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BLACK ZEUS

AFRICAN MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY

By

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INTRODUCTION

I thought that Black Zeus would make an appropriate title for this pamphlet because it is about African mythology and about the migration of Black Africans from Egypt to other parts of the world. Of course, when I say African mythology it means something entirely different than the African Mythology by Geoffrey Parrinder (Hamlyn Publishing Group, Ltd., 1961). His treatise is a compilation of African folktales about creation; birth; death; esods and spirits; witches and monsters; secret societies and ancestors; and animal fables. Parrinder admits they are tales on page 12, where he states that "Africans loved telling tales." The book is copiously illustrated with African art objects, which makes it very interesting to look at, and to read, but it is not the true mythology of the African people. What is now called "Greek" or "Roman" mythology, is in reality African mythology. The reader will find the clarification of this statement in the essay. "Racial transposition" is the substitution of the terms "Greek and Roman," which have come to signify "white Europeans," for Black Egyptians or Africans (they are interchangeable). The first persons to occupy the areas of Greece and Rome were Black colonists from Africa, funneled out through Egypt.

I firmly believe that the great controversies which raged in the 19th and even the 20th centuries regarding Greek mythology and legends, as to whether they contained a core of historical truth, had a deeper and more sinister motive. If the writer was aware of the fact that man originated in Africa, and that Egypt was the representation of his highest achievement of civilization, then he would surely argue against believing Greek mythological legends and Homer's Iliad. There are some writers who argue that the Egyptian civilization was influenced by peoples from Asia; they use such terms as "Semitic" and "Indo-European" to establish whiteness in ancient Greece, while continuing to deny the authenticity of Greek mythology and legend.

I have also found subtle efforts to establish whiteness in the stories themselves. In the story about Zeus and Io, many writers call her "fair," with "blue" eyes, and when Zeus changes her into a heifer, she becomes a "white" heifer. Likewise, in the story of Europa, in which Zeus changes into a bull and carries Europa off to Crete, he changes into a "white" bull, not a black one and Zeus was Black.

This subtle form of racial transposition establishes grounds for eventual belief that the prehistoric Greeks and Romans were white. How does that affect the Black African people of today? Well, they cannot reconcile their thinking with anything "Greek" or Roman," because they have been conditioned to believe that this was the origin of western civilization, and that the Greek and Roman fathers were all white. I know the feeling, because I once entertained similar thoughts, but I continued to study and was later rewarded with a greater knowledge of Africa's contribution to the world civilization.

I would like to digress for a moment to develop a thought that indirectly bears on the ideas being presented. I have worked as a dramatist (producer-director of little theatre) for many years, specializing

in Greek drama. I directed Antigone by Sophocles (1955) with an all-Black cast. In 1957-58, I played Oedipus as a Black king with a mixed cast; in 1969 the Oedipus cast was all Black. I did not know, but I know now, that I was correct; all of the people in the house of Oedipus were Black for real. Many African-American students ridiculed me for playing "white plays;" they just didn't know.

Back now to the main ideas of this introduction. Can you imagine a 20th-century mythologist making the following statement in the face of all of the recent archaeological discoveries? He starts by saying that his book sets forth stories collectively known as Greek, and continues: "It is well to begin to by inquiring what manner of tales they were; for it is very clear that we cannot take them, as they stand, as historically true, or even as slightly idealized or exaggerated history." This statement was made by H. J. Rose in his book A Handbook of Greek Mythology. (E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc. 1959 p. 1.) Fantastic, unbelievable, weird--but he said it. When Grote, the historian of Greece, spoke this way in the 19th century, saying that Greek history only started in the sixth century, and cautioned against believing that the earlier myths were the true history of the people, his position could be understood, since the history had not yet been confirmed archaeologically. However, when scholars are confronted with incontrovertible evidence that the Greek legends and mythology contain a core of historical truth, and still persist in their own false theories, then I suspect that either ignorance or racism is the hidden premise and the basic cause.

I hope that I have caused the reader to realize the immediate imperative that is: minds must be changed--especially the minds of Black Africans everywhere. Maybe this essay will be in its small way a giant step for young Africans, and for other scholars who are in search of the truth. I will conclude by quoting the profound remarks of the English historian, Godfrey Higgins, who said: "In my search into the origin of ancient Druids, I continually found, at last, that my labours terminated with something black. Thus the oracles at Dodona, and of Apollo at Delphi, were founded by Black Doves. Doves are not often, I believe never really, black. Osiris and his bull were black; all the gods and goddesses of Greece were black: at least this was the case with Jupiter, Bacchus, Hercules, Apollo, Ammon." (Anacalypsis, Vol. I. University Books, New York, 1965, pages 137-138.

Dr. Edward L. Jones
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PART I - ORIGIN OF THE GODS

Where did the gods come from? Did they come from Rome, Greece or Africa? The answer, of course, is Africa. The beginning of mythology was in Africa; all the gods originated there and they were black, not white. Gerald Massey, the Egyptologist, recognized this important fact in the following statement:

"It will be maintained in this book that the oldest mythology, religion, symbols, languages, had their birth-place in Africa...and the civilization attained in Egypt emanated from that country and spread over the world."¹

This paper will first discuss African mythology and the early history of the Black African people's emigration from Egypt throughout the world. The task appears to be a monumental one, but it is not, if the reader accepts the premise that the primordial home of mankind is Africa. If this is so, then how did the names of the gods get to Greece and Rome? Hopefully, the answer will be forthcoming. Before proceeding, the term "myth" should be examined, and some of its attributes described. Man has used myths to explain the world about him, in order to make the unknown understandable. Science has had the same objective; to make phenomena intelligible. The purpose of the myth was to help man control the elemental forces of the universe such as rain, air, storms, the sea and the sky. Through personification, that is, by giving the forces in nature human attributes such as the feelings, desires and motives which every individual experiences, man was able mentally to control these forces and could no longer be frightened by them. There is no doubt that the myth constitutes a necessary part of man's mental daily life. It helps him to bring order out of a chaotic and hostile world.

