Myths: Mutability



<http://i.imgur.com/4VOSsQi.jpg>



[https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTf68\\_LamzLTNZE703YQ24gc0k-Ha4EG\\_e77ZyM3xY-nMOqO6YQ](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTf68_LamzLTNZE703YQ24gc0k-Ha4EG_e77ZyM3xY-nMOqO6YQ)

# Part 1: Cosmogony

## The Birth of the Universe





# Cosmogony

*Cosm-o-gony* = the birth of 'the order'





# Cosmogony

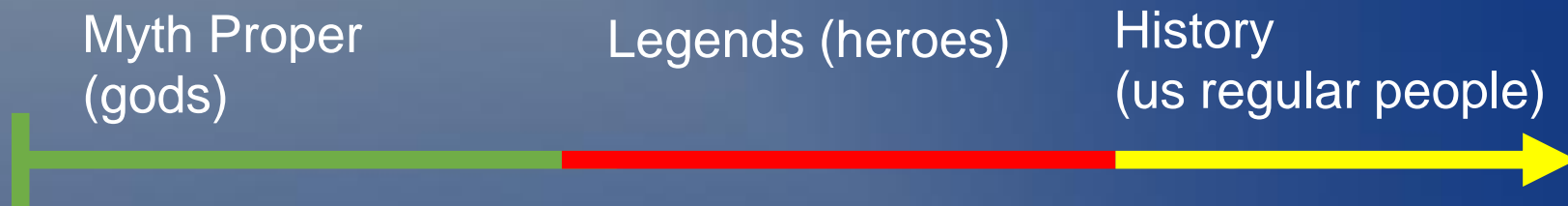
*Cosm-et-ology* = the study of making 'order'



<http://westendsalonboulder.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/cosmetology.png>

# Cosmogony

## Ancient Concept of Chronology ("What happened before us?")



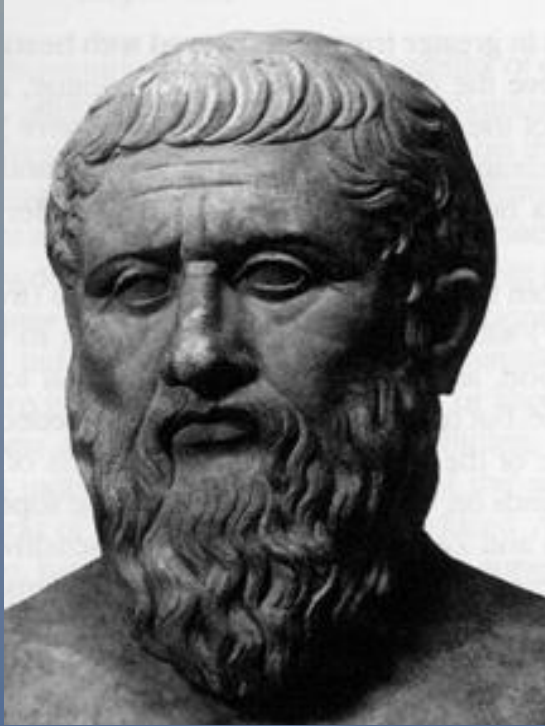
\*The closer we come to “history”, the more the world looks like it does today\*  
(fewer “monsters”, less interaction with gods, etc.)

# Cosmogony

All such 'myths' (and there are many) are non-falsifiable – i.e. they cannot be proven false



# Plato's *Timaeus*

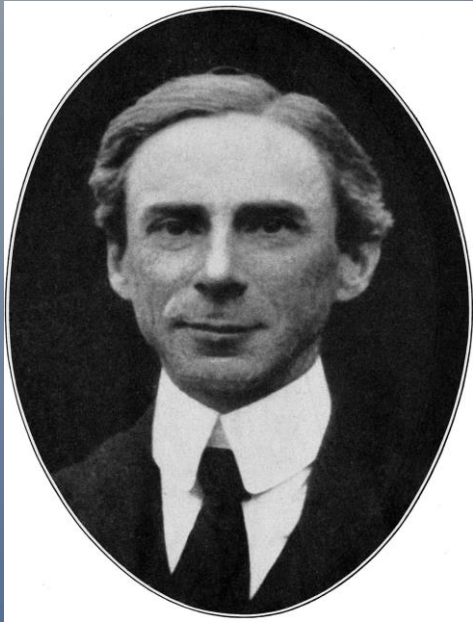


Plato of Athens  
(ca. 428-347 BCE)

Myth = 'a reasonable account'

