

西方文学选读

Selected Readings of Western Literature

主 编 季 峥

副主编 龙 亚 毕丽君 雷定坤

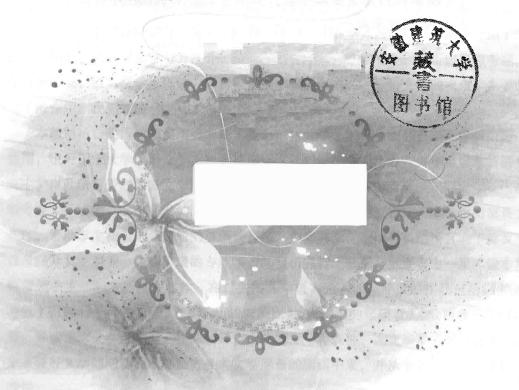
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本书为"入典华裔美国作家作品的中国影响研究 (国家社科基金西部项目, 批准号:16XWW006)" 的研究成果之一

Selected

前 Readings of
Western
Literature

本教材由希腊神话故事、《圣经》故事、诗歌、散文、戏剧、小说六个大的部分组成。其中,小说部分分为长篇小说与短篇小说。作为西方文学、文化的两大源泉,我们从希腊神话与《圣经》中选取了具有代表性的故事及章节,在让学生了解西方耳熟能详的神话、《圣经》故事的同时,也为他们理解文学作品中常见的相关典故做好准备。其他四个部分人选的皆为西方经典作家的经典作品,同时我们尽量避免国内其他同类教材经常入选的作品,以给学生更多新的选择。每个部分之前都有对该文学体裁的导读,简单介绍了该体裁的发展历史、特点以及学习方法。每篇选文均有注释、作家简介、赏析以及思考题。赏析部分为中文,以方便学生理解。赏析仅仅为学生提供某一个分析文本的视角,主要起抛砖引玉的作用。我们鼓励学生从多角度思考、理解文本。

本教材适合高等学校英语类专业(英语语言文学、翻译、商务英语)本科阶段的学生使用,也可用于大学英语文学文化类拓展课。同时可供非英语专业高年级或非英语专业研究生,以及所有爱好西方文学的学习者使用。本教材的编写源自重庆工商大学英语系为英语专业大一、大二学生开设的"英文名作导读"课程。该课程旨在鼓励学生阅读英文原版名作,帮助学生在大量、优质的英语语言输入中潜移默化地学习英语语言、了解英美文化以及提升文学素养,为高年级的专业学习甚至研究打下基础。该课程由一批经验丰富的教师带领学生一起赏析英文名作。在过去的几年里,选入课堂导读的作品包括:《德伯家的苔丝》《1984》《动物农场》《了不起的盖茨比》《麦田里的守望者》《战地春梦》《喜福会》等。导读课深受学生欢迎,任课教师也由此萌发了将课件、选文编纂成册的念头,以期望更多爱好文学的同学加入到西方经典文学原著的阅读中来,并从中收获阅读带来的惊喜与愉悦。



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Part 1 Greek Mythology

Definition of Greek Mythology

Greek mythology is the myths and teachings that belong to the ancient Greeks, about their gods and heroes, the nature of the world, and the origins and significance of their own ritual practices. It was a part of the religion in ancient Greece. Modern scholars refer to and study the myths in an attempt to shed light on the religious and political institutions of ancient Greece and its civilization, and to learn the nature of myth-making itself.

Sources of Greek Mythology

Greek mythology is explicitly embodied in a large collection of narratives, and implicitly in Greek representational arts, such as ancient vase-paintings and votive gifts. Greek myth attempts to explain the origins of the world, and details the lives and adventures of a wide variety of gods, goddesses, heroes, heroines and mythological creatures. These accounts initially were disseminated in an oral-poetic tradition; today the Greek myths are known primarily from ancient Greek literature. The oldest known Greek literary sources, Homer's epic poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, focus on the Trojan War and its aftermath. Two poems by Homer's near contemporary Hesiod, the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*, contain accounts of the genesis of the world, the succession of divine rulers, the succession of human ages, the origin of human woes, and the origin of sacrificial practices.

Myths are also preserved in the Homeric Hymns, in fragments of epic poems of the Epic Cycle, in lyric poems, in the works of the tragedians and comedians of the fifth century BC, in writings of scholars and poets of the Hellenistic Age, and in texts from the time of the Roman Empire by writers such as Plutarch and Pausanias.

