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“Sirens”

Mythological Birds in Ancient Greek Civilization

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Sirens whom were half woman and half bird were famous for their attractive charm melodies that allure sailors while passing by their places. This article highlights the origin and different types of Sirens. It discussed the music and the different melodies of the Sirens and how they were targeting the sailors who passed by their places and played their attractive charm melody which made the sailors changed their way and took the risky road to discover out the source of those sounds and faced their deadly fate. Some scholars mixed Sirens with mermaids and others described them as El Naddah, which is one of the Arabic legends in the Egyptian villages; it identifies that the lady who called the persons who passed by any source of water whatever was sea, canals or swamps. Moreover, like “El Naddaha¹” of these days the Sirens were usually targeting men as their curiosity was very high and they always choose the risky stories to show their daring as well as a way of taking revenge².

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Introduction

Despite the fact that sailors frequently had a complicated role in Graeco-Roman civilization being necessary for trade and military activities, they were occasionally seen as inferior. However, they were sometimes considered as lower class even though they were necessary for commerce and military activities. They held a very important position as they led a lifestyle characterized by extended periods at sea and considerable hazards as a result of their demanding and dangerous employment.

Their daily schedule differed as they were based on the kind of vessels. Typically, a sailor would handle duties including cargo handling, navigation, and ship maintenance. Moreover, for more effective operations, the organization of workers aboard ships was essential.

¹In Arabic legend, El Naddaha, sometimes called "Al-Nadhaha" or "The Calling Woman," is a spectral apparition that rises from the depths of bodies of water to enchant both tourists and locals. This legendary water nymph has a melancholy yet captivating aura and is frequently seen as a lovely and captivating woman. Her tales serve as a warning about the perils and secrets that lurk under quiet waters, reminding everyone that beauty may be a mask for dangerous depths.

² H., ZIMMERBAUM, "Sirens in Greek Mythology, Definition, History and Facts", in Ancient Greece Study, 2023.

The Sirens

The Sirens were attractive ladies who perched on cliffs and enticed seafarers with their seductive singing. Unable to resist the beauty of their sight and music, the sailors would drive their ships aground on the rocks and perish. The presence of Orpheus once again protected the Argonauts from such a tragedy³.

Greek mythology frequently presents Sirens as entrancing beings with the body of a bird and the head of a stunning woman. Interpretations differ, though; other tales describe them as more comparable to mermaids, fusing the traits of fish and women. A siren's alluring singing⁴, which is known to entice sailors to perilous rocks, is what really distinguishes them from other animals. The sirens are ancient Greek mythological creatures and quite hazardous. The sirens were thought to have transformed into monsters after Hades kidnapped Persephone, whom they served⁵.

Ovid's⁶ *Metamorphoses* describes the Sirens as human companions of Persephone, Demeter's daughter. After Hades kidnapped Persephone, the Sirens searched for her everywhere. They eventually prayed for wings to soar over the sea. The gods answered their petition. In other tales, Demeter transformed them into birds as punishment for failing to protect Persephone⁷.

Earlier Greek art depicted Sirens as birds with female heads⁸. Later, ancient Greek painters depicted them as winged ladies with bird legs⁹. The Sirens appear to have arisen from an ancient story about the hazards of early exploration, mixed with an Asian picture of a bird-woman¹⁰.

Though they are sometimes confused in contemporary art, sirens and mermaids have different histories and traits. Mermaids are aquatic beings distinguished by their beauty and occasionally kind disposition. They have a human upper body and a fish tail¹¹. On the other hand, sirens are chiefly recognized for their hypnotic tunes and malicious intentions directed on seafarers¹².



³ N., J., RICHARDSON, "Sirens", in Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Classics, 2016, p. 39-45.

⁴FR. PELOSI, *Eight Singing Sirens*. Heavenly Harmonies in Plato and the Neoplatonists 1, 2017.

⁵G. VAN RAALTE, "Greek Siren Names, Goddess and Legends", 2023.

⁶ O., OVID, *Metamorphoses of Ovid*, Irvine, 2015.

⁷ S., SIERRA, "The Rape of Persphone", 2018, Vol 6.

⁸ M., BULL, *Sirens*, 2020.

⁹ I., WINTER, *On Art in the Ancient Near East: Of the First Millennium B.C.E.*, p. 247, 2010.

¹⁰<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Siren/624604> accessed in **13 September 2024**.

¹¹ C., CANNELL, "From Bird-Woman to Mermaid: The Shifting Image of the Medieval Siren", Portland, 2019.

¹²Sirens in Mythology: Legends and Symbolism, 2024, <https://www.centreofexcellence.com/sirens-in-mythology/> access in 12 september 2024.

