

Classical Mythology

LLCU/CMLT 316.010/080



Class 7

Poseidon and his Kind

Apollo

Readings for Next Tuesday

Classical Mythology 251-280

The Greeks as binary thinkers:

Zeus (sky) and Hera (earth)

Ares (war) and Aphrodite (love)

Hephaestus and Aphrodite

Other Children of Zeus

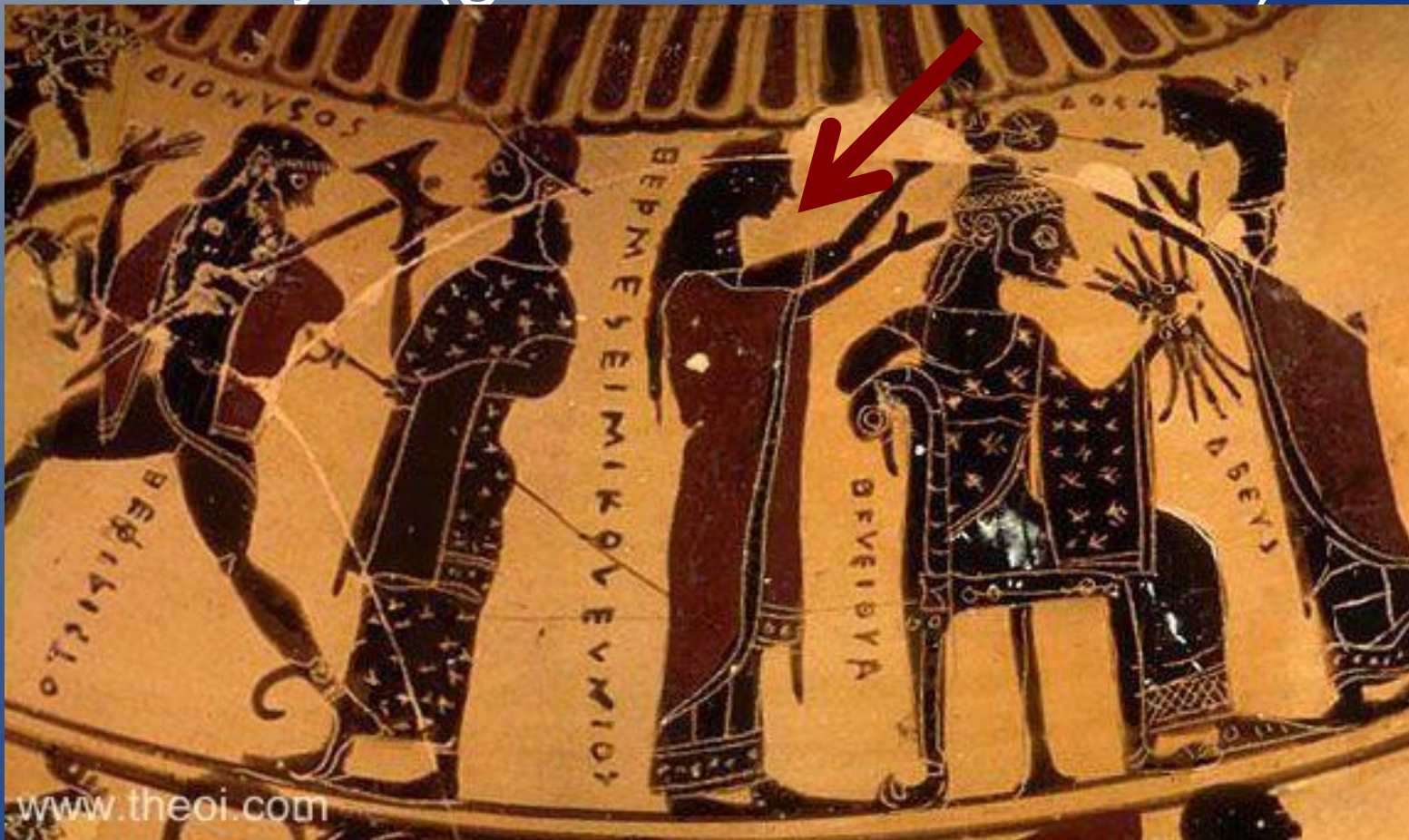
(+ Hera) Eileithyia

(+ Hera) Hebe

(+ Themis/Ananke) Fates:
Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos

Other Children of Zeus (and Hera)

Eileithyia (goddess of childbirth)