From a historical point of view, myths were usually based upon the living reality of the people who made up the stories; as such, they helped to establish a historical relationship between the ancient past and the present. When myths no longer served as a vibrant force in man's life, they were collected as groups of stories and labeled mythology.

When man made up these stories to explain reality, he named the forces, such as thunder, lightning, etc., and finally, man began to give them gods' names, to help him in his identification and humanization of these mysterious forces of nature.

Since man and his mythology began in Africa, it must be clearly understood that Egypt is Africa, and the gods originated in Egypt. The people of Egypt and their gods were black. Herodotus related the story of two black doves that flew away from Egypt or women that were kidnapped by Phoenicians to establish an oracle to Jupiter in Dodona, and an

¹Gerald Massey, A Book of the Beginnings, Vol. 1., London, Williams and Norgate, 1881, page 18.

oracle to Ammon in Libya, he said that the women probably chattered in a foreign tongue and were consequently called doves. "But in saying that the dove was black they show that the woman was an Egyptian."² Another historian, Godfrey Higgins (some 2300 years later), referred to the oracles established by the black doves:

"In my search for the origin of the Ancient Druids, I continually found, at last, that my labours terminated with something black. Thus the oracles of Dodona and Apollo at Delphi were founded by Black doves. Doves are not often, I believe, never black."³

Higgins also noted that he always found a black complexion or something close to it when his research ended at the origin of nations. "The Alma Mater, the Goddess Multimamia, the founders of the oracles the Memnon or first idols were always black."⁴

The Egyptians were Black according to Herodotus and Higgins, and since Egypt is an integral part of Africa, its citizens were also African, and it was these people who created gods in their own image and introduced them to the rest of the world. Herodotus relates a story told to him by the Heliopolitians, the most learned of Egyptians, who said "...that the Egyptians were the first who introduced the names of the twelve gods, and that the Greeks borrowed those names from them; that they were the first to assign altars, images, and temples to the gods, and to carve the figures of animals on stone; and most of these things they proved were so in fact."⁵

Diodorus, the historian, speaking about the gods, individually, stated the position of different writers of mythology, saying that some of them claim that Cronus became the ruler of the universe, and upon marrying his sister Rhea he begot Osiris and Isis. But according to the majority of writers of mythology, Zeus and Hera became the rulers of the universe.

"From these last were sprung, five gods one born on each of the five days which the Egyptians intercalate; the names of these children were Osiris and Isis, also Typhon, Apollo, and Aphrodite; and Osiris when translated is Dionysus, and Isis is more similar to Demeter than to any other goddess..."⁶

²Herodotus, New York, Henry Cary, Harper & Brothers, 1863, Book II, 54-57.

³Godfrey Higgins, Anacalypsis, Vol. I, New York, University Books, 1965, p. 332.

⁴Higgins, Ibid., p. 286.

⁵Herodotus, Book II, 4.

⁶Diodorus of Sicily, New York, C. H. Oldfather, Putnam & Sons, 1933, Book I, 15.

At this point, it must be made clear that mythologists used the Roman and Greek names of Jupiter and Zeus interchangeably, but they both had their origin in the first Egyptian god Ammon, or Amen. Diodorus recognized the fact that Zeus (Greek) was called Ammon by people referring to the same god; "Osiris, said many writers....Also built a temple to his parents, Zeus and Hera, which was famous both for its size and its costliness in general, and two golden chapels to Zeus, the larger one to him as god of heaven, the smaller one to him as former king, and father of the Egyptians in which role he is called by some Ammon."⁷

The three most important propositions that have been discussed so far are: that Egypt was Africa; that the origin of the gods was Africa; and that since the gods were started by Africans, and named by them, then the gods were surely black like them. Higgins affirms the fact that Zeus was called the "black god."⁸

Since the gods originated in Africa, how did they get to Greece? Herodotus had a simple answer: the names of almost all of the gods came from Egypt into Greece. However, according to some historians, the people on the island of Crete were the first to obtain the names of the gods from Egypt, and it was from them that the Grecians gained knowledge of the gods of Egypt. The rite for Osiris is the same as for Dionysus and the rite of Isis is the same as that of Demeter. Plutarch states a similar view.⁹

The view that the Cretans were beholden to the Egyptians for their culture is substantiated by Sir Arthur Evans, who stated that Crete was indebted to Egypt as the source of its religion. He also advanced the view that there was a Libyan element in Crete which had emigrated from Egypt. The Libyans were black. Evans said:

"The question even arises whether some of the other, in this case partly negroized [Negroized] elements, with whom the proto-Libyan race stood in close relations in the Nile Valley, may not also have found their way to this Cretan district in their wake."¹⁰

The point to be remembered is that the origin of mythology was Africa, and its people, through emigration to Crete and other lands, took their gods and religion with them to Crete, and that the Blacks of Crete later introduced them to the African people who were the early settlers of Greece.

⁷ Diodorus, Book I, 15.