The mythological creatures known as sirens, human-headed birds or bird-women with enticing melodies, were brought from near-Eastern societies such as; Babylonian, Assyrian, or Egypt¹³. Most likely, their ancestors first appeared in the Late Mycenaean era¹⁴. Greek art from the early eighth to early seventh century BCE features representations of human-headed birds, such as; a male *askos*¹⁵, like Siren from Knossos¹⁶, a Siren on an amphora from Praissos/ Crete, bronze Sirens in the form of *cauldrons* from the sanctuaries in Olympia and Delphi, and the Acropolis of Athens. Similar hybrid creatures, such as bearded bird-men and bird-women, may be seen on Greek vase paintings from the Orientalizing era. These creatures were employed in animal friezes and a variety of other scenarios¹⁷.



The appearance of sirens as singers first started in the early 6th century, the Sirens were depicted as singers and musicians on Late Corinthian and Attic vases. They are either associated with the adventures of Ulysses or, less frequently, with a singer (Orpheus). They can also be shown in other associations or symbolism, either singly or collectively¹⁸.

The Mythic narration of Sirens

The Odyssey Sirens have a significant role in Greek mythology and folklore, including The Odyssey and other transformation stories. The most famous meeting with sirens is in Homer's "Odyssey," when Odysseus, urged by Circe, instructs his crew to block their ears with beeswax and binds himself to his ship's mast so he can hear the sirens' singing without succumbing to it. This story depicts Odysseus' ingenuity as well as the fascination and danger of the sirens, which represent the difficulties sailors confront when exploring new waters¹⁹.

¹³M. J. AASVED, "The Sirens and Cargo Cults", *JSTOR*, 1996,

¹⁴MP., NILSSON, *The Minoan-Mycenaean religion and its survival in Greek Religion*, 1971, Lund.

¹⁵G., LATIMER, *The Antiaquary*, Vol 27, 1893, p. 119. Askoi (singular askos) are perfume jars of various designs that are usually invariably modest in size due to the high expense of the fragrant oils they contain. The RISD askos is one of twelve known to resemble a wild hog.

¹⁶is a Bronze Age archeological site in Crete. The location was an important hub of Minoan culture and is associated with the Greek story of Theseus and the Minotaur. It is located on the outskirts of Heraklion and has remained a popular tourist attraction. Knossos is often regarded as Europe's oldest city.

¹⁷A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

¹⁸Cr., ROME, and D., SNEED, "Sirens in ancient Greece and the Near East", *College of Arts and Science*, June 2018.

¹⁹Sirens in Mythology: Legends and Symbolism, 2024, <https://www.centreofexcellence.com/sirens-in-mythology/> access in 12 september 2024.

In the classic narrative of Jason and the Argonauts' search for the Golden Fleece,²⁰ the heroes meet the sirens, whose seductive melodies threaten to lure them astray. The Argonauts, forewarned by their wise counsel, are shielded by Orpheus' music, whose lyre melodies are so exquisite that they drown out the sirens' pleas, letting the crew to safely pass. In contrast to the Odyssey, this myth depicts a peaceful overcoming of the sirens' menace, emphasizing the power of art and music as an antidote to seduction and danger²¹.

Thelxiepeia (also known as Thelxiope or Thelxinoe) is the most renowned siren. Her name translates to 'persuasive face'. Hesiod, Lycophron²², Apollodorus²³ and Hyginus²⁴ all make references to Thelxiepeia²⁵.

The mourning siren follows established depiction conventions—a female body with avian attributes—but is distinguished by her adoption of a characteristic human mourning posture, the so-called "*valediction*, one or two upraised arms with hands to head and palms facing out, and, in some cases, an expression of grief. This signs a fundamental transformation in the iconography and meaning of the siren, changing from the horrific character depicted in the Odyssey to a friendly figure employed to decorate funeral²⁶.

According to traditional funeral iconography from ancient Greece, the Sirens were strongly tied with grief rites and mourning songs. While mourning may be a fierce and destructive emotion, the Siren's portrayal as lamenters evokes a more sensitive aspect. Euripides described them as "mitigators of death, compassionate creatures sharing in the suffering of those in mourning, as doleful and lyrical as he found them." Mariner Warner observed sarcophagi from Magna Graecia and described the deceased as "clinging to the sirens who are ferrying them across the river dividing the earth from the Isles of the Blessed"²⁷.