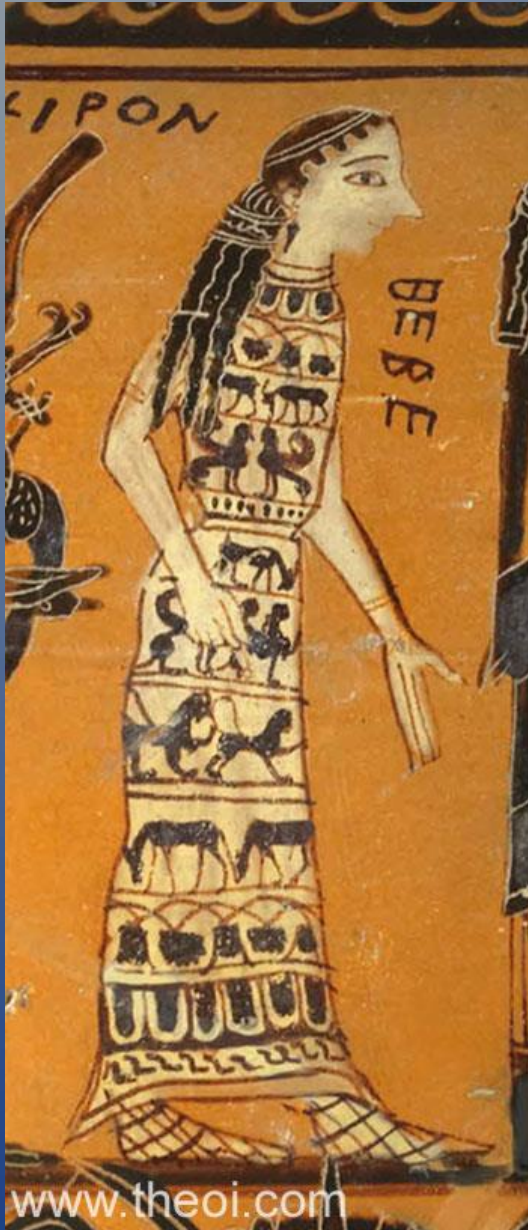
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Child of Zeus and Hera

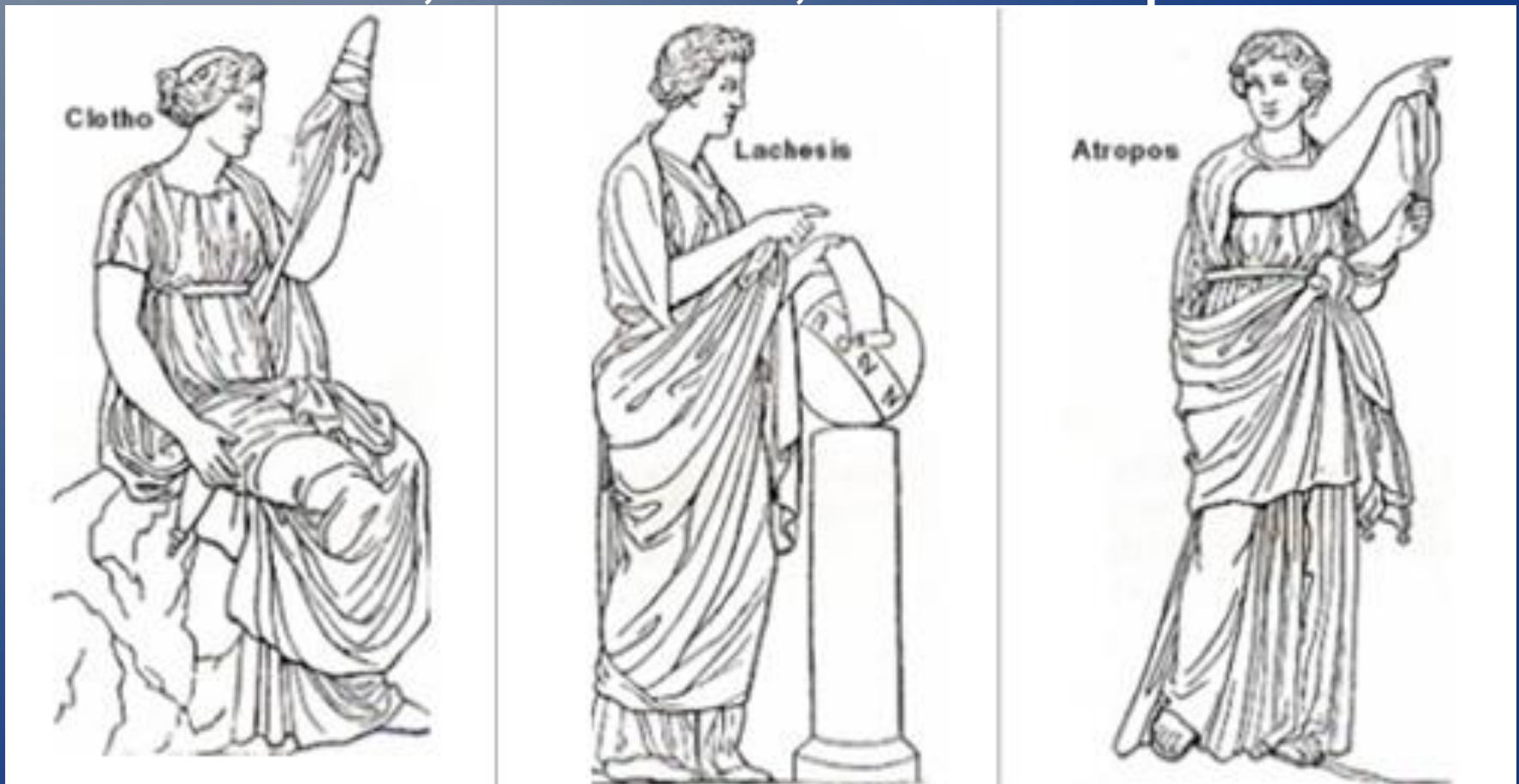
Hebe (Olympian cup-bearer)