Influences of Greek Mythology

Greek mythology has had an extensive influence on the culture, arts, and literature of





Western civilization and remains part of Western heritage and language. Poets and artists from ancient times to the present have derived inspiration from Greek mythology and have discovered contemporary significance and relevance in the themes.

Methods to Study Greek Mythology

The stories of Gods and mortals created by the Greeks thousands of years ago are all around us still today, from terms like "Oedipal complex" and "Pandora's box" to Hollywood movies like *Clash of the Titans*, *Hercules*, and *Troy*. Knowing Greek mythology will make you more culturally literate.

- (1) Learn the gods. Greek mythology has a dizzying cast of characters. You don't need to know them all, but learning the major Olympian gods is an important first step in understanding Greek mythology.
- (2) Get to know the great heroes of Greek mythology. While the same gods appear in myth after myth, they are rarely the protagonists the leading characters of Greek myths, who are typically human or half-human (quite a few have one divine parent). These heroes are famous for a variety of reasons, from fighting monsters to winning glory on the battlefield to suffering family tragedies.
- (3) Study the major myths. While the heroes each have their own stories, there are a number of other myths featuring less prominent protagonists that have become famous, such as the story of Narcissus, who was so vain that he became transfixed upon seeing his reflection in a pond, and stayed staring at it until he died.

Selections of the Greek Mythology



Zeus is the child of Cronus and Rhea, the youngest of his siblings to be born. He was respected as an allfather who was chief of the gods and assigned the others to their roles: "Even the gods who are not his natural children address him as Father, and all the gods rise in his presence." "Zeus is king in heaven" is a saying common to all men. Zeus' symbols are the thunderbolt, eagle, bull, and oak. In most traditions, he is married to Hera, by whom he is usually said to have fathered Ares, Hebe, and Hephaestus. At the oracle of Dodona, his consort was said to be Dione, by whom the *Iliad* states that he fathered Aphrodite. Zeus was also infamous for his

Part 1 Greek Mythology

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erotic escapades. These resulted in many godly and heroic offspring, including Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Persephone, Perseus, Heracles, Helen of Troy, Minos, and the Muses.

King of All Gods

After the battle with the titans and the giants, and putting out the revolt by Olympian gods and goddesses led by Hera, Zeus became the absolute supreme god of the heavens and the earth. He ordered the heavenly bodies, made laws, enforced oaths, and pronounced oracles. He dominated his kingdom with his two brothers, making himself king of the heavens and the earth, Poseidon king of the sea, and Hades king of the underworld. But he was always the head of the Olympian family, although his authority was sometimes challenged and tested by other deities, especially the goddesses. For instance, Hera was able to thwart now and then, his plans; Aphrodite could bend all the gods to her will, including Zeus, and Demeter forced Zeus to intervene and come to terms with her after her daughter Persephone was abducted by Hades. What's more, Zeus must yield to the fates, although this wasn't always the case.

Zeus was, first of all, the god of weather. He could whistle up a furious storm in the clearest of skies, or calm a gale down to a gentle spring breeze. He gave the world life in the form of rain. In essence, all life was dependent on him for this. Without him, everything that had been created on the earth would perish, and would have to begin anew. Zeus was also the god of the sky and thunder, and often seen as the patron of hospitality and the keeper of oaths. Though often despotic, petty and malicious, Zeus was upheld as the highest authority in preserving order and justice. This is perhaps best exemplified in his punishment of Hera, Poseidon and Apollo¹, and of Lycaon, Tantalus and Atreus² to observe the cosmic law and order, he struck the overambitious Asclepius³, son of Apollo, to death with his thunderbolt; he turned Pandareus to stone for stealing the golden dog from one of his temples on Crete; he killed Salmoneus with a thunderbolt for attempting to equal him by riding around on a bronze chariot and loudly imitating thunder; he condemned the disrespectful nymph named Chelone⁴ to eternal silence and together with Hera, he turned the vain king Haemus and queen Rhodope⁵ into mountains. He made the decision to marry Aphrodite off to Hephaestus in order to prevent violent conflict between the many gods who lusted after her beauty. He turned Periphas into an eagle after his death, as a reward for being righteous and just. And when Memnon died, he felt pity for his mother, Eos, the dawn goddess, and granted him immortality. A well-known story of Zeus as god of justice and hospitality is related to a marvelous tree in the Phrygian hill country. It is said that sometimes when Zeus grew tired of eating ambrosia, drinking nectar, and even a little weary of hearing Apollo's lyre and watching the Graces dance, he would come down to the earth. He would often disguise himself



as a mere mortal and walk around with Hermes. On a voyage to the earth, it was their attempt to see what hospitality was to be met there, for he was the protector of all who sought shelter in a strange land. The two gods, accordingly, took on the appearance of lowly vagabonds. They walked door to door asking each home to admit them and provide food, but none would let them in and the door was often barred to them. However, as they reached the last house, one poorer than all the rest, the door opened and a warm and cheerful voice bade them enter.