The Origins of Sirens

In Greek mythology, sirens are said to be the daughters of a Muse, usually Terpsichore or Melpomene, and the river deity Achelous. While there is disagreement among scholars on their names, Thelxiepi, Peisinoe, and Aglaope are among the most often mentioned. These beings were once thought of as Persephone's friends; however, once Hades kidnapped her, they were punished by taking on the appearance of a bird-woman²⁸.

²⁰ BL, HOENA, *Jason, the Argonauts, and the Golden Fleece*, 2016.

²¹R. BYRD, *Jason and the Argonatus*, 2016.

²² was a Hellenistic Greek tragic poet, grammarian, and comic critic who is credited with the poem *Alexandra* (possibly incorrectly).

²³author of the *Bibliotheca*, sometimes called "Pseudo-Apollodorus" to distinguish him from Apollodorus of Athens

²⁴ was a [Latin](#) author, a pupil of the scholar [Alexander Polyhistor](#), and a freedman of [Caesar Augustus](#).

²⁵G. VAN RAALTE, "Greek Siren Names, Goddess and Legends", 2023; J.R. T. POLLARD, *Muses and Sirens*, in *Classical Review*, 2009.

²⁶H. ARIELLE PERRIN, "Singing Sorrow in Stone: The Mourning Sirens in Greek Art", p. 4, California, 2015.

²⁷ J., ROBSON, "Sirens and Tuneful Weeping", p. 12, 2017.

²⁸Though they are sometimes confused in contemporary art, sirens and mermaids have different histories and traits. Mermaids are aquatic beings distinguished by their beauty and occasionally kind disposition. They have a human upper body and a fish tail. On the other hand, sirens are chiefly recognized for their hypnotic tunes and malicious intentions directed on seafarers.

The sirens were commonly considered to be daughters of the river deity Achelous (but Euripides calls them 'daughters of the earth'). Various accounts identify their mother differently; some claim she was the Muse Terpsichore, while others say she was Melpomene, Calliope, or Sterope. The sirens play an essential role in many Greek mythologies, especially the *Odyssey*²⁹.

According to Plato, there were three different types of sirens: (the **generative**, who were ruled by Poseidon; the **purifier** or cathartic, who were ruled by Hades; and the **heavenly**, who were ruled by Zeus³⁰).

Sirens-singers appear around the middle-end of the 8th century in the epic poetry. There were siren-musicians even before the Homeric era. This indicates that allusions to literature come before those to philosophy and maybe art. There are several surviving tales about the origins of the Sirens. Their mother was either Chthon (Earth), Sterope, or a Muse (Terpsichore, Melpomene, or Calliope)³¹.

The most well-known feature of the sirens is their song—a strong, alluring tune that entralls listeners and forces them to sail their ships toward peril. Its ability to appeal to its victims' innermost wants and provide them with what they most desperately want, only to ultimately lead them to their doom, is what makes them so influential beyond just their music. This version of the siren myth delves into issues of desire, seduction, and the challenging quest of unfulfilled goals³².

They were the daughters of Phorkys or Achelous. Homer states that there were two sirens who lived in a flower-filled meadow on the legendary island of Anthemooussa, also known as Anthemoessa (Flowery); Sophocles lists three sirens, while Plato lists eight³³.

With the aid of the sorceress Circe, the brave Odysseus managed to elude the Sirens' call. Circe suggested that he apply wax to his crew members' ears to prevent them from hearing the Sirens' call. Odysseus, however, desired to hear the Sirens' song and instructed them to tie him to the mast in order to hear it without being affected by it. This image was painted on the so-called Siren Vase, an Attic red-figure stamnos from the early 5th century B.C.E. housed in the British Museum³⁴.

²⁹G. VAN RAALTE, "Greek Siren Names, Goddess and Legends", 2023.

³⁰FR. PELOSI, *Eight Singing Sirens*. Heavenly Harmonies in Plato and the Neoplatonists 1, 2017.

³¹A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

³²Sirens in Mythology:*Ibid*.

³³A. LIVERI,*Ibid*.

³⁴Cr., ROME, and D., SNEED, "Sirens in ancient Greece and the Near East", College of Arts and Science, June 2018.

