

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WATER IN ANCIENT GREECE

WATER IN MYTHOLOGY

There are many myths in which we can see the vital role that water had in people's lives. Since the ancient years people aimed to be close to Gods and this affected their lives in a high level, that's why they honored water and the Gods that were related to it.

SEA GODS

***Poseidon** was, according to mythology, one of the twelve gods of Olympus, Zeus' brother and god of the sea. His symbols were the trident, the horse, and the dolphin. When he was angry, he beat his trident and the water whirled. They say that most sailors sacrificed in his honor to do their trip well.*





***Nireas** lived on the bottom of the Aegean, with his fifty daughters the Nereids, who could unsettle and calm the sea. His wife was Dorida. He was renowned for his wisdom and prophetic powers. One of his best known daughters was Thetis, the mother of Achilles.*

***The Sirens** were sea demons, daughters of the river god Achelooos and Mousa Melpomeni. They lived on an island where, with their charming song, they trapped the unsuspected sailors who were either approaching or forgot their destination. Only Odysseus managed to get through the Sirens after telling his companies to tie him to the ship so he would not be enchanted by their song.*





***Lernaia Hydra** was a beast with nine heads. She lived in the swamps of Lake Lerna near Argos and killed animals and people. Her enemy was Hercules who killed her with the help of Iolaus.*

***Medusa** was sister of the Gorgons Stheno and Euriali. Unlike her sisters, Medusa was mortal. She had snakes' hair and her awesome weapon was her eyes. Whoever stared at her became a stone. Her enemy was Perseus, who, with the help of Athena, beheaded her.*



The myth of Styga's water

Stygas' waters were linked to theological and philosophical ideas, such as those from the Eleusinian Mysteries.



The water had such power and temperature they said that the glass, the crystals, the clay vases broke as they plunged into it, the metals were altered, even silver and gold, and amber, so gods

drank water from the cups made of horse's hooves because they had no petals.



*The Soul, in search of her mate, Eros, was forced by Aphrodite to bring water from Stygia. In these waters **Achilles** was baptized by his mother Thetis and became immune and immortal but because the water did not touch his heel, he got killed by Paris who aimed*



his heel with his arrow in Troy.



Zeus determined that there would be given the most terrible oaths. Whenever some gods were accused of lying, Zeus sent Iris to bring water from this mysterious source. Above the water the accused ones swore trembling.



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