Stories of creation *must* remain tentative – they are only useful so long as they remain probable or possible

# Russel's Teapot: Appeal to Tradition Fallacy



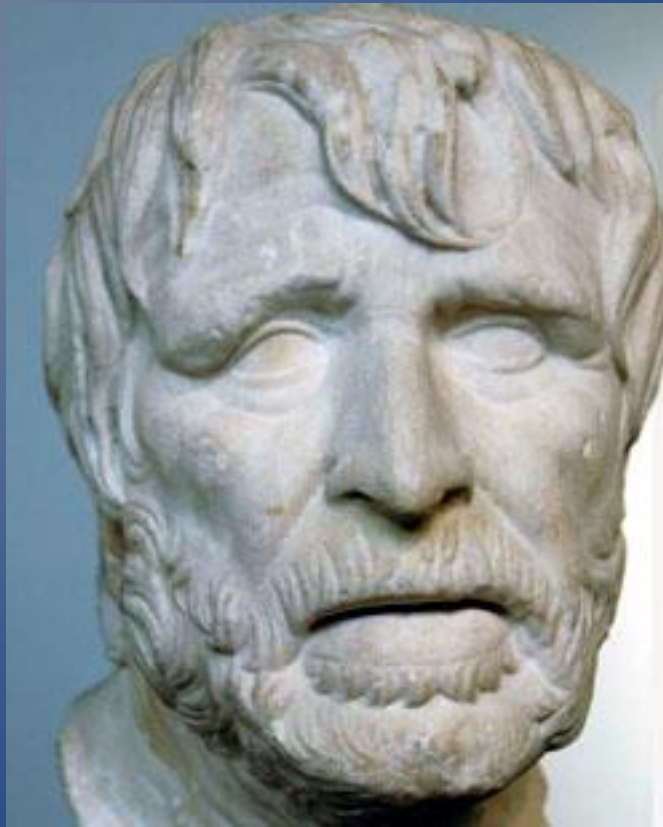
Bertrand Russell  
(1872-1970)

“If I say a teapot orbited between Mars and Earth, so small that it cannot be seen, you would call me a fool to believe in it.

But if it were described in an ancient text, and taught to us as fact, I would be hard-pressed to deny its existence.”

# Cosmogony

## Hesiod's *Theogony*



[www.ancientgreece](http://www.ancientgreece)



# Cosmogony

## Hesiod

- Circa 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE (sometime between 799-700 BCE)
- Shepherd/farmer turned poet
- From Boeotia (region north of Athens)
- Wrote *Theogony*, *Works and Days*, (and *Catalogue of Women*?)

# Cosmogony

## Boeotia



# Cosmogony

## Hesiod: Mount Helicon



[www.utexas.edu](http://www.utexas.edu)

## Invocation to *Theogony*

“From the Muses of Helicon let us begin our singing”



# Cosmogony

## Hesiod: **The Nine Muses**



lewebpedagogique

Perhaps Invented by Hesiod

# Invocation to *Theogony*

- Mythology Pro-tip #1: Epithets (descriptive phrases) are everywhere!

Lady Hera of Argos, Zeus the aegis-bearer, pale-eyed Athena, Phoebus Apollo, Artemis the archer, Poseidon the shaker of the earth, etc., etc.

# Invocation to *Theogony*

...and the rest of the holy family of immortals who are forever.

# Cosmogony

Why should the audience believe Hesiod?



# Invocation to *Theogony*

“This is what the goddesses said to me first, the Olympian Muses, Daughters of Zeus the Aegis-bearer:

‘Shepherds that camp in the wild, disgraces, merest bellies: we know to tell may lies that sound like truth, but we know to sing reality, when we will.’

# Invocation to *Theogony*

The Muses are named:

Clio (history), Euterpe (lyric poetry), Thaleia (comedy), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (dance), Erato (erotic poetry), Polyhymnia (hymns), Urania (astronomy), and Calliope (epic poetry).

They are the daughters of Memory and Zeus

In the beginning...