As they entered, the old man set a bench near the fire and told them to rest and stretch out their tired limbs. The old woman threw a soft covering over the bench. Her name was Philemon, she told the strangers, and her husband's was Baucis. As the visitors sat at the dining table, they noticed that one leg was propped up by a piece of broken dish for it was shorter than the rest. As they served the food and the diluted wine, the couple realized that the mixing bowl kept full no matter how much had been taken out. As they saw this overcome with terror, they dropped their eyes and prayed silently. Instead of trembling, they told their guests they had a goose and the old man attempted to catch it but failed in doing so. But when he panted, exhausted from the chase, the gods felt that it was time to take some action. "You have been hosts to gods," they said, "and you shall have your reward. This wicked country which despises the poor shall be punished, but not you." They then led the elderly couple out of the hut. The old couple saw in amazement that the countryside that they had known for life had disappeared, and instead a great lake surrounded them. Their lowly hut began to change into a stately pillared temple of whitest marble with a golden roof. The gods granted the two a wish, and the couple huddled and whispered. They had two requests: the first was that they become priest and priestess of this temple, and the second was that they never die alone. The gods agreed and were pleased with their requests. A long time they served in the grand edifice. When they were in extreme old age and exchanged memories of their past life, each suddenly saw the other put forth leaves. Then bark grew around them both. They had time only to cry, "Farewell, dear companion." As the words passed their lips, they became trees, but still they were together. The linden and the oak grew from one trunk.

> Zeus and Hera

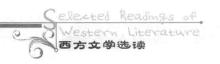
After establishing his kingdom, Zeus took his youngest sister, Hera, as his wife and queen, but he was by far the most unfaithful of all the gods. Prior to his marriage to Hera, he was said to have married first Metis, and then Themis. His third wife was Mnemosyne, and he was also involved with Leto shortly before his marriage to Hera. As a married god, he was famous for his many extramarital affairs with various goddesses—notably Demeter, Dione and Maia. His marriage with Hera did not stop him from siring countless other children. The immortal children

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born from these goddesses would eventually join the Olympian pantheon, or become part of the major Olympian gods. Apollo and Artemis, Aphrodite and Hermes are all progeny of his extramarital affairs. Hera was aware of her husband's unfaithfulness, and she did all she could to stop it before it even happened. She was furiously jealous, and vented her wrath on the women Zeus sought after. For a time, a nymph named Echo had the job of distracting Hera from Zeus' affairs by incessantly talking. When Hera discovered the deception, she cast a curse on Echo so that she could only speak or rather, repeat the words of others. Whenever Hera flew into fits of rage, she was unstoppable, even by Zeus. The helpless women would fall prey to her curses and hexes, often ruthlessly tortured as a reminder of what they had done. Zeus feared Hera in her rages, and more often than not, would let her deal her punishment onto the women, and then try to alleviate the harm done. As she was a master in the art of magic, her spells were woven so tightly that even Zeus couldn't unravel them. Thus the couple lived forever in this bizarre marriage loving each other despite the troubles they brought each other. Their marriage left upon people a tableau with Zeus as the harassed, vexed and philandering husband who had countless affairs and was constantly upbraided and intimidated by a self-righteous nagging wife.

