

# CHAPTER 8, SECTION 3

## Greek Mythology & Literature

### **ANCIENT GREEK GODS** Goddesses, Mythical Creatures & Myths



# MYTHS EXPLAIN THE WORLD

- The ancient Greeks believed in many gods.
- These gods were at the center of mythology.
- Each story, or myth, explained natural or historical events.



# Greek GODS

- People today have scientific explanations for events like thunder, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.
- The ancient Greeks did not.
- They believed their gods caused these events to happen & they created myths to explain the gods' actions.



# Greek GODS

- Zeus, king of the gods
- Hera, queen of the gods
- Poseidon, god of the sea
- Hades, god of the underworld
- Demeter, goddess of agriculture
- Hestia, goddess of the hearth
- Athena, goddess of wisdom
- Apollo, god of the sun
- Artemis, goddess of the moon
- Ares, god of war



# Greek GODS

- Aphrodite, goddess of love
- Hephaestus, god of metalworking
- Dionysus, god of celebration
- Hermes, the messenger god



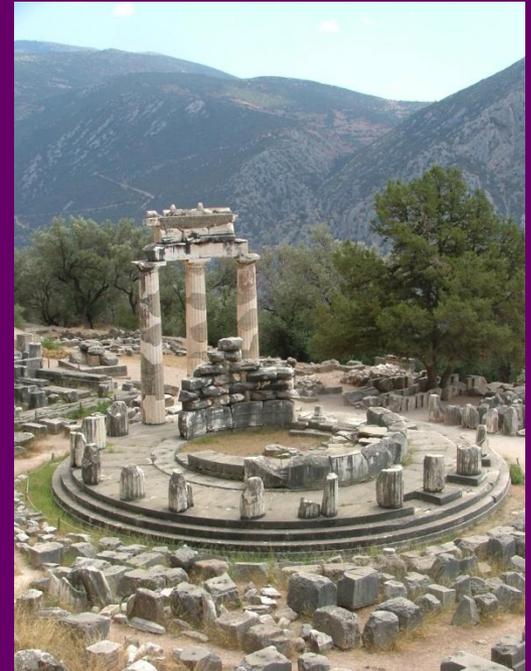
# GODS & MYTHOLOGY

- The Greeks saw the works of the gods all around them.
  - Disasters
  - Daily events
- To keep the gods happy, the Greeks built great temples to honor them.



# GODS & MYTHOLOGY

- Many Greeks in need of advice traveled to Delphi to see the oracle.
- The oracle was a female priest of Apollo to whom they thought the god gave answers.
- The oracle was so respected that Greek leaders sometimes asked her for advice about how to rule their cities.



# Heroes & MYTHOLOGY

- Not all Greek myths were about gods.
- Many were about the adventures of great heroes.
- Some of their heroes were real people while others were not.

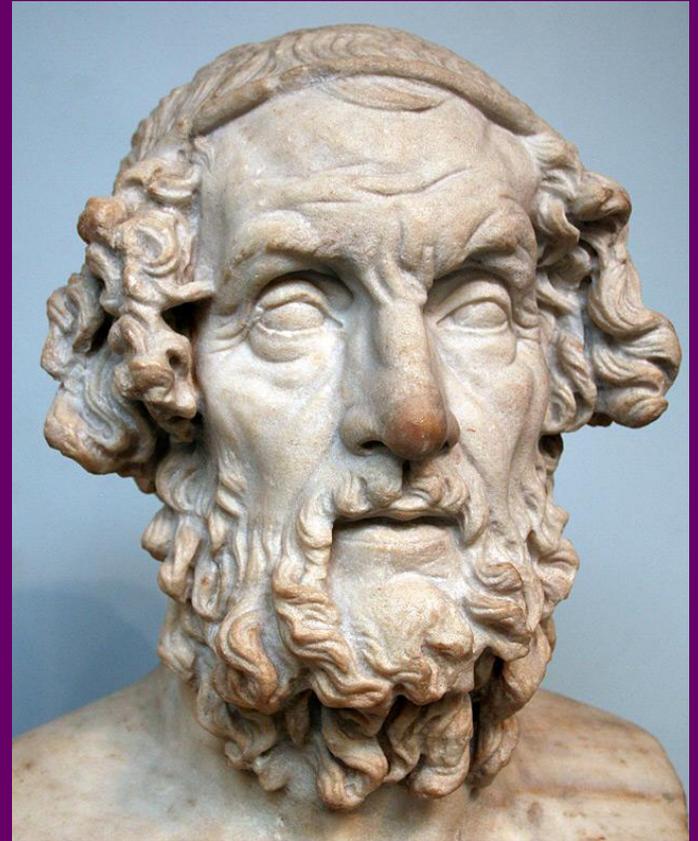


# Heroes & MYTHOLOGY

- They loved to tell stories of heroes who had special abilities & faced terrible monsters.
- The people of each city had their favorite hero, usually someone from there.
- Athens favorite hero was Theseus.
- The most famous of all Greek heroes was Hercules.