Other Children of Zeus (with Themis/Ananke)

Fates (Moirai)

Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos



Poseidon and His ilk

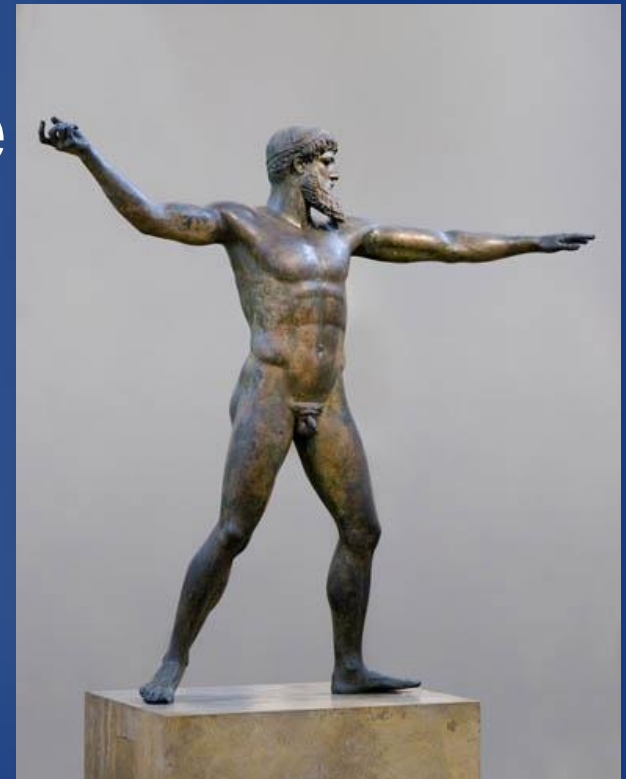


Poseidon

- Brother of Zeus
- god of the sea
- god of earthquakes
- god of horses and bulls