Zeus and His Lovers

As the supreme god, Zeus had easy access to both the goddesses and women of the earth and took full advantage of this privilege. Also, his power and charm made him difficult to resist. After defeating his mother Rhea, who foresaw what trouble his lust would cause and tried to prevent him from marriage, Zeus began his long journey of love adventures and of his numerous affairs with mortal women. The most notable are those with Io, Europa, Danae and Leda. Europa was the daughter of king Agenor of Sidon in Asia Minor and the sister of Cadmus. One night, Europa had a dream. In this dream two continents in the forms of two women were arguing over her. Asia, one of the women maintained that since Europa had been born in Asia she belonged to it. The other woman, or continent, which was nameless, said that her birth was not important, and that Zeus would give her to Europe. It was early morning, and disturbed by the dream, Europa did not go back to sleep. She summoned her companions, who were all daughters of nobility and of her age. It was a beautiful day and they went off gathering flowers by the sea. Zeus noticed this charming group, particularly Europa, who was the prettiest of the maidens. Some say that Eros had induced him into action with one of his darts, although Zeus often had enough selfmotivation. In any case, Zeus approached the group as a white bull, which was more beautiful than any other, a bull that smelt of flowers and lowed musically, a bull so obviously gentle that all the maidens rushed to stroke and pet it. The bull lay down in front of Europa. She slid on to



its back instantly, when the bull charged off, plunging into the sea, and began to swim rapidly from the shore. Europa saw that a procession had joined them: Nereids⁶ rode dolphins, Triton blew his horn, and even Poseidon was there. From this she realized that the bull must be a god. She pleaded with him to pity her. Zeus spoke to her and explained his love. He took her to Crete, where he had been raised, and promised that she would bear him many famous sons, including Minos and Rhadamanthus. Thus, Europa had the continent of Europe named after her. And miraculously Hera was somewhat distracted at the time and never punished her.

Zeus also fell in love with Io, the beautiful princess of Argos and seduced her. To keep Hera from noticing, he covered the area with a thick blanket of clouds. However, this backfired, arousing Hera's suspicions. She came down from mount Olympus and began dispersing the clouds. Zeus did some quick thinking and changed Io's form. So as the clouds dispersed, Hera found Zeus standing next to a white heifer. He swore that he had never seen the cow before. It had just sprung right out of the earth. Seeing right through this, Hera complimented the beautiful cow and asked to have it as a present. As turning such a reasonable request down would have given the whole thing away, Zeus agreed. Hera sent the cow away and arranged Argus Panoptes to watch over it. Since Argus had a hundred eyes and could have some of them sleep while others were awake, he made a fine watchman. Desperate, Zeus sent Hermes to fetch Io. Disguised as a shepherd, Hermes had to employ all his skill as a musician and storyteller to gain Argus' confidence and lull him to sleep. Once Argus closed all his eyes, Hermes killed him. As a memorial, Hera took Argus' hundred eyes and set them into the tail of her favorite bird, the peacock. Now that Io was free, Hera sent gadflies to sting the running cow, with the ghost of Argus pursuing her as well. This pushed poor Io near madness. Trying to escape, she wandered all over the world. One day she came across the chained Prometheus at Caucasus. He gave her hope. He predicted that she would have to wander for many years, but would eventually be changed back into human form and would bear a child, whose descendant would be a great hero and set him free. Prometheus' prediction came true. During her wanderings, many geographical locations were named after her, including the Ionian Sea and the Bosphorus (which means "of the cow"). She eventually reached the Nile where Zeus restored her to human form. She bore Epaphus and eleven generations later her descendant Heracles set Prometheus free.

Zeus' Descendants

Zeus had many children by mortals and immortals alike. With Hera, he had four children: Ares, Eris, Eileithyia⁷ and Hebe. Another account says that there was a fifth, Hephaestus, although some people say that he was conceived through the will of Hera on her own, with no

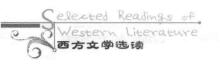
help from Zeus. Among his other children were Apollo and Artemis, the twin deities born of Leto, a Titaness; Dionysus, the god of wine and ecstasy, was born of the mortal princess Semele; the messenger of the gods, Hermes, was born of the Titaness Maia; Athena, goddess of wisdom, strategy and crafts, was born of Metis, the Titaness of wisdom, whom Zeus swallowed upon finding out that she would be a threat to him; with the Titaness of memory, Mnemosyne, Zeus fathered the nine muses; from the goddess Eurynome, the three Graces were born; Persephone, queen of the underworld, was born of his sister Demeter; Helen, the most beautiful mortal woman to have ever existed, was born of mortal Leda, after Zeus seduced her in the form of a swan; Perseus, the hero who slew the gorgon Medusa, was born of Danae, princess of Argos; Alcmene, queen of Thebes, who slept with both Zeus and her husband Amphitryon on the same night, gave birth to twin sons: the weak and feeble Iphicles, a mortal boy, and the strong and beautiful Heracles, who lived on to become one of the very few mortals ever made immortal through their heroic deeds. There are countless others.