First there was the **Chasm** (the English translation of “**Chaos**” in Greek)

Then appeared Earth (**Gaia** or Ge), followed by **Eros**

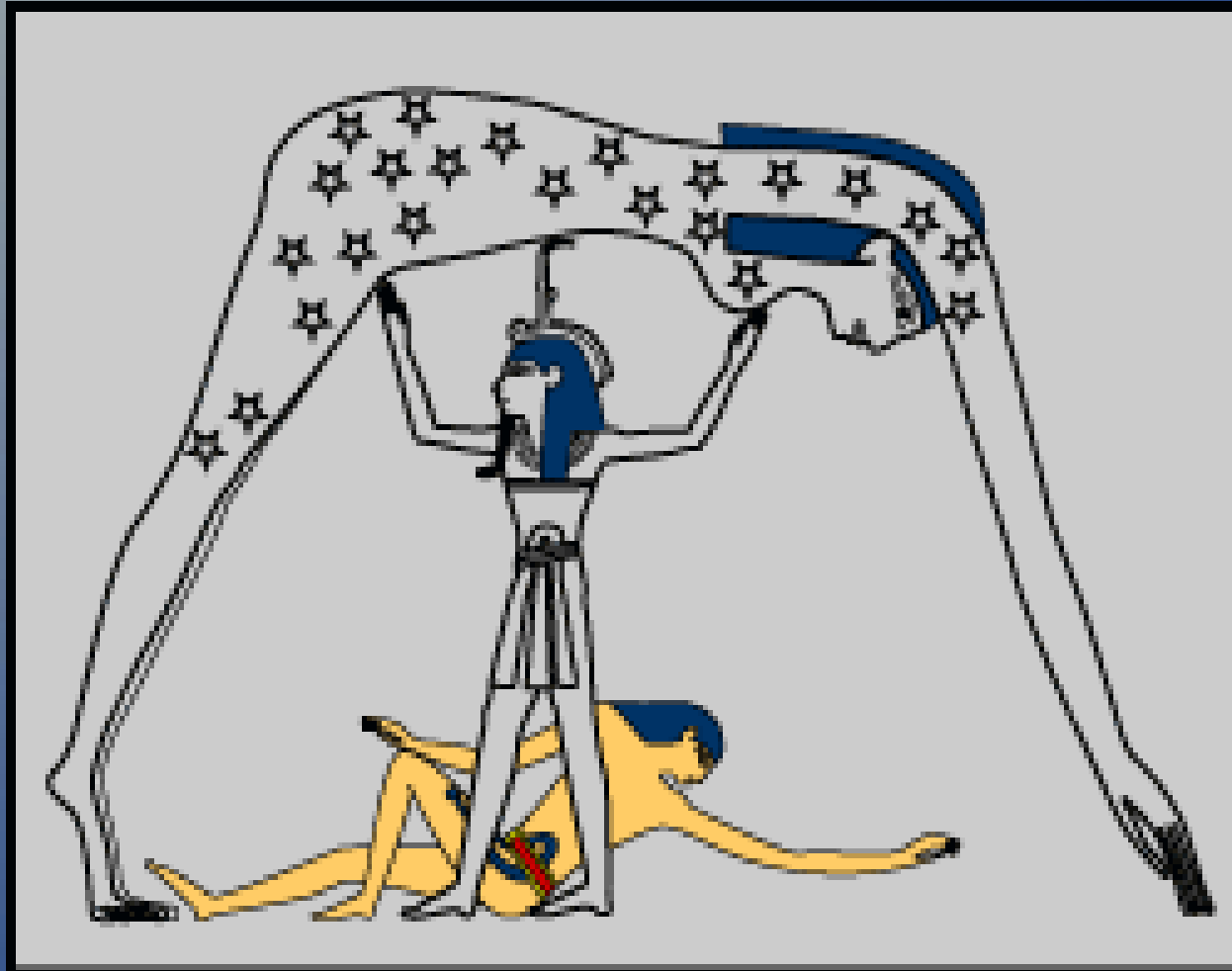
Then we see Erebus (connected to the Underworld), Night, Bright Air, and Day



In the beginning...

Then Earth (Gaia) produced Heaven  
(**Ouranos/Uranus**), 'so that he should cover  
her all about, to be a secure seat for ever  
for the blessed gods.'

# In the beginning...(Egypt)



Nut – Heaven  
(female)

Shu – Air

Geb - Earth

In the beginning...

Then Earth (Gaia) produced with Uranus the mountains, Oceanus, [physical features of the world] and some other abstract characters, e.g. Mnemosyne (“Memory”), Thea (“goddess”) and Rhea (“the Flowing One”).