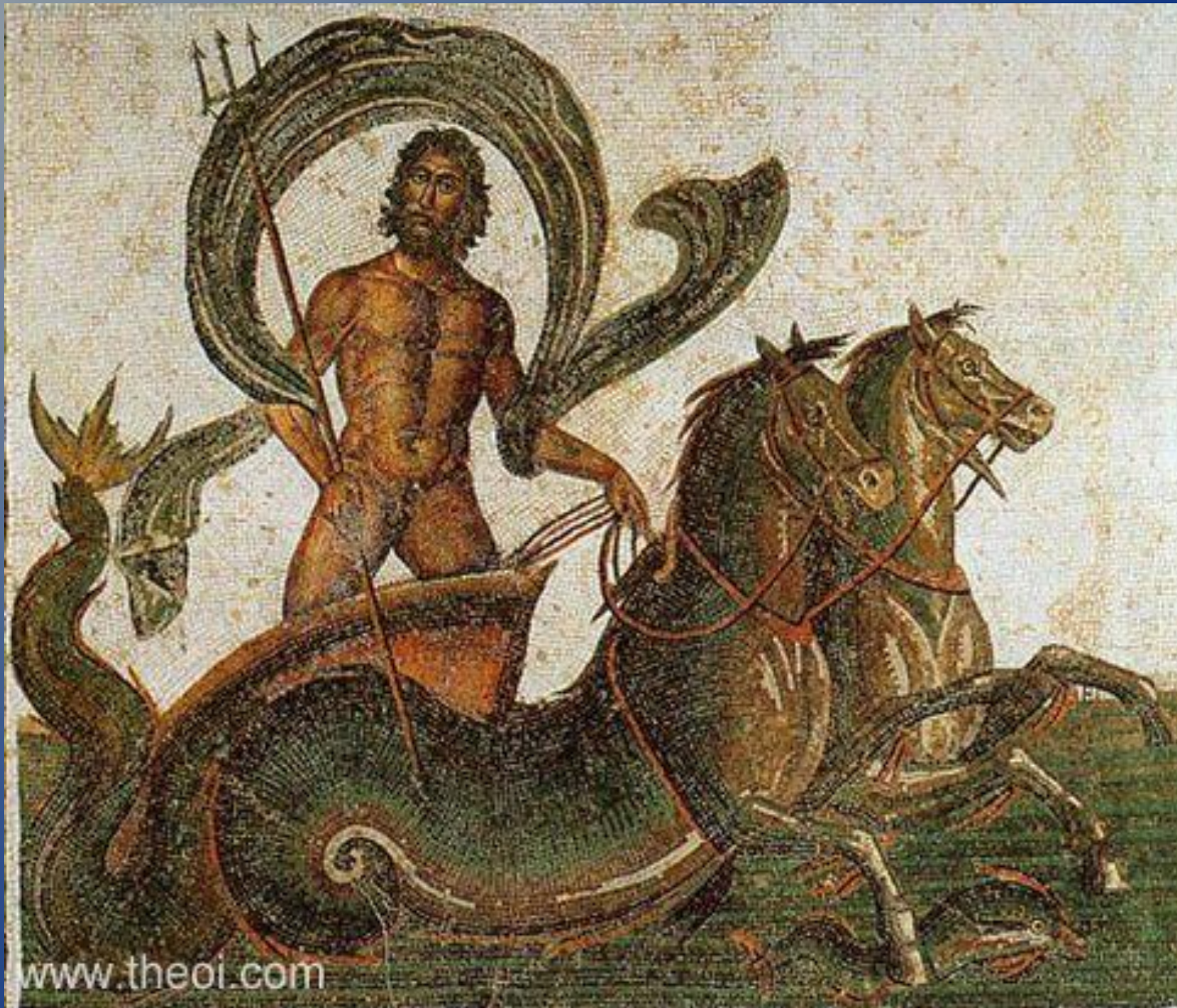
Poseidon

- In art, appears to look very much like his brother Zeus (middle-aged and bearded)
- Sometimes depicted with more dishevelled hair
- Special token: trident



https://www.learner.org/courses/globalart/assets/non_flash_386/work_235.jpg

Poseidon with “Sea” Horses



Temple of Poseidon (Athens)



Polyphemus and Galatea (and Acis)



Polyphemus and Galatea (and Acis)

- Polyphemus smashes Acis with a piece of a mountain
- From his blood flowed a Sicilian river and he became its spirit

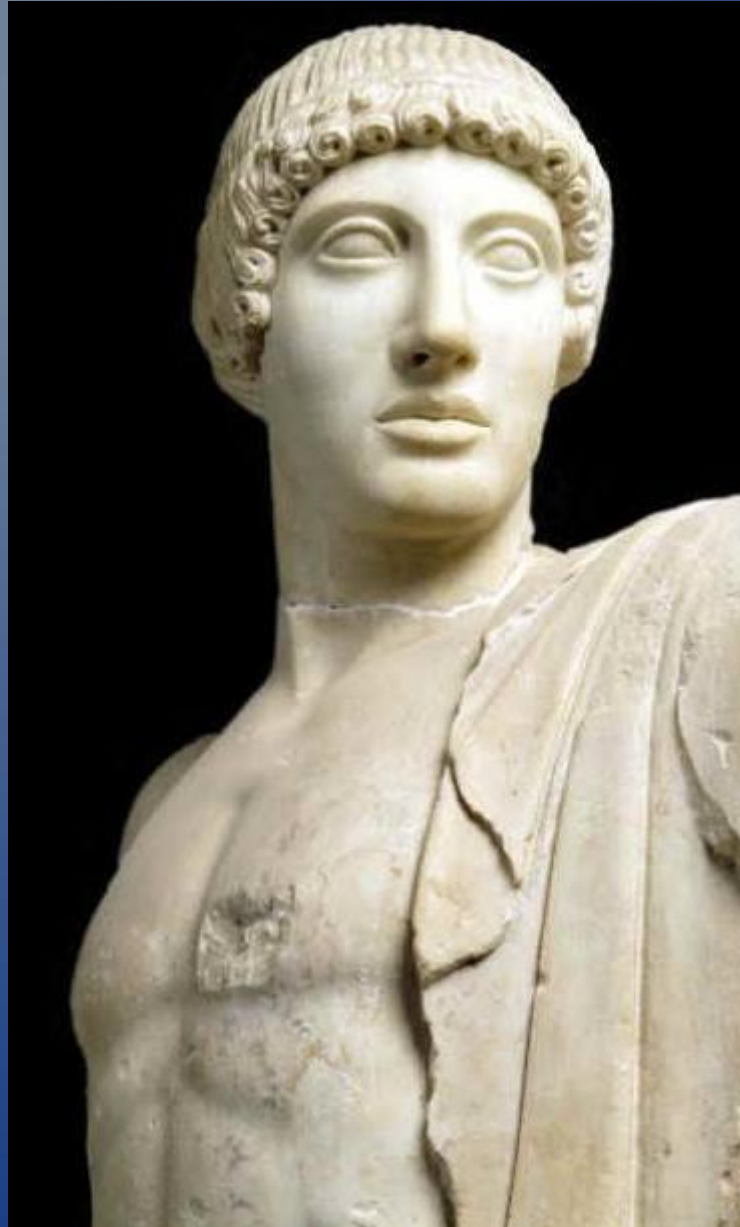


Polyphemus and Galatea (and Acis)

Ovid being subversive:

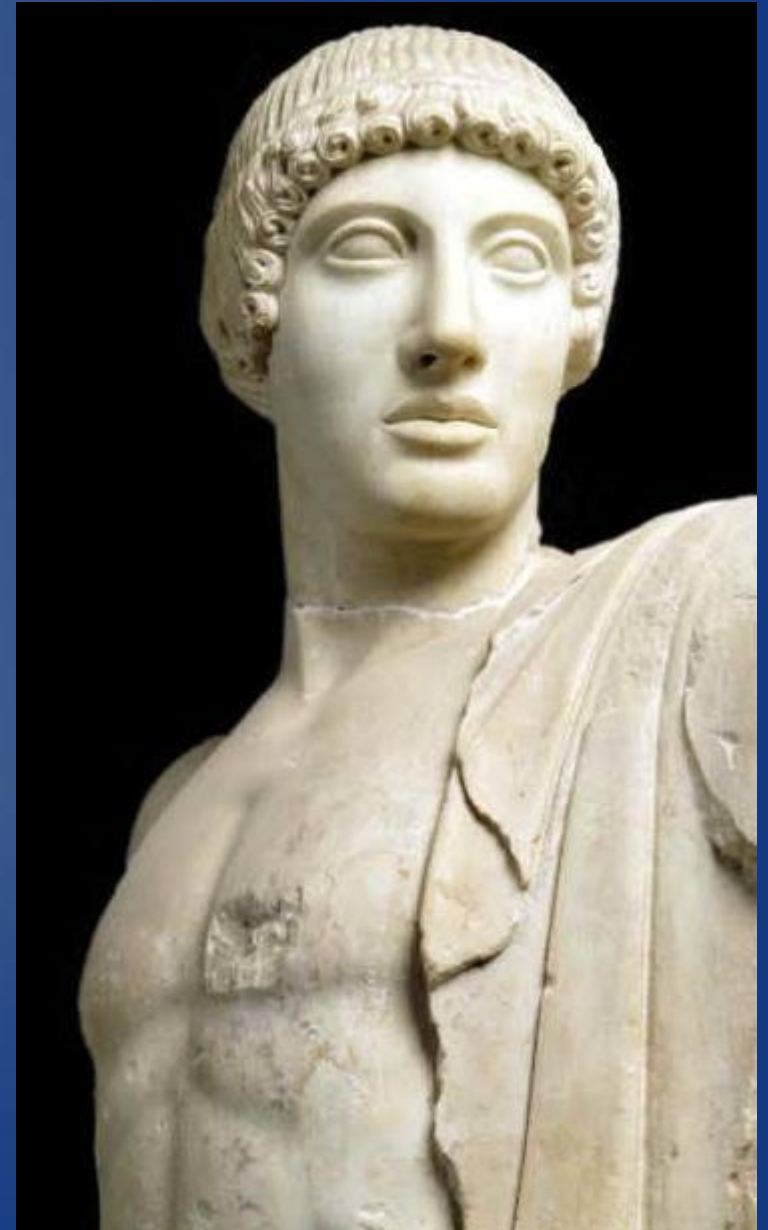
- A parody of love poetry (the ugly cyclops wooing the beautiful Neiriad)
- Combing his hair with a rake
- Playing a 100-reed pan flute
- Making excuses for his giant eyeball

Apollo



Apollo

- A decidedly “young” god in art
- Often depicted with a bow and arrow or a lyre (small harp)
- Represents youthful aspects of (male) existence: his twin sister Artemis will represent youthful *female* existence



Apollo

- Son of Zeus and the Titan Leto



Delos

- After becoming pregnant, Leto searches for a place to give birth to Apollo
- Finally finds the island of Delos, that *reluctantly* agrees to be the site of his birth
- Hera still angry, and keeps Eilytheia away – but E. is eventually bribed to assist Leto



Apollo

- End of *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*
- Description of festival on Delos in honour of Apollo (myth as explanation for ritual festivals)
- The poet mentions himself:
 - ‘Maidens, what man do you think is the sweetest of the singers who...in whom you delight most of all? Then all of you answer that I am the one: ‘A blind man who lives in rocky Chios.’