The Different Names of Sirens³⁵

Name	Meaning of the Name	Function	Name in Greek
Aglaope, Aglaophonos or Aglaopheme	The name itself may be divided into components that represent attractiveness and beauty: The meaning of "Aglaos" is "bright" or "beautiful."- The word "ops" means "voice" or "face." Aglaope's meaning might therefore be understood as "the one with the beautiful voice" or "bright voice." Aglaope and other sirens represent temptation and the dangers of giving in to temptation.	She was regarded as the embodiment of beauty, she represents the Gorgons' deadly and protective sides. Gorgons are both scary and protective beings that represent the dichotomy of beauty and dread in a variety of tales.	Αγλαόπη
Parthenope	This translates to "virgin." Parthenope was one of the Sirens, who used their mesmerizing songs to entice sailors to their deaths in Greek mythology. Furthermore, Naples, Italy, which was established by the Greeks, is likewise linked to Parthenope. The name is a representation of mystery, beauty, and charm.	Among her roles and significance are: 1. Symbol of Seduction: Parthenope is a symbol of beauty and seduction, frequently luring people to peril with her mesmerizing voice. 2. Guardian of the Sea: As a Siren, she represents the ocean's perilous character and serves as a warning of its dangers. 3. Cultural Influence: Parthenope has served as the inspiration for several literary, musical, and artistic depictions that highlight the enduring topic of desire and its repercussions. 4. Foundational Legend: Parthenope is credited in some stories with the establishment of Naples (Napoli), where her name is supposed to have endured.	Παρθενόπη
Ligeia	the word "Ligeia" itself comes from the Greek word "ligeia," which means "clear-voiced" or "having a beautiful voice." Given that the Sirens' melodic vocals have the potential to be both mesmerizing and lethal, this name captures both their charm and peril.	Alluring Voice: Men were drawn to shipwrecks on the rough coasts by Ligeia's enticing singing. 2. Symbol of Temptation: Ligeia and the other Sirens stand in for the pitfalls of giving in to temptation and the repercussions of straying from one's path, which frequently have disastrous results. 3. Cultural Influence: Symbolizing irresistible appeal and the darker sides of beauty, Ligeia has influenced several literary and artistic creations throughout history. Should you have any more inquiries concerning Greek mythology or any other topic,	Λιγεία
Leucosia	Has its roots in the Greek word "leukos," meaning "white" or "bright." In keeping with the Sirens' seductive personality, this name frequently denotes innocence and beauty. Like her sisters, Leucosia is connected to the water and represents both beauty and peril.	Leucosia's particular function frequently highlights the perils of temptation and the terrible results of giving in to such seductive temptations.	Λευκοσία

³⁵[https://monstermovies.fandom.com/wiki/Sirens_\(mythology\)](https://monstermovies.fandom.com/wiki/Sirens_(mythology)) accessed in 13 september 2024.

Melodia	It has a strong connection to harmony and music. In particular, Terpsichore, the Muse of dance and choral singing, is associated with Melodia, one of the Muses, the goddesses of inspiration in the arts and sciences. The name represents beauty, inventiveness, and the divine inspiration behind artistic expression, reflecting the significance of music and the arts in Greek culture in a larger sense.	Includes a number of functions:1. Musical Expression: Melodia shapes the performance's emotional and artistic aspects by encapsulating a piece of music's distinctive sound or melody.2. Poetic Structure: Melodrama was essential to setting texts to music in poetry, particularly lyric poetry, which increased the texts' emotional resonance and effect.3. Cultural Significance: Reflecting cultural ideals and shared experiences, music—often melodia—played an essential part in religious rites, festivals, and social gatherings in ancient Greece.4. Educational Purpose: Melodia also functioned as a teaching tool, especially when it came to teaching young males via song about rhythm, music, and cultural values.	μελωδία
Calypso	"Calypso" is a play on the Greek word "kalyptō," meaning "to conceal" or "to hide." This illustrates her function in the story as the person who prevents Odysseus from returning home to Ithaca. In Greek mythology, Calypso represents themes of love, desire, and the intricacies of fate.	Goddess of Enchantment: Calypso is frequently portrayed as a lovely and alluring nymph who lives in a magical world and represents the concepts of desire and love.2. Odysseus' captivity: One of her most well-known parts is in Homer's "Odyssey," when she meets the hero Odysseus after he washes up on shore after hitting a ship. She offers him immortality and endless youth after falling in love with him and keeping him on her island for a number of years.3. Conflict with the Gods: Because of her bond with Odysseus, Calypso finds herself at odds with the gods, especially Hermes, who Zeus sends to command her to free Odysseus so he can return to Ithaca.	Καλυψώ
Echo	The nymph Echo is well-known for her terrible destiny and unusual tale. Echo used to be a lovely, chatty mountain nymph. When she fell in love with Narcissus, a very attractive young guy, her life changed. Unfortunately, Echo was unable to explicitly convey her sentiments since Hera, the queen of the gods, cursed her to only repeat the last words that were said to her. She was unable to declare her love for Narcissus when she finally met him; all she could do was repeat what he said. Echo was so devastated by his rejection that she finally vanished, leaving just her voice. This story is a powerful warning of the dangers of vanity and unrequited love.	Voice of Narcissus: Echo's capacity to mimic the final words of others is well-known. 2. Hera's Punishment: In myth, Echo was chastised by Hera, the queen of the gods, for talking too much and distracting her while her husband Zeus was out with other nymphs. Hera cursed her, depriving her of her own voice and limiting her to only repeating what other people said.3. Symbol of Unrequited Love: Echo's inability to do anything but repeat Narcissus's words, which expresses her want and longing, makes her a perfect example of the concept of unrequited love. Her tale arouses emotions of loss and melancholy.4. Connection to Nature: Echo represents the reflection of sound in nature and is frequently connected to the natural world, especially hills and woods.	ηχώ