⁸ Higgins, G., The Celtic Druids, London, 1829, p. 162.

⁹ Plutarch's De Iside Et Osiride, translated by John Gwyn Griffiths, Univ. of Wales, 1970, Chapter 35.

¹⁰ Arthur Evans, The Palace of Minos at Knossos, Macmillan and Co., 1921-35, p. 28, 45.

Donald A. Mackenzie confirms these findings in the following statement: "It has even been found possible to arrange a system of Cretan chronology, approximate dates being fixed with the aid of artifacts, evidently imported from Egypt, and of Cretan artifacts found in the Nilotic area and elsewhere. The idea of the 'Hellenic miracle' no longer obtains. It is undoubted that Crete was the forerunner of Greece, and that the Hellenes owed a debt to Cretan civilization the importance of which was not realized even by the native historians of ancient Greece."¹

It seems that Herodotus and others have, through their investigations, discovered that the origin of the gods came from the Egyptians. The Egyptian gods were given Grecian names, but the rites (as previously stated) remained the same.

There is no question regarding the origin of the Roman gods, because they were adopted from Greece, and the names were changed again. For example, the Greek names of Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, Demeter and Hera, became the Roman Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto, Ceres and Juno, respectively. The mysteries and rites, as practiced by the Romans, were similar to those practiced by the Greeks. The adaptation of the Egyptian gods by the Greeks and Romans became a complete adoption and the Egyptian gods were given new names and a new mythology was created that retained a semblance of relationship to the original.

¹¹ Mackenzie, D. A., Myths of Crete and Pre-Hellenic Europe, London, Gresham Publishing Co., 1917, p. V.

PART II - MYTHS AND LEGENDS: EARLY AFRICAN HISTORY

If we turn now to legend, which constitutes a series of stories from early times preserved by the people as a part of their tradition and history, we will find that it is interwoven with mythology. Therefore, our perspective of mythology will be clearer after we examine the legendary emigrations of colonies from Egypt. In order to grasp the proper understanding of how the Greeks and Romans adapted the mythology and legends of Egypt, one must fully accept the fact that the so-called Romans and Greeks were black. They were African colonists who set out from Egypt to inhabit the world. They took their gods and rituals with them, in a number of instances, or later adopted the gods of their neighbors.

Diodorus Siculus, reporting what the Egyptians told him about the colonies, said:

"Now the Egyptians say that also after these events (the birth and secret burial places of the gods) a great number of colonies were spread from Egypt over all the inhabited world. To Babylon, for instance, colonists were led by Belus, who was held to be the son of Poseidon and Libya; and after establishing himself on the Euphrates river he appointed priests, called Chaldaeans by the Babylonians, who were exempt from taxation and free from every kind of service to the state, as are the priests of Egypt; and they also make observations of the stars, following the example of the Egyptian priests, physicists, and astrologers. They say also that those who set forth with Danaus, likewise from Egypt, settled what is practically the oldest city of Greece, Argos, and that the nation of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria, were founded as colonies by certain emigrants from their country; and this is why it is a long established institution among these two peoples to circumcise their male children, the custom having been brought over from Egypt. Even the Athenians, they say, are colonists from Sais in Egypt, and they undertake to offer proofs of such a relationship; for the Athenians are the only Greeks who call their city 'Asty' a name brought over from the city Asty in Egypt."¹²

Diodorus continued the story related to him, saying that the Athenians had the same form of government as the Egyptians, and the people of Egypt. They also told Diodorus that the first kings of Greece were Egyptians: Cecrops and Erectheus. Of Cecrops, Smith stated:

"Attica is said to have been indebted for the arts of civilized life to Cecrops, a native of Sais in Egypt. [Note: This is the same Sais that Diodorus refers to above.] To

¹²Diodorus, Book I, 28.

him is ascribed the foundation of the city of Athens, the institution of marriage and the introduction of religious rites and ceremonies."¹³

Now the first colony from Egypt to Greece probably called themselves Pelasgians. This condition is substantiated by Herodotus who said:

"The Athenians, when the Pelasgians possessed that which is now called Greece, were Pelasgians and went by the name of Cranai: under the reign of Cecrops they were surnamed Cecropidae; but when Erectheus succeeded to the government, they changed their name for that of Athenians..."¹⁴

The Egyptians told Diodorus about Erectheus, who was an Egyptian by birth, and who became king of Athens; to prove their statement they referred to a drought that extended over a large area of the earth, except Egypt, and how it destroyed men and crops in great numbers, Erectheus,

"through his racial connections with Egypt, brought there to Athens a great supply of grain, and in return those who had enjoyed the aid made their benefactor king. After he had secured the throne he instituted the initiatory rites of Demeter (Isis) in Eleusis and established the mysteries, transferring their ritual from Egypt."¹⁵

Although Cecrops and Erectheus were the first Egyptian kings of Athens, there were many other great black Egyptians who led colonies to the different areas of Greece, Crete, and North Africa. These were the offspring of Black Zeus and Io. (See Table A).

Io, who had been turned into a cow by Zeus to avoid the wrath of his wife Hera, wandered over the world and finally came to Egypt where she was turned back into a woman. She had a son by Zeus, Black Epaphus, who became king of Egypt. Epaphus married Memphis,¹⁶ and named a city after her. They had a daughter, Libya, after whom the region in Africa was named. Libya, later, married Poseidon and they had twin sons, Agenor and Belus. It is from these two Egyptians that we get the pioneers, heroes and great leaders. Belus reigned over Egypt, but Agenor went to Phoenicia.