NOTES !

- 1. Zeus punished Poseidon and Apollo by sending them to Laomedon as bond slaves to build the walls of Troy.
- 2. All of them killed their children and served them as food, and were severely punished in Tartarus.
- 3. Asclepius restored several dead people to life with his medicine.
- 4. Chelone was changed into a tortoise for refusing to attend the wedding ceremony of Zeus and Hera. She was condemned to perpetual silence for ridiculing these deities.
- 5. The couple were so vain that they assumed the name of Zeus and Hera.
- 6. The Nereids were daughters of Poseidon and Doris and attendants of Poseidon.
- 7. Eileithyia was seldom mentioned as Zeus and Hera's child. This version may have to do with the fact that as a goddess of childbirth, she was often in the company of Hera.

Appreciation:

中国的英语学习者在接触以希腊神话为代表的西方神话的过程中,不可避免地会把自己对中国古代神话的理解投射到希腊神话中去。然后,一旦有了主观意识的介人,再来学习希腊神话,将会对正确理解希腊神话故事及其意义产生负面影响。因此,为了更好地学习希腊神话,我们不妨先了解东西方神话故事的差别。



中国上古神话有着极为鲜明的尚德精神,这一点在与西方神话特别是希腊神话进行比较时显得更加突出。中国上古神话中的大神均有不食人间烟火、没有凡人情欲的神格特征;神话中充满对远古英雄和帝王献身精神的讴歌与礼赞,以及对神话人物保民佑民的职分要求。"不食人间烟火,没有平凡人的情欲",这是中国上古神话中的主要大神们神格的重要特征。在中国的很多经史典籍中,中国上古的主要大神们,诸如伏羲、女娲、炎帝、黄帝、颛顼、帝喾、尧、舜、禹等等,都是崇高和圣洁的。他们不苟言笑,从不戏谑人类,更不会嫉妒和残害人类。在个人的私生活上,他们从来都是十分规矩和检点的,十分注重小节、注重品行和德操的修养,并且尊贤重能。几乎每一位神王都没有"红杏出墙"或"乱播爱情种子"的现象。在他们的身上,只有神圣的光环、纯洁的品性和高尚的情操。

古希腊的神话与传说表现出了与中国神话大不相同的文化特色。在古希腊神话中,天神与人类一样,也表现出爱、恨、怒、欲望、嫉妒等凡俗的情感。本书希腊神话选文选择了宙斯和赫拉两位主神的故事,以及忒修斯和伊阿宋两位英雄人物的故事,特别展现了在希腊神话中,无论神还是英雄,他们都有不完美的一面,也即所谓充满了人性的一面。

在关于宙斯的这一选文中,我们将会读到在古希腊神话中,宙斯是世俗的、满身人间烟火味的形象:众神之王狂放不羁,拈花惹草,在神界与人间留下了一大串风流债,更严重的是他任意行事、不讲原则、充满欲望和个人爱好。

Questions:

- 1. How would you comment on Zeus?
- 2. Which would you value more, the virtues displayed in Chinese mythology or those in Greek mythology, and why?



Hera, the youngest sister and the last wife of Zeus, was queen of the Heavens. She was also the goddess of marriage, the patroness of marital fidelity, childbirth and family life. Being the queen of heavens, she reigned with Zeus as the pair-ruler like their predecessors Gaia and Uranus, Rhea and Cronus. However, after the failure of her revolt against Zeus, the pattern of pair-ruler reign was changed to that of single-ruler reign with Zeus as the supreme god, and her status was reduced to a less important one. However, Hera was equal to Zeus in one thing: she could bestow the gift of prophecy on any man or beast and she could metamorphose her rivals

Selected Reading: Wester Literation

into animals or drive them mad. As in the case of Callisto and Lamia¹; and she turned Galanthis, servant of Alcmene, into a weasel for she foiled Hera by saying that Alcmene had already delivered a baby, thus thwarting Hera's plan to prevent the birth of Heracles. She even granted the best gift that a god could give a mortal—to die in sleep—to two brothers Biton and Cleobis for their devotion to their mother Cydippe, a priestess of Hera. Curses and hexes were also her specialties and she could devastate any being that she hated with a simple phrase, as she cursed Echo to speak or repeat only the words of others; her curse on Leto caused her great suffering and delayed her delivery of Artemis and Apollo; and her hatred for Pelias, who had murdered his step-grandmother, Sidero, in a temple to Hera, prompted her later to manipulate Jason and Pelias and Medea into killing.