The Common Features between Sirens and Muses

Although both Sirens and Muses were female singers, their natures were diametrically opposed: for example, "the Muses were the divine inspirers of poesy, whereas the Sirens charmed only to destroy." In art, the Sirens were shown as woman-headed birds, whereas the Muses were anthropomorphic. Their legendary music competition, which has an aetiological narrative of Boeotia as told by Pausanias, further demonstrates their enmity. It states that "Hera convinced the Sirens to compete in singing with the Muses." After winning the contest, the Muses took all of the Sirens' feathers and used them to fashion crowns for themselves. The intimate bond between Hera and the Sirens is shown here as well³⁶.

However, Lycophron and others had already recounted the sirens' suicide in the sea as a result of the Muses' defeat against them. It is also connected to Orpheus's songs³⁷ and music during the Argonautic trip, which led to their defeat. The Tyrranean Sea (Parthenope, Leucosia, Ligeia) has occasionally been named as the place of their suicide and transformation into islands or rocks; later texts describe the tiny islands known as Aptera (featherless) and the islands Leukai (white)³⁸, linked with contemporary Souda on Crete³⁹.

Buschor sees the Sirens as Muses of the Underworld, spirits of the beyond who represent yearning for a paradise where humanity may spend a happy afterlife. Lamenting Sirens, in a variety of poses, frequently decorate funeral monuments, lamenting the dead or performing music and dance. Sirens as death singers, with or without musical instruments, adorn vases of many forms, sizes, and purposes⁴⁰.

The Muses are linked to both the birth and death of sirens. Greek mythology claims that sirens⁴¹ are the children of a single Muse, and that their Muse-mother bestowed upon them all of their musical talents, including voice, singing, music, and motions. The powers of memory, omniscience, and pleasure were shared by the Sirens in Odyssey 30 and the Muses in Iliad 28 and Theogony⁴².

Later creative interpretations, reflecting shifting cultural values and views about femininity and danger, portrayed them as attractive ladies, despite their original description as bird-like entities with human heads. The dichotomy of pleasure and danger is represented by the sirens. Their melodies symbolize the seduction of desire and knowledge, but their ultimate objective

³⁶A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

³⁷Orpheus, who is half god and half human, personifies the power of singing. He learned his musical and poetic abilities from the sun god Apollo, so the story goes. He used them not just to gain access into the underworld's prohibited realm but also to attract his peers on Earth. Orpheus became alert: he had given up on ever locating Eurydice. Not too long after, he starts singing once more. I recognized the song Orpheus was singing on one of my visits back to the House; it was "Good Riddance," performed in the somber voice of a regretful person.

³⁸[https://monstermovies.fandom.com/wiki/Sirens_\(mythology\)](https://monstermovies.fandom.com/wiki/Sirens_(mythology)) accessed in 13 september 2024.

³⁹A. LIVERI, *Ibid.*

⁴⁰R. L. KENDRICK, *Celstial Sirens*, Oxford, 1996.

⁴¹The mystical teachings of Pythagoras (Pythagoreanism) and Orphism, which impacted the beliefs of subsequent philosophers and classical Greek intellectuals, placed a significant emphasis on the heavenly Sirens. The foundation of Pythagoras' well-known cosmological theory is a system made up of the first four numbers and their total, the ideal Pythagorean number. It has to do with the harmony that the Sirens sang, which might have something to do with the idea of the spheres' harmony. Given that the oracle of Delphi revealed the global truth and harmony, Pythagoras thought that the tetraktys formed it.

⁴²A. LIVERI, *Ibid.*

is destruction. This dichotomy, which demonstrates the universal human experience of temptation and the results of giving in to it, is resonant across diverse cultures⁴³.

According to Bushor, the original sirens were not the ones from Homer, who can only be partially identified with Phorcy's daughters and the monks of the Greek Sea Saga. Rather, they were the demonic equivalents of the celestial Muses, who performed the role of escort from this world to the next and charmed the dead souls in Hades with their song⁴⁴.