¹³William Smith, A History of Greece, New York, revised by George W. Green, Harper and Brothers, 1885, p. 15.

¹⁴Herodotus, Book VIII, 44.

¹⁵Diodorus, Book I 29.

¹⁶Aeschylus, Vol. I, New York, translated by Herbert W. Smyth, G. P. Putnam & Sons, 1927; Prometheus, line 850 "And thou shall bring forth black Epaphus..."

Why don't we first look at the descendants of Agenor who was connected with the Egyptian throne in Table B. After Agenor became the ruler of the Phoenicians he married Telephassa (or Argiope), and had four sons: Cadmus, Phoenix, Cilix, and Phineus, and a daughter Europa. Zeus saw Europa, a beautiful woman, playing by the seashore with her companions and immediately fell in love with her. He turned himself into a very attractive bull and went into her presence. When her friends became afraid, she ventured to climb upon the animal's back, and he bore her to Crete. He bedded with her and they had three sons: Minos, (more on Minos later) Sarpedon, and Rhadamanthys. Now, if someone kidnapped your daughter or sister (Zeus or not) wouldn't you go after the culprit? Sure you would, and that is just what Agenor ordered his sons to do. They were to search for their sister and not to return until they had found her. They didn't find her, so they decided not to return home. Phoenix settled in Phoenicia, Cilix settled nearby and called his area Cilicia, and Cadmus became the founder of Thebes. Cadmus also was credited with introducing into Greece letters of the alphabet and the art of writing.¹⁷

Returning to Europa, Zeus gave her hand in marriage to the King of Crete, Asterius, who adopted the children, and when he died Minos succeeded him as King of Crete. When Europa died she received royal recognition, a continent was named after her (Europe) and she was transformed into a constellation.

Agenor's twin brother, Belus, remained in Egypt as king of that country. According to Apollodorus Belus married Anchinoe.¹⁸ They also had twin sons, Aegyptus and Danaus, and another son, Cepheus. Aegyptus had fifty Black sons and Danaus had fifty Black daughters. The men fell in love with their cousins, but the women would have none of it. Danaus, the father, was afraid of Aegyptus' sons so he sought the advice of Athena. She advised him to build a ship (Apollodorus claims that Danaus built the first ship), which he did, and fled with his daughters aboard. He arrived in Argos, and was later elected king of Argos by the people.¹⁹ In the meantime, the fifty Black sons of Aegyptus had followed Danaus and his daughters to Argos.

Danaus was eventually forced to submit to the demands of his nephews, so he entreated his daughters to swear upon oath that they would kill their bridegrooms on their wedding night, and he supplied them with fifty daggers to complete the task. Forty-nine obeyed him, but one, Hypermnestra refused to obey because of her love of Lynceus. They became ancestors of the two great heroes, Perseus and Hercules. (See Table C).

¹⁷ Herodotus, Book V, 58.

¹⁸ Apollodorus, The Library, Vol. I, New York, Trans. by Sir James George Frazer, G. P. Putman's Sons, 1921, Book II, 1.4.

¹⁹ Aeschylus, The Suppliant Maidens, p. 3; Apollodorus, Book II, 1.4.

Belus had another son, Cepheus, who became king Ethiopia. Cepheus married Cassiopea (Cassiepea) and had a daughter Andromeda.

This concludes the legendary portion of the essay which seems to authenticate what the Egyptians reported to Diodorus Siculus, that they had sent colonies all over the world. The black race of Inachus, whose daughter was Io, whom Zeus mated with, were the great emigrants, the Black people who founded Greece, Crete, Rome, and who settled many other areas of the world.

PART III - THE SUPPLIANT MAIDENS

Aeschylus' play, The Suppliant Maidens, is about the flight of Danaus and his fifty Black daughters from Egypt, and their arrival on the shores of Argos, the home of their ancestor, Io.

The play opens with the entrance of the maidens who relate their plight, having fled the land of Zeus (Egypt) to escape the suit of man, because they abhor the idea of marriage with the sons of Aegyptus. They send up invocations to their savior, Zeus, and they say it is from Argos that their race springs (Io=Zeus). The maidens also call upon Zeus' daughter Artemis to help:

"Yet, if she will not, we, a swart, sun-smitten race, with suppliant boughs will fare unto the nether Zeus, Zeus the great hospitaler of the dead; for if the gods of Olympus hearken not unto us, we will perish by the noose."²⁰

Danaus asks them to be prudent, then he sees the king approaching and tells the maidens to hold their boughs in their left hands and answer all questions from the strangers in a courteous manner. King Pelasgus arrives and asks the origin of the band of maidens. Their reply is brief and clear: "Argives we claim to be by birth, seed of a cow blest in its offspring."

The maidens then proceed to inform the king through questions and answers how Io was changed into a cow by Zeus, and how Hera caused the cow to wander all over the earth, eventually stopping at the Nile, and Hera has pity and changes her back again. Zeus "touches" Io and she has a male child, Black Epaphus, father of Libya, whose offspring were Agenor and Belus. Belus had two sons, Danaus, their father, and Aegyptus. This proved their Argive descent, and the king said that he could not help them until he consulted with the citizens, because he wanted to avoid entering into a conflict, or possibly a war with Aegyptus' sons. After he and Danaus exit, the maidens pray to Zeus for their deliverance.