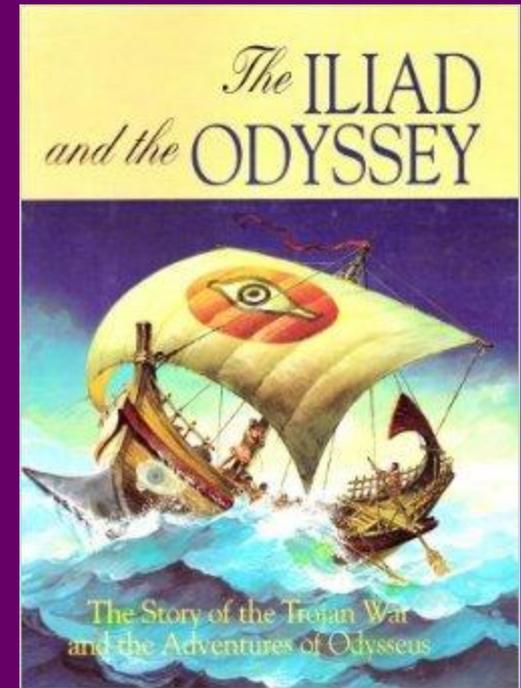
# ANCIENT Greek LITERATURE

- Early Greek writers produced long epic poems, romantic poetry, and some of the world's famous stories.



# HOMER & EPIC POETRY

- Among the earliest Greek writings are two great epic poems:
  - The *Iliad*
  - The Odyssey
- These were written by a poet named Homer.



# Homer & EPIC POETRY

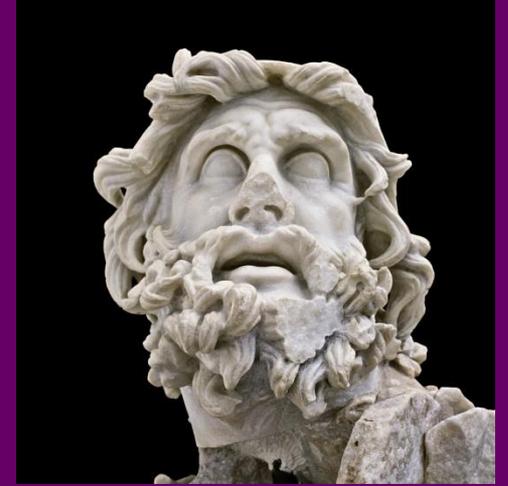
- Both of these epic poems describe the deeds of great heroes.
- The heroes in Homer's poems fought in the Trojan War.
- In this war, the Mycenaean Greeks fought the Trojans, people of the city called Troy.



# HOMER & EPIC POETRY

- The *Iliad* tells the story of the last years of the Trojan War.
- It focuses on the deeds of the Greeks, especially Achilles, the greatest of all Greek warriors.
- It describes in great detail the battles between the Greeks & their Trojan enemies.

# Homer & EPIC POETRY



- The *Odyssey* describes the challenges the Greek hero Odysseus faced on his way home from the war.
- For 10 years after the war ends, he tries to get home, but many obstacles stand in his way.
- He has to fight his way past terrible monsters, powerful magicians and even angry gods.

# Homer & EPIC POETRY

- Both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are great tales of adventure.
- These poems were central to the Greek education system.
- They would memorize long portions of the poems.

# LYRIC POETRY

- Other poets wrote poems that were set to music.
- During a performance, the poet played a stringed instrument called a lyre while reading a poem.
- Today, the words of songs are called lyrics after these ancient Greek poets.



# LYRIC POETRY

- The most famous Greek lyric poet was a woman named Sappho.
- Her poems were beautiful and emotional.
- Most of her poems were about love & relationships with her friends & her family.



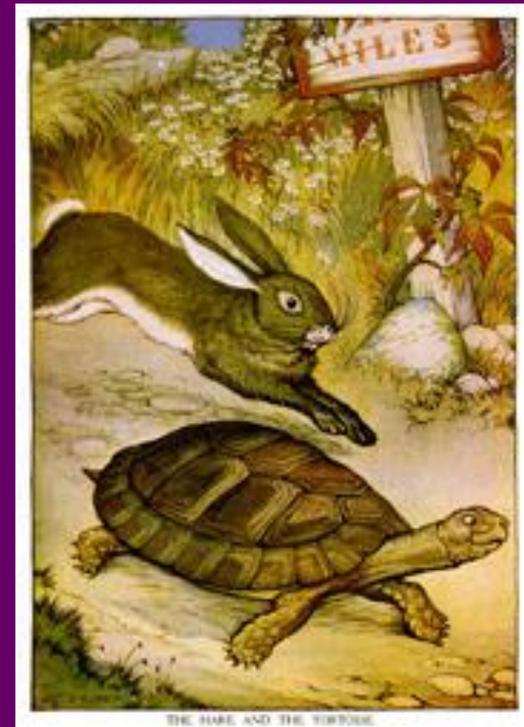
# FABLES

- Other Greeks told stories to teach people important lessons.
- Aesop is famous for his fables.



# FABLES

- In most of his fables animals are the main characters.
- The animals talk & act like humans.
  - The Ants & the Grasshopper
  - The Tortoise & the Hare
  - The Boy Who Cried Wolf



# Greek LITERATURE LIVES

- Greek literature is still alive & popular today.
- Some of the words we still use & some of the stories we hear come from ancient Greece.

# LANGUAGE

- The most obvious way we see the influence of the Greeks is in our language.
- Many English words & expressions come from Greek mythology:
  - Odyssey (Odysseus) - long journey
  - Titanic (Titans) – very large & powerful

# LANGUAGE

- Many places around the world today are also named after figures from Greek myths:
  - Athens named after Athena
  - Africa's Atlas Mountains named after a giant from Greek mythology who held up the sky
  - Aegean Sea named after Aegeus, a legendary Greek king
  - Europe named from a Greek myth, a princess from Europa



# LITERATURE & THE ARTS

- Greek myths have inspired artists for centuries:
  - Painters & sculptors
  - Writers
  - Moviemakers
  - Sports teams use the names of powerful figures from myths
  - Businesses use images or symbols from mythology