Role of Sirens

Greek mythology states that in these situations, the seductive songs of the sirens posed a threat because, either the sailors were slain by the fabled monsters as they approached or the passengers were so enthralled with the melodies that they neglected to eat. Nevertheless, Jason, the Argonauts (including Orpheus), and Ulysses and his friends all made it through, though in different ways. Orpheus did so by using the musical force of his songs and his triumph over the Sirens' melodies, while Ulysses used a cunning tactic: "On Circe's advice, he stopped his allies' ears with wax and ordered that he himself should be bound to the mast." He pleaded to be freed after being coerced to stay by the Sirens, but they chained him even more, so he sailed by⁴⁵.

While it's true that the main role of both Sirens and Muses was to serve as singers, their differences appear to exceed any apparent similarities. The Muses' ancestral home was Pieria, a region that was fed by streams that came from nearby mountains including Mount Olympus. In contrast, the Sirens lived on an island that was located halfway between Aea and Scylla's cave⁴⁶.

The Asian concept of a bird-woman and an old story about the dangers of early exploration appear to have influenced the development of the sirens. Anthropologists interpret the Asian picture as a winged ghost that abducted the living to share its destiny, or a soul-bird. The harpies⁴⁷ and sirens were similar in that regard⁴⁸.

Greek mythology describes the siren as a half-bird, half-woman who, with her beautiful melody, enticed sailors to their demise. Two sirens were said to be on an island in the western sea between Aea and the Scylla rocks, according to Homer. Later on, the count was often raised to three, and they were situated close to Naples on Italy's west coast. One of the Muses said that they were the daughters of either the river deity Achelous or the sea god Phorcys⁴⁹.

⁴³Cr., ROME, and D., SNEED, "Sirens in ancient Greece and the Near East", College of Arts and Science, June 2018.

⁴⁴J.R. T. POLLARD, *Ibid*.

⁴⁵A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

⁴⁶R. FERWEDA, "Plotinus and the Muses", *JSTOR*, 1990.

⁴⁷In Greco-Roman classical mythology, the Harpy is a fantastical being that is most likely a wind spirit. However, it's probable that harpies were also thought of as ghosts because they appear as tomb figures. People were swept away by winds in Homer's *Odyssey*. They were occasionally associated with the forces of the underworld in other places. One Harpy named Podarge (Swiftfoot) is mentioned by Homer.

⁴⁸A. ZELAZKO, Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Siren". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 18 Apr. 2024

⁴⁹Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Siren". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 18 Apr. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Siren-Greek-mythology>. Accessed 11 September 2024.

The Greek hero Odysseus, guided by the sorceress Circe, avoided the danger of the Sirens' song in Book XII of Homer's *Odyssey* by plugging his crew's ears with wax, rendering them deaf to their calls. Even though Odysseus was tethered to the mast to prevent him from directing the ship off course, he still desired to hear their singing. According to Apollonius of Rhodes in *Argonautica*, Orpheus⁵⁰ sang with such heavenly quality that just one Argonaut was able to hear the Sirens' singing during the Argonauts' voyage. (*Argonautica* claims that Butes was the only one forced to leap into the river by the sounds of the Sirens; nevertheless, the goddess Cypris, a cult name for Aphrodite, spared his life⁵¹.)

The first depictions of Ulysses and the Sirens emerge on two Corinthian vases (aryballoi) at the beginning of the sixth century BC. However, only the second can be recognized with confidence. The earliest aryballos (about 590 BCE) may depict an early, shorter account of Ulysses' encounter with the Sirens⁵². Only one Siren may be seen soaring above Ulysses' ship to the right. The hero is not tied to his ship's mast, but he appears to be walking to the right, avoiding the enormous bird soaring overhead. The Ulysses-Sirens, scenario is paired with the Herakles-Hydra scene⁵².

According to Ovid, that Persephone's human friends were the Sirens. They looked for her all around after Hades dragged her away and at last begged for wings to fly over the sea. Their request was heard by the gods. Alternatively, Demeter punished them by turning them into birds for failing to watch after Persephone. Originally depicted in art as birds with female heads, the Sirens eventually took on the form of winged ladies with bird legs⁵³.

The sirens are a potent metaphor for the perils of giving in to temptation. Their roots are in classical literature, and their interpretations show how morality, beauty, and danger have changed throughout time in different cultural contexts⁵⁴.

Effect of Hedonistic Music

The title that was given to sirens reflect the melodies of their songs and voices. Only the island and number of the Sirens are mentioned by Homer, not their names. Later writers, however, give them names: Thelxiope, (the voice charmer)⁵⁵.