Conflicts Between Hera and Zeus

Hera's marriage to Zeus was filled with strife. When Zeus first decided to court Hera, she resisted. No matter what gifts Zeus gave her or what he did for her, she remained completely indifferent. Zeus had then to resort to trickery. One night, he summoned a rainstorm. Taking the form of a cuckoo bird, he flew up to Hera's window and perched there, soaking wet and shivering from the cold. Hera took pity on the bird and brought it in, holding it in her arms against her breast to keep it warm. It was then that Zeus assumed his true form, took advantage of the chance and raped her. Hera thereafter agreed to marry him to cover the shame. Their wedding was such a grand event that every deity was invited to attend. Gifts were showered upon the new queen of the gods. The most cherished gift was given to her by Gaia: a small apple tree that bore fruit of pure gold, and each time an apple was picked another would grow back immediately in its place. All the gods marveled at this gift with greedy eyes, thinking of stealing some of the fruit. Hera saw this, and to safeguard her tree, she took it to the end of the world to the garden of Hesperides². There she also set the great dragon Ladon as well as three apple nymphs to help guard it. Any visitor to the garden would fall prey to the divine charms of the three nymphs, who smelt of the sweetest apple blossoms that would bring a state of euphoria to anyone who breathed it in. The nymphs would then dance with the visitor toward a high cliff until he eventually fell off the cliff.

Zeus and Hera constantly quarreled with each other. Vexed by his infidelities, Hera often humiliated him by her scheming ways. Though he would confide his secrets to her, and sometimes accept her advice, he never fully trusted Hera. She knew that if offended beyond a certain point, Zeus would fly into a rage or even strike her with his thunderbolt. Therefore, she often resorted to ruthless intrigue or spent most of her time plotting revenge on the women that Zeus consorted



with.

Once when Zeus was being particularly overbearing to the other gods, Hera convinced them to join a revolt against him. Her role in the revolt was to drug Zeus and she was successful. Then Poseidon, Apollo, Athena and the other deities, except Hestia, bound the sleeping Zeus to a couch with raw-hide thongs knotted into a hundred knots, so that he could not move. After this, they began to discuss who was to be his successor. Overhearing the arguments, Thetis, the Nereid, foresaw a civil war on Olympus, and hurried to get Briareus to help untie the knots. After being released, Zeus sprang from the couch and grabbed his thunderbolt. The gods fell to their knees, begging and pleading for mercy. Zeus punished Poseidon and Apollo by sending them as bondservants to king Laomedon of Troy. Since it was Hera who had led the conspiracy against him, Zeus hung her up from the sky with golden chains. She wept in pain all night, but no one dared to interfere. In the end, Zeus undertook to free her if she swore never more to rebel against him. She had no choice but to agree. Though she never rebelled again, she often intrigued against Zeus' plans, and was sometimes able to outwit him.

Ability of Parthenogenesis

Gaia had the ability to give birth to her offspring without the help of a god. Like her mother Gaia, Hera also had this ability, which showed her superiority to other goddesses.

As Hera watched more and more beautiful children of Zeus' enter the pantheon, she soon became jealous and convinced herself that she could conceive the most beautiful child on her own. Some versions say that Hera was jealous of Zeus giving birth to Athena without her, so she decided to give birth to Hephaestus without him. An alternative version discounts this and says Zeus and Hera were both parents of Hephaestus. Working her magic, she was able to become pregnant and give birth on her own all in one day. However, the baby she gave birth to turned out to be the exact opposite of what she wanted, a pitiful shriveled child that Hera was so disgusted at the ugliness of the baby that she flung him off Mount Olympus, although another account says that because Hephaestus had taken Hera's side against his father Zeus and Zeus threw him off Mount Olympus. He fell for a full day, and landed on a deserted beach shattering his legs. He was later rescued by an ancient ocean goddess, and grew up to become Hephaestus. Later Hephaestus gained revenge against Hera for rejecting him by making her a magical throne, which, when she sat on it, didn't allow her to leave. The other gods begged Hephaestus to return to Olympus and release her, but he refused repeatedly. So Dionysus got him drunk and took him back to Olympus on the back of a mule. Then Hephaestus released Hera after being given Aphrodite as his wife.