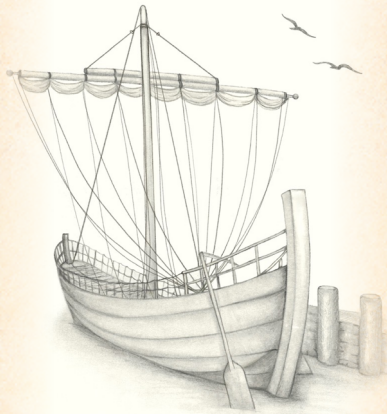




Historically Speaking

Volume 3, Number 2 February 2024

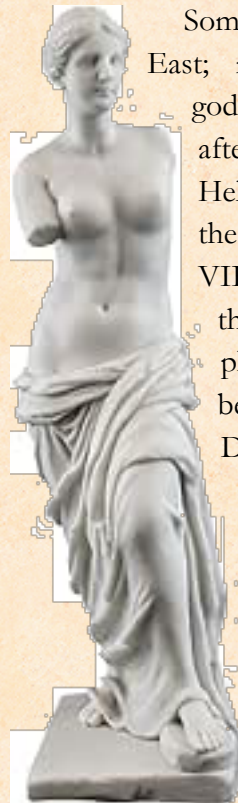
Aphrodite



What's happening?

I am pleased to announce that '...to teach' will be in the printer's hands soon. I am thankful that so many past students allowed me to mention their name. Several of them contributed statements for the book.

This was challenging to write as a hybrid; part memoir and part treatise on the art and science of teaching and learning. It wasn't always clear to me when to separate the two. I had tremendous help from Kristi Stalder of Stalder Books and Publishing. She designed the cover and did most of the editing.



The ancient Greek goddess of sexual love and beauty, identified with Venus by the Romans. The Greek word *aphros* means “foam,” and Hesiod relates in his *Theogony* that Aphrodite was born from the white foam produced at the edge of the sea. Aphrodite was, in fact, widely worshipped as a goddess of the sea and of seafaring; she was also sometimes honored as a goddess of war, especially at Sparta, Thebes, Cyprus, and other places. However, she was known primarily as a goddess of love and fertility and even occasionally presided over marriage. Prostitutes considered Aphrodite their patron.

Some scholars believe Aphrodite's worship came to Greece from the East; many of her attributes recall the ancient Middle Eastern goddesses Ishtar and Astarte. Although Homer called her “Cyprian” after the island chiefly famed for her worship, she was already Hellenized by the time of Homer, and, according to Homer, she was the daughter of Zeus and Dione, his consort at Dodona. In Book VIII of the *Odyssey*, Aphrodite was mismatched with Hephaestus, the lame smith god, and she consequently spent her time philandering with the handsome god of war, Ares (by whom she became the mother of Harmonia, the warrior twins Phobos and Deimos, and Eros, the god of love).

Of Aphrodite's mortal lovers, the most important were the Trojan shepherd Anchises, by whom she became the mother of Aeneas, and the handsome youth Adonis (in origin a Semitic nature deity and the consort of Ishtar-Astarte), who was killed by a boar while hunting and was lamented by women at the festival of Adonia.

(Continued on second page)

Ouranian Publishing of Spokane
304 N. Adams Rd.
Spokane Valley, WA 99216=2062
(509) 710-7185
website: ouranianpublishing.com



Historically Speaking

Volume 3, Number 2 February 2024

The cult of Adonis had underworld features, and Aphrodite was also connected with the dead at Delphi.

Aphrodite's main centres of worship were at Paphos and Amathus on Cyprus and on the island of Cythera, a Minoan colony, where in prehistoric times her cult probably originated. On the Greek mainland, Corinth was the chief centre of her worship.



Her close association with Eros, the Graces (Charites), and the Horae (Seasons) emphasized her role as a promoter of fertility. Among her symbols were the dove, pomegranate, swan, and myrtle.

Representations of Aphrodite in early Greek art are fully dressed and without features that differentiate her from other goddesses. She first attained individuality at the hands of the great 5th-century-BCE Greek sculptors. Perhaps the most famous of all statues of Aphrodite was carved by Praxiteles for the Cnidians. The first full-scale

female nude, it later became the model for such Hellenistic masterpieces as the Venus de Milo (2nd century BCE).



Eros, son of Aphrodite, Roman Cupid. His arrows bring love. To the Greeks he was an adolescent youth.

Sacred items for Aphrodite include the dove (far left,) the myrtle tree (above,) and the swan (right.)



The *Birth of Venus* by Sandro Botticelli.