The most well-known feature of the sirens is their song—a strong, alluring tune that entralls listeners and forces them to sail their ships toward peril. its ability to appeal to its victims' innermost wants and provide them with what they most desperately want, only to ultimately lead them to their doom, is what makes them so influential beyond just their music. This version

⁵⁰was a prophet, renowned musician, and poet from Thrace. In addition to being a well-known poet, he is said to have traveled with Jason and the Argonauts in pursuit of the Golden Fleece and even ventured into Hades' underworld in order to retrieve his missing wife Eurydice. Another title for Orpheus was "ruler of Bistonian Pieria."

⁵¹LE, DOHERTY, "Siren Songs: Gender, Audience, and Narrators in the *Odyssey*", 1995.

⁵²A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

⁵³OVID, *The Metamorphoses*, Book V, 2000.

⁵⁴H. ROODENBURG, *Cultural History of the Senses in the Renaissance*, 2014; TR., BARNARD, "The Cult of Muses", 2020.

⁵⁵A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

of the siren myth delves into issues of desire, seduction, and the challenging quest of unfulfilled goals⁵⁶.

Secret of Killing Only Men

Effect of Hedonistic Music

The titles that were given to sirens reflect the melodies of their songs and voices. Only the island and number of the Sirens are mentioned by Homer, not their names. Later writers, however, give them names: *Thelxiope*, (the voice charmer)⁵⁷.

The most well-known feature of the sirens is their song—a strong, alluring tune that entralls listeners and forces them to sail their ships toward peril. Its ability to appeal to its victims' innermost wants and provide them with what they most desperately want, only to ultimately lead them to their doom, is what makes them so influential beyond just their music. This version of the siren myth delves into issues of desire, seduction, and the challenging quest of unfulfilled goals⁵⁸.

Secret of Killing Only Men

For millennia, the siren tale has woven its way through numerous civilizations and epochs, generating fascination and inquiry. These stories not only entertain, but also serve as cautionary tales, warning of the perils lying beneath the waters and the allure of the unknown. Join us as we investigate the causes for this lethal appeal, exploring the symbolism and meaning of the story of sirens and their fatal fascination⁵⁹.

The effectiveness of the siren's song lies in its psychological impact. It exploits the vulnerability of the sailors, who, after months at sea, are yearning for comfort and human connection. The sirens, understanding these desires, craft their songs to offer what seems like a solace. The melody, perceived through the fog of isolation and longing, becomes a beacon drawing sailor to their end.

Sirens are frequently portrayed as symbols of the sea's unexpected perils. Their melodies, while appealing, serve as a metaphor for the deadly pull of the ocean, urging sailors to venture into the unknown despite the perils. Sirens use their alluring tunes to enter into the sailors' thoughts, exploiting their loneliness and the fascination of the sea, which represents both the ultimate adventure and their potential destruction. In many readings of the tale, killing is not done for amusement or malice, but as a destined expression of their nature. Sirens represent the powerful draw of passions, which, when pursued blindly, might lead to one's demise⁶⁰.

⁵⁶Sirens in Mythology: Legends and Symbolism, 2024, <https://www.centreofexcellence.com/sirens-in-mythology/> access in 12 September 2024.

⁵⁷A. LIVERI, "Sirens' Songs and Music: Their Representations and Significance on Archaic and Classical Attic Vase-Paintings", Vol, 124, 2024.

⁵⁸Sirens in Mythology: Legends and Symbolism, 2024, <https://www.centreofexcellence.com/sirens-in-mythology/> access in 12 September 2024.

⁵⁹ A., J., GIBSON, "Why Do Sirens Kill Sailors: Temptation & Psyche Explored", 2024.

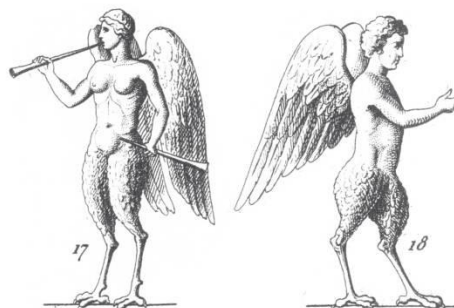
⁶⁰R. FERWEDA, "Plotinus and the Muses", *JSTOR*, 1990.