Later, Danaus returns with good news. The Argives unanimously voted a resolution into law that they become free settlers in Argos. The maidens offer up prayers to the Argives and Zeus. Danaus assures the maidens that the people of the land will now defend them.

Aegyptus' sons finally pull into the shores of Argos, and they dispatch a herald to order the maidens back to the ship. The maidens refuse. The king arrives and argues with the herald, who threatens war and exits. Pelasgus promises the maidens protection, and tells them to select their dwellings freely. The maidens praise him, but ask him to send their father to be their adviser and leader. Danaus has been given a personal bodyguard; he appeals to his daughters to conduct themselves properly and count their chastity more precious than their life. They promise Danaus that they will keep their virginity.

²⁰ Aeschylus, Maidens line 150.

The chorus of Danaids join with the chorus of handmaidens in a final prayer:

"May sovereign Zeus withhold from me cruel wedlock with a man I hate, that very Zeus who mercifully wrought for Io deliverance from pain, restoring her with healing hand by kindly constraint. And may he award victory to the women!"

The prayer ends with the belief that justice will prevail. The play ends.

The sequel to this play is in the Egyptians and the Danaids. In that play, Danaus is forced to agree to the demands of his nephews, and enjoins upon his daughters their sacred duty to kill their bridegrooms on their wedding night. All but Hypermnestra comply, she spares her man, Lynceus because he respected her virginity out of love; and when she is brought to trial, she is defended by the goddess Aphrodite, pleading that love of man and woman is sanctified by the love of Heaven for Earth.

PART IV - PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

Hypermnestra and Lynceus married, and Lynceus became King of Argos, succeeding Danaus. Hypermnestra had a son Abas, and Abas had twin sons Acrisius and Proetus by Aglaia, daughter of Mantineus. The two brothers quarreled, and Acrisius drove Proetus from Argos.

After Acrisius reigned as King of Argos for a while, he became worried about the prospect of not having an heir to succeed him on the throne. He received an oracle from Delphi saying that a daughter would be born to him and that she would have a son who would slay his grandfather and take over the throne. When Danae, a daughter was born, he imprisoned her in a room underground. However, Zeus sent a shower of gold which poured through the roof of the chamber and reached her. She became pregnant and bore a child. His name was Perseus and he was destined to become a great hero. Upon hearing the child's cries, Acrisius questioned his daughter. Disbelieving her and also recalling the oracle, he had his daughter and grandson put in a chest and cast into the sea. It is said that Zeus directed the chest as it rocked about upon the waves, bringing it safely to shore on the island of Seriphus. The island was ruled by two brothers: Dictys and Polydectes. It was Dictys who, fishing at the time, pulled the chest out of the water. The brothers, upon discovering the contents of the chest, treated Danae and her son with kindness. Dictys reared Perseus but his brother Polydectes fell in love with Danae. He refrained from making advances because Perseus had come of age and presented a problem. So King Polydectes, anxious to get Perseus out of the way, required him to prove his loyalty by bringing him the head of Medusa.

Perseus started out to fulfill the task, guided by the god and goddess, Hermes and Athena. He arrived at the home of Phorcus, (Phorcys) father of the monsters; there he found the three women who were old from birth, and had only one eye and tooth among them which they passed around in turn. Perseus took away the eye and tooth, refusing to return them until they told him the way to the nymphs who had the magical helmet of Hades, the winged shoes and a wallet. Now, whoever adorns themselves with these things may fly wherever he wishes without being seen, but would be able to see anything. The women told him the way, so he returned their eye and tooth. He arrived at the home of the nymphs and was provided with the helmet, shoes and wallet. Hermes gave him a knife and a shiny shield. Dressing himself with helmet and shoes and slinging the wallet over his shoulder, he took off like a bird flying toward the home of the Gorgons. He found them asleep. Only Medusa was a mortal, that is why he was sent for her head. Anyone looking at the monsters straight-on would be turned to stone. Athena instructed him about how he should attack Medusa. Looking into his shield, and with Athena guiding his hand, he beheaded her; from her sprang the winged horse Pegasus, and Chrysaor, the father of Geryon. When Perseus placed the head in his wallet, the two sisters woke up to discover that Medusa had been decapitated. They started to pursue Perseus, but his helmet made him invisible and his shoes gave him speed and he eluded them.

It has been said that Perseus, on his return flight to his home, Seriphus, stopped in the kingdom of King Atlas, who refused him as a guest. Angered by this, Perseus took the head of Medusa out of his wallet and, avoiding looking at it, he turned it towards the king, who was immediately turned into a stone.

Continuing his homeward journey, Perseus flew over Ethiopia, the realm of King Cepheus, (a brother of Danaus, Aegyptus, and Phineus). He saw the king's daughter, Andromeda, chained to a rock on the shore of the sea, a victim of sacrifice to the sea monster. The reason she had been placed in this perilous position was the boast that her mother Queen Cassiope had made to the Nereids, saying she was prettier than them. They were angered and caused a flood to inundate the land. The king, seeking an oracle from the Temple of Ammon in Libya, was told he must sacrifice his daughter in order to lift the plague. The people implored the king to save them, so he chained Andromeda to the rock.

Perseus was overwhelmed by her beauty and offered to save her if the king and queen would consent to their marriage. They readily consented, and Perseus slew the monster, thus releasing Andromeda from the rock and returning her to her grateful parents.

The wedding feast following the marriage was interrupted by the king's brother Phenius, who was enamoured with this beautiful princess. He claimed that she was his promised bride. He was flanked with numerous bodyguards. Perseus pulled out the head of Medusa from his wallet, and asked that all of his friends turn their eyes away. Then he showed the head to Phenius and his men and they were immediately turned to stone.