Fiction of “Homer” being a blind man from Chios

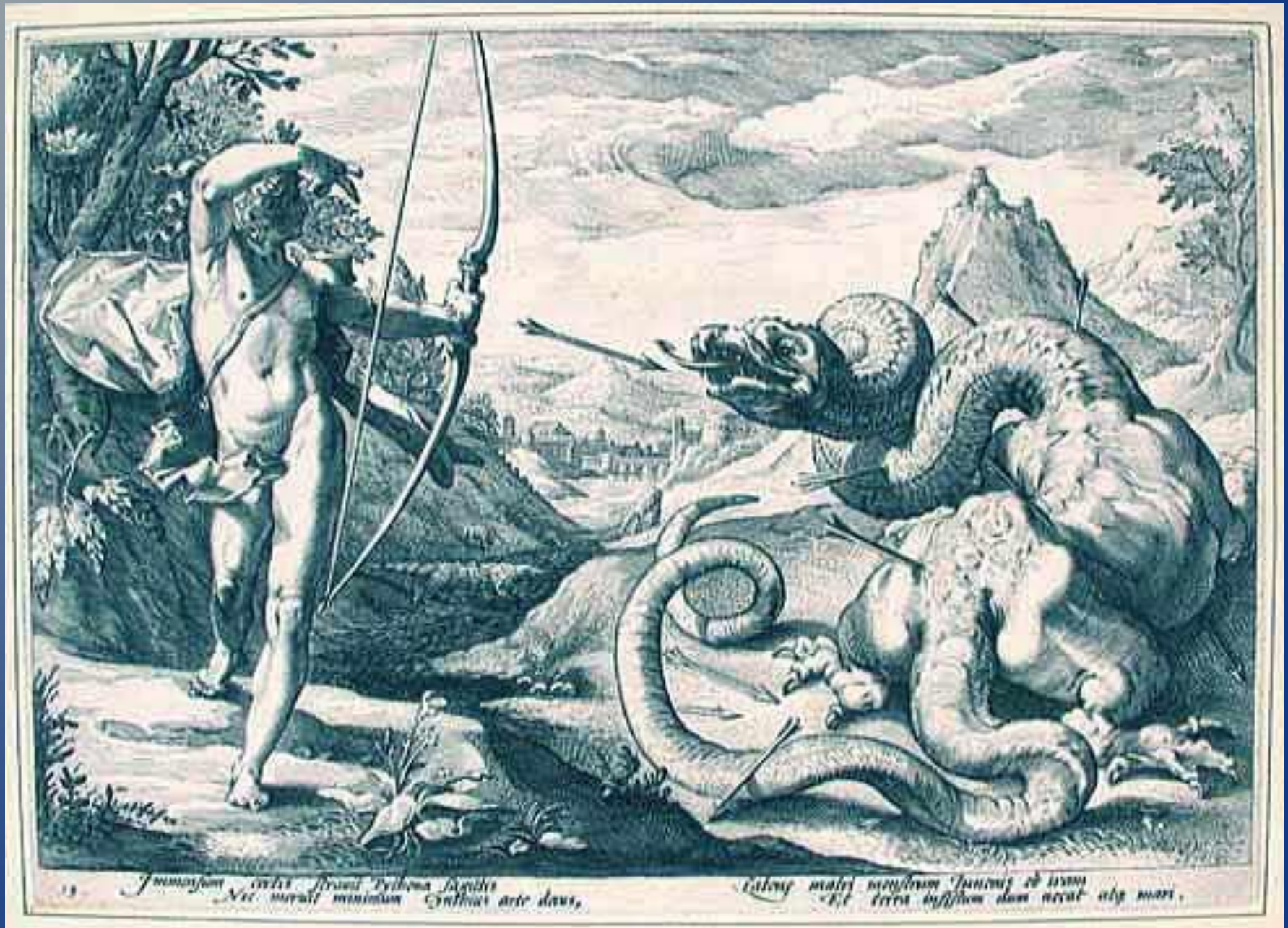


[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0b/William-Adolphe_Bouguereau_\(1825-1905\)_-_Homer_and_his_Guide_\(1874\).jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0b/William-Adolphe_Bouguereau_(1825-1905)_-_Homer_and_his_Guide_(1874).jpg)

Apollo at Delphi



Apollo at Delphi (the Python)



Apollo at Delphi (the Python)



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/93/Athina_Pronaia_Sanctuary_at_Delphi.jpg

Apollo at Delphi (the Python)

- Some accounts say that he killed the Python at the tender age of 4 days
- Although a god, he still must be purified
- Ostensibly a story about Apollo establishing his oracle
- Historically, it has been seen as a myth to explain the replacement of an old belief at the site (Ge-Themis/Earth-goddess worship)

The Site of Delphi

- Site of the Pythian Games, a major Panhellenic festival
- Site of the major oracle in the Greek world (tied with Oracle of Dodona – Zeus)
- The key site for receiving Apollo's prophecies (through the Pythian priestess)

The Site of Delphi



http://www.athensjustin.com/wp-content/fancygallery/delphi-arahova/delphi-arahova/1335364695_delphi1.jpg

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'