Conclusion

- This tale exemplifies the dual essence of human desire to seek out peril and to conquer it. It also underscores the value of resisting temptation, a lesson that speaks to the common human experience.
- Furthermore, the story of the sirens is more than just a warning about the dangers of surrendering to seduction. It also illustrates ancient cultures' awareness and respect for the sea's immense power. Given the sea's enigmatic and sometimes treacherous character, the siren became an embodiment of its all-consuming appeal, warning anyone who ventured to cross its waters of the perils hiding under its misleading beauty.
- It's clear that their acts are a narrative technique, mirroring old and eternal warnings about the risks of yielding to alluring yet harmful temptations. This tale serves as a warning against pursuing an impossible or dangerous ambition, representing an important lesson about the balance between aspiration and reality, desire and reason. Through the terrible destiny of those captivated by the siren's voice, the story expresses the eternal human effort to traverse the wide, often turbulent sea of wants without becoming lost in its depths.
- For a long time, the island of Lemnos was populated solely by women, and it was there that the Argo first laid anchor. These ladies had angered Goddess Aphrodite's fury by refusing to worship her, and in retaliation, she had afflicted them with foul bodily odor. Their spouses had abandoned them on this remote island, unable to tolerate the terrible stink. The ladies, humiliated and enraged by their miserable situation, slaughtered every man on the island. They lived with their queen, Hypsipyle, until Jason and his Argonauts came. The Argonauts were greeted with open arms and had children with these ladies. Jason fathered two boys born to Queen Hypsipyle.
- It was noticed that the Sirens killed only men which meant that they hate men and the reason may be refers to the curse of goddess Aphrodite as she punished the ladies who refused to make sacrificing for her with the very bad smell in their bodies which made their husbands hated them and married other virgins. As they were isolated in an island called Lemnos Island where they decided to stay there without men and killed any man passed by their island, and the majority were sailors.

Different Photos for the different Kinds of Sirens

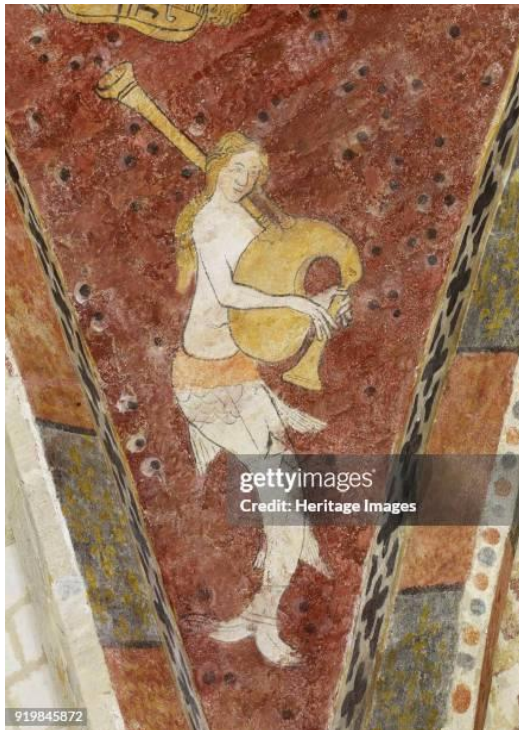




17. & 18. SIRENS



SIRENS





The Odessyeus Sirens playing Music



الطيور الأسطورية في الحضارة اليونانية القديمة

رودينا محمد شديد

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المخلص	معلومات المقالة
<p>اشتهرت السيرسنز التي كان نصفها امرأة ونصفها طائر، بألحانها الساحرة الجذابة التي تغري البحارة أثناء مرورهم بأماكنهم. تسلط هذه المقالة الضوء على أصل وأنواع صفارات الإنذار المختلفة. ناقشت الموسيقى والألحان المختلفة للسيرينز وكيف كانت تستهدف البحارة الذين يمرون بأماكنهم ويعزفون لحنها الساحر الجذاب مما جعل البحارة يغيرون طريقهم ويسلكون الطريق المحفوف بالمخاطر لاكتشاف مصدر تلك الأصوات و واجهوا مصيرهم القاتل. وقد خلط بعض العلماء الحوريات مع الحوريات، ووصفها آخرون بالنداح، وهي إحدى الأساطير العربية في القرى المصرية؛ ويُعرف أن السيدة هي التي كانت تدعو الأشخاص الذين يمرون بأي مصدر للمياه سواء كان بجرأاً أو قنوات أو مستنقعات. علاوة على ذلك، مثل "النداهة" هذه الأيام، كانت صفارات الإنذار عادة تستهدف الرجال، لأن فضولهم كان مرتفعاً للغاية، ودائمًا ما يختارون القصص المحفوفة بالمخاطر لإظهار جرأتهم وطريقة للانتقام.</p>	<p>الكلمات المفتاحية البحارة؛ المخلوقات الساحرة؛ الجزر الصخرية.</p> <p>(JAAUTH) المجلد 28، العدد 1، (2025)، ص 66-82.</p>