Perseus carried off his bride, Andromeda, to his home in Seriphus. Upon their arrival, Perseus found that his mother had been mistreated by King Polydectes, and that she had sought sanctuary at the altars of the gods. He revealed to the king and his friends, who had gathered to see it, the head of Medusa, the proof that Perseus had kept his word--all were instantly turned to stone. He left Dictys in charge of the island, taking his wife and mother to Argos. Before leaving, he gave back the sandals, helmet and wallet to Hermes, and the head of Medusa to Athena. Hermes returned the first three items to the nymphs, but Athena placed the head in the middle of her shield.

Instead of going to Argos, Perseus, remembering the oracle had said that the son of Danae would kill his grandfather, stopped in Larissa. The King of Larissa was holding athletic games, which were attended by Acrisius. Perseus entered into the competition and threw a disc that struck Acrisius, his grandfather, in the foot and killed him. Realizing that the oracle had been fulfilled, Perseus refused to accept his inheritance as King of Argos. Instead, he negotiated an exchange with Megapenthes (son of Proetus) of Tiryns for Argos.

Perseus and Andromeda had two sons, Electryon and Alcaeus. Electryon was the father of Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, and her husband, Amphitryon, was a son of Alcaeus. It is also claimed that before Andromeda left Ethiopia, she had a son, whom they named Perses and

left behind with king Cepheus. It is from Perses that the kings of Persia claim their descent, and that Persia gets its name.²¹ The Egyptians also have a tradition regarding the hero Perseus. The people of Chemmis in Egypt say "that Perseus derived his origin from their city; for that Danaus and Lynceus who were both natives of Chemmis, sailed from them to Greece." Tracing the descent from them to Perseus, they say that he brought the head of Medusa from Libya to them for the same reason that he returned it to Seriphus. When he came to them, they allege, that affirmed his kinship, because he had heard this from his mother. He ordered the Egyptians to institute gymnastic games in his honor.²²

The exploits of the Black hero Perseus ends here, but remember, he was the great grandfather (see Table A) of another outstanding Black hero, Hercules, who was of Egyptian descent, and was numbered as one of their twelve gods.²³ Whether we call him a Grecian national hero, or Egyptian, he was still Black because he was a descendant of the sons of Belus, Aegyptus, Danaus and Cepheus, all of whom established royal houses in other lands while retaining connection with the Egyptian throne.

At this point, let us move to the other side of the genealogical tree and discuss the descendants of Agenor's son and daughter, Cadmus and Europa. (See Table B)

²¹Herodotus, Book VII, 61.

²²Herodotus, Book II, 91.

²³Herodotus, Book II, 43-44.

PART V - OEDIPUS REX: A PLAY BY SOPHOCLES

Cadmus, the founder of Thebes was the ancestor of both Jocasta and Laius, the parents of Oedipus (See Table A).

The story of Oedipus begins with his parents who were childless. King Laius and Jocasta, having received an oracle from Delphi which said that if they had a child it would grow up to kill its father, they refrained from doing so. However, their love was so strong for each other they eventually had a child despite the oracle. When the infant was born, they remembered the oracle, and, becoming fearful of the fearful consequences, riveted the child's ankles together and ordered a shepherd to take him upon Mount Cithaeron and leave him to die. The shepherd, being a compassionate man, could not leave the infant to die, so he gave it to another shepherd who was tending his flock on the slopes of the mountain. This shepherd was one of King Polybus' men from Corinth. He freed the child's ankles, and called him Oedipus or Swollen-Feet. On his arrival in Corinth, he presented the child to King Polybus, who was childless. The King and his wife, Merope, liked the child and reared him as their own son. Oedipus grew up as a prince, believing he was the son and heir of King Polybus.

Years later, after attaining manhood, Oedipus was attending a banquet, and a citizen of Corinth who had been drinking too much wine hurled the envious remark that Oedipus was not Polybus' real son. Hurt by this vicious taunt, he confronted his parents the next day, demanding that they tell him the truth. They were terribly angry that the drunken citizen should have told such a story, and they reassured Oedipus of their love for him, and that he was their true son. This satisfied him for awhile, but the thought persisted, and, without his parents' knowledge, he decided to leave Corinth and to seek an oracle from Delphi to affirm his heritage. Instead of answering his question, the oracle said: "you will kill your father, and marry your mother and become the father of a misbegotten brood." Upon hearing this, Oedipus refused to return to Corinth. He was fearful that fate would bring about these horrible deeds, would cause him to kill Polybus and to wed Merope, still believing them to be his real parents.

On the road from Delphi to Daulia, Oedipus came to a place where crossroads meet, and a herald followed by a horse-drawn chariot was coming towards him. The herald ordered him off the road; Oedipus, being a prince, refused to move. The party pushed past him and the old man in the chariot struck him, whereupon Oedipus, in a fit of rage, killed all except one, who escaped. He did not know that the old man that he killed was King Laius, his real father.

