



Classical Myth & Religion

Lifelong Learning

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Outline of ancient Greek religion

I Greek Religion:

- A Indo-European roots - Father Sky vs. Mother Earth
- B Near-Eastern roots:
 - 1 **Polytheism**
 - 2 **Anthropomorphism**
 - 3 **War in Heaven**
- C Piety: the commerce between gods and humans –
 - 1 **Sacrificial** - animals and agricultural products
 - 2 **Reciprocal** - feeding the gods
 - 3 **Social:**
 - a **Communal Meals**
 - b **Local Patronage**
 - c **Corporate Guilt**
 - 4 **Divination** (oracles and prophecy)

II The Two Poets

(who established the canon):

- A **Homer** on the gods (c. 750 BCE)
 - 1 *The Iliad*
 - 2 *The Odyssey*
- B **Hesiod** on the gods (c. 700 BCE)
 - 1 *Theogony*
 - 2 *Works and Days*

III The Main Deities:

A The First Generation

- 1 **Gaia** (Earth)
- 2 **Uranus** (Sky)

B The Second Generation (Titans)

- 1 **Cronus** (Time)
- 2 **Rhea**
- 3 **Prometheus**
- 4 etc.

incl. **Aphrodite** (Goddess of love and beauty), an Olympian before the Olympians

C The Third Generation - the original gods

- 1 **Zeus** (King of the gods, thunder, lightning)
- 2 **Hera** (Wife of Zeus, goddess of marriage and maternity)
- 3 **Poseidon** (God of sea and horses)
- 4 **Demeter** (Goddess of agriculture)
- 5 **Hestia** (Goddess of the hearth). Her stories are few and she does not remain long in the canon
- 6 **Hades** (God of the Underworld)

D The Fourth Generation – the remaining Olympians

- 1 **Athena** (Goddess of war)
- 2 **Ares** (God of war)
- 3 **Apollo** (God of youth, music, and light)
- 4 **Artemis** (Goddess of the hunt, protector of children)
- 5 **Hermes** (Messenger of the gods, god of fertility)
- 6 **Hephaistos** (God of fire and metallurgy)

Dionysos (God of wine), joins the Olympic circle late, effectively displacing Hestia.