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



Apollo's Relationships

- Hyacinthus and the jealous Zephyr



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

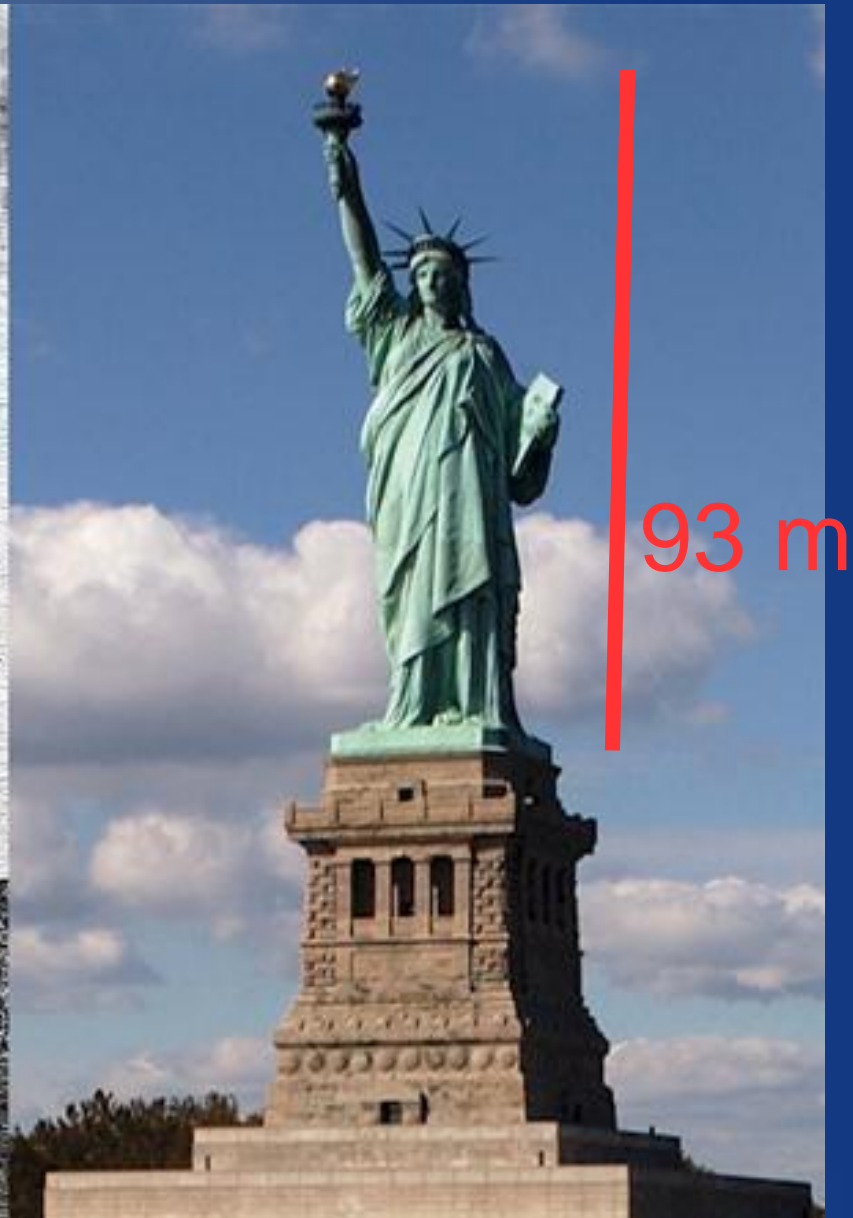
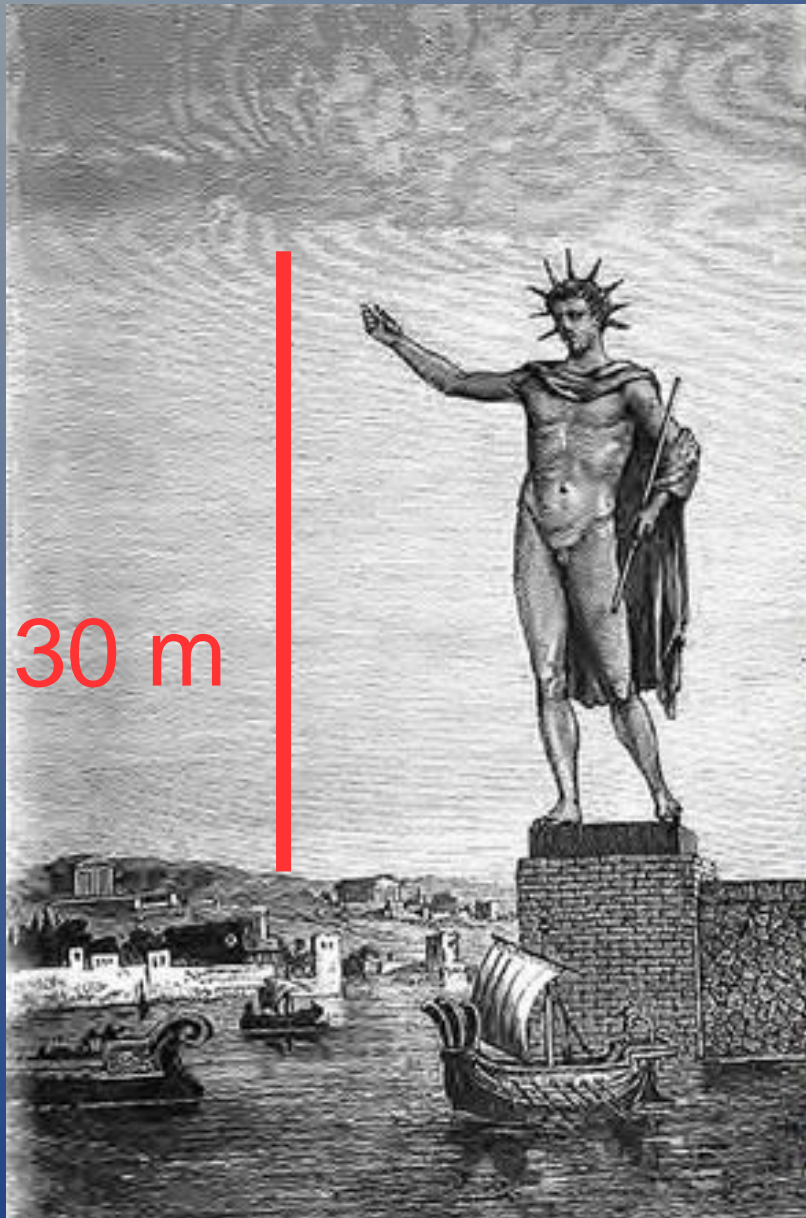
Apollo and Helos