Later on, his travels brought him to Thebes. At the gates was a sphinx, with the head of a woman and the body of a lion. She had caused a plague upon the land to be lifted only if someone could answer her riddles. Oedipus challenged her, and she asked: "What is it that walks on all fours at morning bright, on two at daylight, and on three at twilight? Oedipus answered "Man," because, as a babe, man crawls on hands and feet, grown he walks on two feet, and when he grows old, he walks

with a cane. The monster, unable to face defeat, hurled herself from the cliff to instant death. The plague was lifted from the city, and the people, in their rejoicing, offered the hand of Jocasta, the Queen, in marriage to Oedipus. Jocasta was Oedipus' real mother. He married her and they had four children: two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, and two daughters, Antigone and Ismene. Oedipus and Jocasta lived happily together for fifteen years, but then the gods became angry because of their sinful relationship and sent down another plague upon Thebes.

It is at this point that the play of Sophocles opens. The citizens have come to the palace, led by a priest, and placed themselves in positions of supplication, holding boughs in their hands and imploring the king to save them from the plague as he had once before. The king enters, asks why they have come, and the priest speaks for them.

He tells King Oedipus how the plague has devastated the land, and how people are sick and dying in large numbers. The priest reminds Oedipus that he had been their savior before when he freed them from the scourge of the sphinx, so now they call upon him again to deliver them through the help of gods or men.

Oedipus says that he has been aware of their plight, that he has lain awake at night thinking about possible solutions, and that finally he arrived at an answer. He told them that he had sent his brother-in-law, Creon, to Delphi for an oracle to determine by what means he could help them and free the city.

At the end of Oedipus' speech, Creon arrives. He reports to the King and to the citizens present the oracle he received: "There is an unknown killer born and reared on our soil, polluting our soil, who must be driven away. The murderer of King Laius must be brought to justice and punished." Oedipus tells Creon and the citizens that he considers it his duty as King to find the killer. After the chorus prays to the gods for deliverance, Oedipus pronounces a sentence which includes a curse and exile of the killer when he is found. The King also sent for Tiresias, the blind prophet. The seer had been given the power of prophecy by the gods: He could see into the unknown. He enters, being led by a boy, and King Oedipus tells him of the plague upon the city, and about the oracle; then he implores the seer to use his powers to help find the killers of Laius. But Tiresias refused to speak, and asks to go home telling the king: "you bear your burden and I'll bear mine." After several more conflicting remarks, he begins to anger Oedipus, who starts to taunt him, accusing him of being involved, and possibly an accomplice in the murder, saying: "If you had eyes to see with, I would say that your hand alone had done it all." Tiresias becomes heated with anger and decides to tell that King what he knows: "Do not speak to me or anyone here, you are a cursed polluter of this land." He then accuses Oedipus of being the killer, and also of living in sinful union with his loved ones. The King rages, not believing the truth and calls the soothsayer a double-dealer. Suddenly he suspects a plot against his throne, and accuses Tiresias and Creon. Tiresias tells him that he is his own enemy, repeats his former accusation of the king and asks the boy to take him home.

Creon, having heard Oedipus' accusations against him, arrives at the palace entrance and questions the elders (chorus) regarding the slander. The King comes out and immediately starts to accuse him, but Creon asks to be heard, and he pleads his honesty and loyalty to Oedipus. The King, blind with rage, refuses to believe him and demands his death. Queen Jocasta enters, intercedes in the argument to prevent the two from fighting, and sends Creon home. When he leaves, she demands that Oedipus tell her why he harbored such intense hatred for Creon. He tells her that he thinks that Tiresias and Creon have been plotting against his throne, because Tiresias has accused him of being the killer of King Laius. Jocasta tells Oedipus not to worry; the prophet's powers are not so great. Then she tells him of the oracle given to her and Laius saying that the son would grow up to kill its father, but that Laius had been killed by robbers at a place where three roads meet. So, the oracle is proven wrong, she argued, and disdainfully she speaks against divine sayings. In the meantime, Oedipus, struck by her description of the place where Laius was killed, demands to know the place, what Laius looked like, and how many men had accompanied him. She answers, saying that the place is between Delphi and Daulia, that Laius was about his build, with gray hair, and that five men had accompanied him, all having been killed except one who escaped. Oedipus, overcome with fear and fright, now realized that the prophet knows, but continues to question her hoping to detect an error in her story. She is sure the servant who escaped said that robbers fell in with the King's party, not one but many, and killed the King. Oedipus, distraught over what has been said, orders the servant to be found and brought before him. The chorus says a prayer which condemns arrogance and impiety.

A messenger arrives from Corinth, looking for Oedipus to tell him that King Polybus is dead and that the people of Corinth wanted him to return as their king. Oedipus and Jocasta rejoice at the obvious refutation of the oracle which had said that his father would die at the hands of his own son. Oedipus, believing that Polybus was his father, refuses to return to Corinth because he still fears the second part of the oracle, which said that he would marry his mother, Merope. The messenger tells Oedipus that he need not fear, Polybus, was not his real father. Oedipus asks him to explain. The messenger tells the story of how one of King Laius' servants had given Oedipus to him on Mt. Cithaeron and how he had freed his riveted ankles. Oedipus inquires of the chorus about the servant, and they assure him that he is the same man whom he had asked to be fetched. He turns to Jocasta and asks her:

Oedipus: "My wife, you know the man whom we have sent for.
Is that the man he means?"

Jocasta: "What does it matter
What man he mean? It makes no difference now...
Forget what he has told you...It makes no difference."

Oedipus: "Nonsense: I must pursue this trail to the end,
Till I have unravelled the mystery of my birth."

Jocasta: "No! In God's name--if you want to live,
this quest
Must not go on. Have I not suffered
enough?"

Oedipus: "There is nothing to fear. Though I
proved slave-born
To the third generation, your honour is
not impugned."

