

3. What kind of behavior is rewarded in your home?
 - a. kindness
 - b. achievement
 - c. independence
 - d. dependence
 - e. neatness
 - f. honesty
 - g. other
4. What rewards do you receive from your parents when your behavior pleases them?
 - a. money
 - b. special food
 - c. gifts
 - d. embrace
 - e. general feeling of approval and love
 - f. other
5. Make a chart of your family tree, going back as far as possible. Include great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and second cousins.
6. List each member of your family and his or her relationship to you. Then, write three adjectives that describe each person's personality.
7. How have the nature and the importance of arts and crafts changed in the course of history? Discuss the role of mechanization.

6 Metis and Athena

INTRODUCTION

Originally, in the matriarchal society, Athena was a local Mother Goddess or Great Goddess like Gaia and Rhea. In that role, her blessings helped the people of pre-Mycenaean Athens produce offspring and food, the two things they needed for the survival of their community.

However, according to the patriarchal Olympian religion, Athena was the daughter of Zeus and Metis. Zeus acquired the quality of wisdom by marrying and then swallowing the Titan Metis, whose name meant practical wisdom or counsel. Then Zeus, although a male divinity, took over the female function of giving birth. With the help of another male divinity, he delivered Metis's child, the goddess Athena.

Thereafter, Athena remained her father's favorite daughter, for, being Zeus's brainchild, she represented the qualities that Zeus himself possessed and prized. She lost the motherly qualities she had possessed in the earlier religion and instead became an athletic-looking virgin goddess. She was fond of mortals, helping women by training them in various practical handicrafts¹ and inspiring courageous young men by advising them in the art of defensive warfare and in the pursuit of heroic adventure.² She appreciated in others the characteristics she herself possessed: dignity, sound judgment, and an alert, intelligent mind. She despised passion untempered by reason. Athena became one of the three major Olympian divinities, the other two being Zeus and Apollo.

1. See the myth of Arachne (Section III, The World of Man).

2. See the myths of Perseus, Bellerophon, Heracles, and Jason (Section IV, The Heroes).

THE MYTH

Olympian Zeus had a passion for beautiful women and became known for his amorous pursuits. For his first wife, he chose Metis, the daughter

mortals. As Zeus's wife, she appropriately became the mother of the three Fates or Moerae, meaning "parts," or "portions." The Fates distributed each mortal's destiny and bowed only to Zeus's will. The first of the three, named Clotho (spinner), spun the thread of each mortal's life. The second Fate, Lachesis (distributor of fortunes), measured the thread of each mortal's life, thus determining its length. The third Fate, Atropos (inflexible), was the most feared by mortal man, because she used her dreaded shears to cut the thread of each mortal's life, thus determining his death.¹

Originally, the three Fates were pre-Olympian goddesses. They were powers beyond the control of Zeus, and the power of the gods, too, was subject to their will. In time, they became part of the Olympian family, their chief role being to determine the destiny of mortal man. As the Olympian religion developed and male gods became more important, Zeus gained some degree of control over the Fates, which made them less awesome to both gods and men.

1. The Fates appear in *The Calydonian Boar Hunt* (Section III, *The World of Man*).

Memnosyne and the Muses

Zeus next loved the Titan Memnosyne (memory), a sister of Themis, and through her became the father of the nine Muses. The immortal Muses created the alphabet and poetry. Consequently, poets prayed to them for artistic inspiration.

Although poets often invoked the Muses, they seldom used their names. Originally, there were three Muses, called Melete (practice or attention), Aoede (song) and Mneme (memory). Later their number increased to nine, and their names changed: Calliope (beautiful voice), who became the mother of Orpheus; Cleio (celebrate); Melpomene (singer and dancer); Euterpe (happy delight); Erato (lovely); Terpsichore (enjoyment of dancing); Urania (heavenly); Thaleia (good cheer); and Polyhymnia (many songs). Although the Muses were involved in the particular sphere that they were named for, they each crossed over into other areas, and classical writers were never agreed as to what particular responsibility each had.

1. The myth of Orpheus appears in Section III, *The World of Man*.

Eurynome and the Graces

Then, Metis's sister, Eurynome, bore Zeus the three beautiful Graces, who gave beauty and other gracious gifts to mortal women. They were called: Aglaea (radiance), Euphrosyne (merriment), and Thalia (good cheer). However, the Graces, like the Muses, varied in number and in

name, depending upon the writer. They have been painted by artists more frequently than they have appeared in Greek myths.