In the beginning...



nyc.metblogs

The Physical World

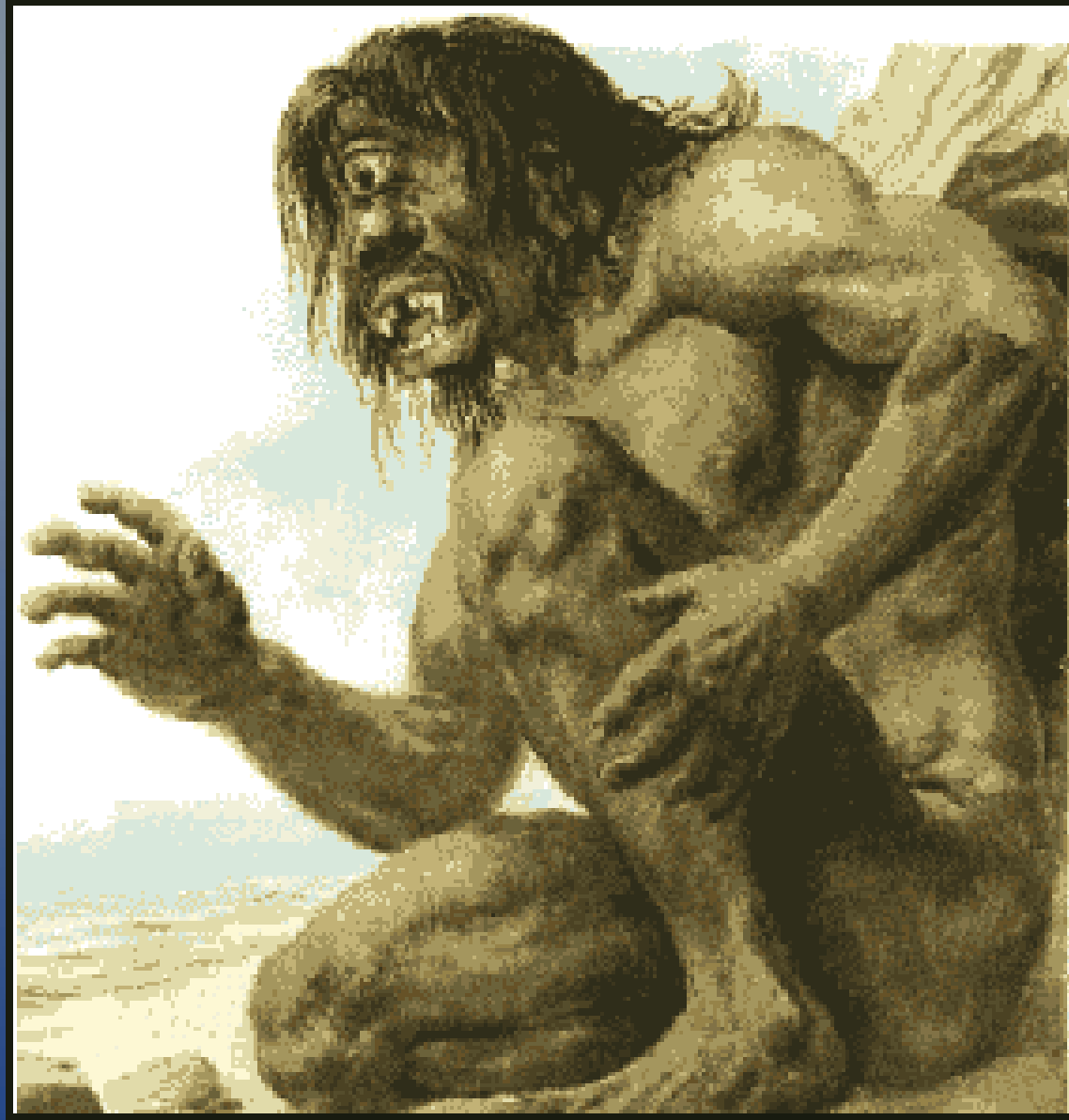
But THEN

“crooked-schemer **Kronos**, the most fearsome of children, who loathed his lusty father”

and

“proud hearted **Cyclopes**: Thunderer, Lightner, and Whitebolt”

# Signs of Disordered Procreation



<https://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net/new-monster/images/9/99/Cyclops.gif/revision/latest?cb=20150112201642>

## AND THEN

‘three more sons, mighty and stern, not to be spoken of, Kottos, Briareos, and Gyges, overbearing children. A hundred arms sprang from the shoulders of each of them...and strength boundless and powerful was upon their mighty form.’