- 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

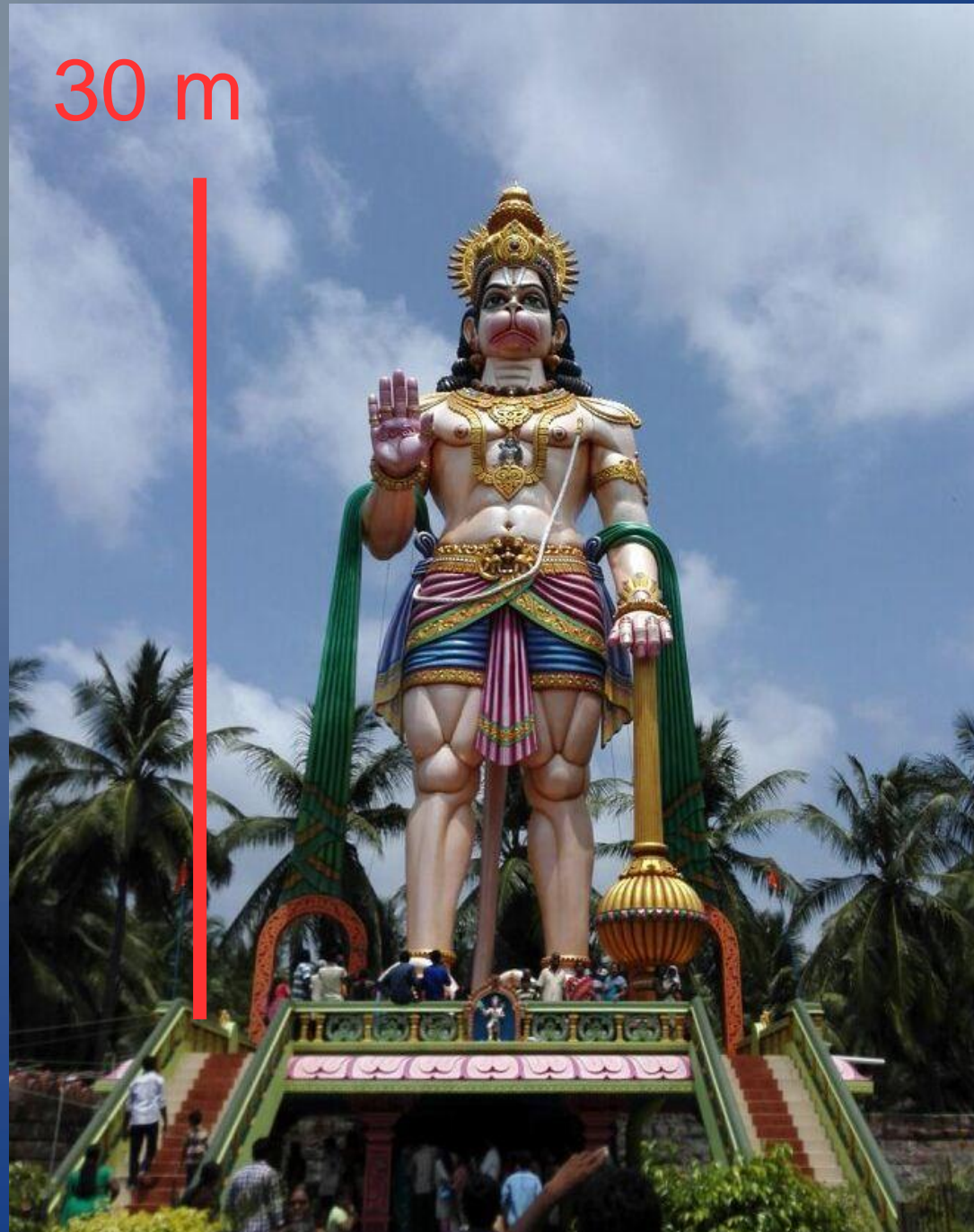
Apollo and Helos



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



Gnothi Seauton



“Know Thyself”