The Hecatoncheires: The “Hundred-Handers”

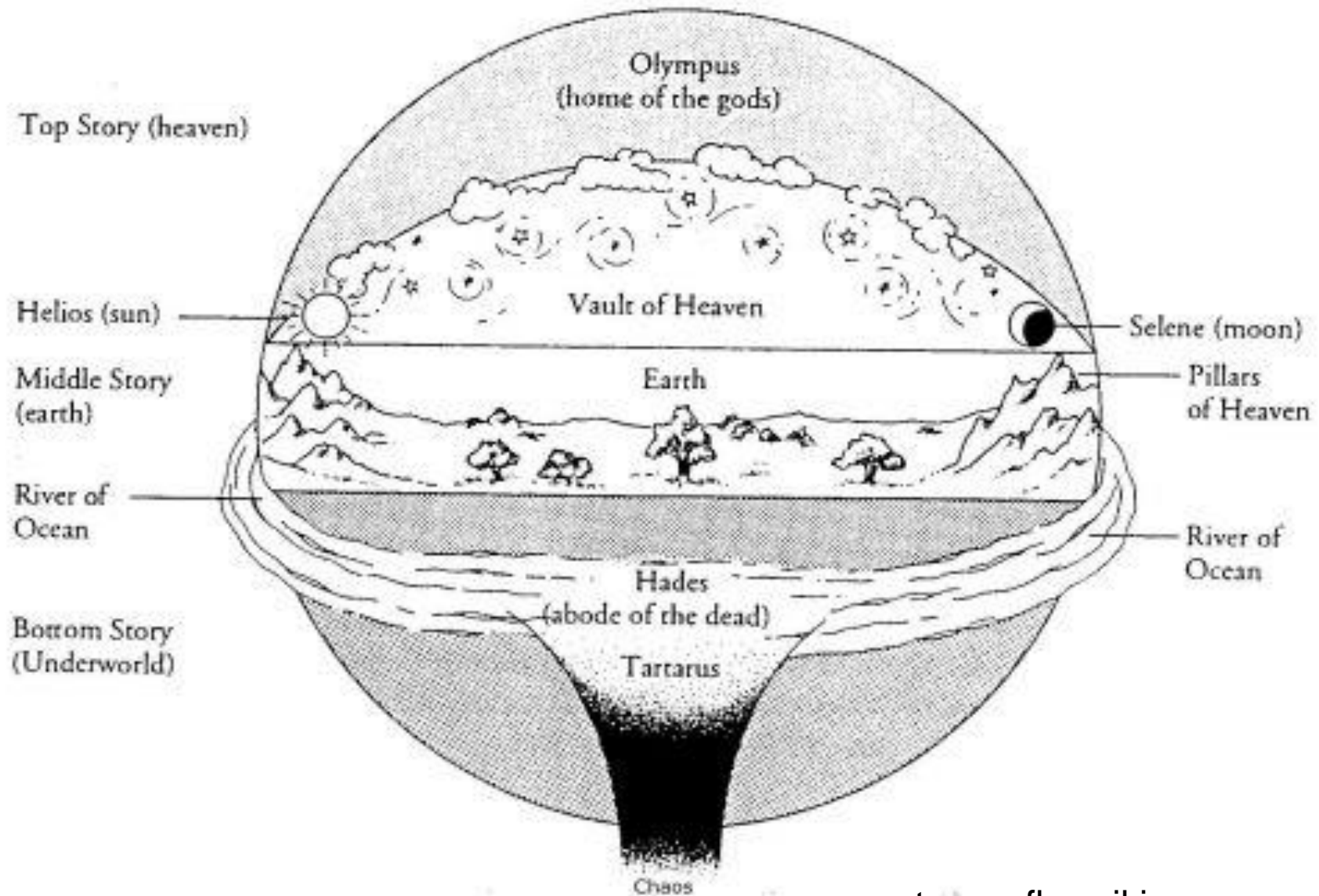
# The Titans: Children of Gaia and Uranus

Oceanus (the god of the river); Hyperion (the sun god); Themis and **Rhea** (earth goddesses); Tethys (sea goddess?); Memory (Mnemosyne); Coeus, Crius, Theia, Iapetus, Kronos, and Phoebe.

# The Titans:

**Oceanus** (the god of the river); **Hyperion** (the sun god); **Themis** and **Rhea** (earth goddesses); **Tethys** (sea goddess?); **Memory** (Mnemosyne); **Coeus**, **Crius**, **Theia**, **Iapetus**, **Kronos**, and **Phoebe**.

# Uranus Tosses Children to Tartarus





# Tartarus: Nine-Day Anvil drop from Earth



<https://i.pinimg.com/236x/50/7a/ca/507aca7dc9faaa6aa91057ff41b5a10a--vintage-cartoons-classic-cartoons.jpg>