Jocasta: "Yet do not do it. I implore you, do
not do it."

Oedipus: "I must. I cannot leave the truth
unknown."²⁴

Jocasta leaves, wailing in despair and calling Oedipus a stubborn man. He calls her proud and says that she fears his possible humble birth. The shepherd finally arrives. It is he who is the sole survivor of the massacre at the cross-roads. The Corinthian identifies him as the cross-roads. The Corinthian identifies him as the person who gave the baby to him. At first, the old herdsman attempts to deny, out of fear, that Oedipus was the one. The King orders his men to pinion the shepherd's arms and threatens to kill him. Gradually the old man confesses that Oedipus was born the son of Laius and Jocasta, that the oracle had caused them to dispose of their child, and that, out of pity, the shepherd had spared his life.

All is out; the truth is known. Oedipus wails that he does not want to see the light again, sinful in his begetting, sinful in marriage, and sinful in shedding of blood. He runs into the palace.

The chorus laments and deplores his fall, and cry that they wish they had never set eyes on him. The Queen's attendant comes out of the palace horror-struck. She tells how Oedipus ran madly through the palace looking for Jocasta, and how when he reached his bedchamber, he smashed the bolt on the door and rushed in to see Jocasta hanging in the middle of the room. She goes on to say how he cried aloud and lowered Jocasta's body to the floor, how he tore two gold brooches from her gown, and lifted them high in his hands, while telling his eyes that they would never more look upon the suffering he had caused. Then she relates how he pierced his eyeballs time and time again, until the blood cascaded from the sockets.

The King then begs his servants to lead him out to the people so they may see the killer of his father, the husband of his mother, and the brother of his children--a man hated by all the gods. The chorus feels sorry for him. Even Creon feels bad about his misfortune. Oedipus asks Creon to take care of the children, and to banish him from Thebes. Creon says he will have to wait on a decision from the gods, and orders that Oedipus be taken inside the palace, telling him that his rule ended.

²⁴ Sophocles, Oedipus Rex, The Theban Plays, trans. by E. F. Watting.

The chorus's final philosophical comment is: "...none can be called happy until that day when he carries his happiness down to the grave in peace."²⁵

Was there a real Oedipus, or was he just a mythical character of the heroic age? He was a real person like every other person on Genealogical Table A. Herodotus spoke of the letters introduced by the Phoenicians, and, in his description of how and where he had seen them, he mentioned the time when Oedipus' parents and Oedipus himself had lived:

"And I myself have seen in the temple of Ismenian Apollo Thebes, in Boeotia, Cadmean letters engraved on certain tripods, for the most part resembling the Ionian. One of the tripods has this inscription: 'Amphitryon²⁶ dedicated me on his return from the Teleboans.' These must be about the age of Laius, son of Labdacus, son of Polydorus, son of Cadmus. Another tripod has these words in hexameter verse: 'Scaeus, a boxer, having been victorious, dedicated me, a very beautiful offering to thee, far darting Apollo.' Scaeus must have been son of Hippocoon, if indeed it was he who made the offering, and not another person bearing the same name as the son of Hippocoon; and must have been about the time of Oedipus, son of Laius."²⁷

The fact that Oedipus the king really lived is very significant because it dispels the views of the skeptics, who still try to confuse others with such terms as "myths," "poetry" (of Homer), "legends," etc., concluding with statements implying that we must not trust Homer, or put too much faith in ancient historians, because myths and poetry are not to be considered as containing historical fact. If these skeptical scholars knew that these first colonies were Black and that it was they who set out from Egypt to inhabit the areas which later became Greece, Crete, Rome, and other parts of the world, then their reasons for creating skepticism, disbelief, and doubt in the reader's mind about the earlier settlers of Greece and Rome are clear.

If the skeptics are to be believed, then the history of the African peoples and their emigrations from Egypt might be successfully concealed. It appears that this deceitfulness is still being continued; universities and colleges throughout the Western World have classics and history departments which teach that the foundation of Western culture rests upon the "glorious achievements" of Greece and Rome, failing to admit the truth: that the Greeks and Romans, at that time, were Black people from Africa.

Let us return to another child of Agenor, Europa and her descendants. Remember that Zeus, in the likeness of a bull, carried Europa to

²⁵Sophocles, Oedipus.

²⁶The putative father of Hercules.

²⁷Herodotus, Book V, 59, 60.

Crete on his back and there mated with her. They had three Black children: Minos I, Rhadamanthus, and Sarpedon. The King of Crete, Asterius, later married Europa and reared her children. He dies without issue and Minos succeeded him on the throne. Of course, there are scholars who still question whether there was a Minos II, who was married to Pasiphae, that argument will not be discussed in this essay.²⁸ The point to be made, however, for genealogical reasons is that Minos was the father of Catreus, who begat Aerope, the mother of Agamemnon and Menelaus. See Table D) Agamemnon became the King of Mycenae, and his brother Menelaus was the King of Sparta. They were two of the most powerful men in Greece. When Paris carried away Helen, Menelaus' wife, Agamemnon was made commander-in-chief of the Grecian forces, which later defeated Priam of Troy.²⁹

How did Minos' descendants, Agamemnon and the others get to Greece? The answer is that the continuous movement of the people of Crete to the different cities of Greece, and vice versa, may be attributed to the efficiency of their sea transportation. Diodorus said that Minos II, who was the son of Zeus, was the first to create a powerful naval force and that it made him master of the sea. This enabled him and his subjects to travel from Crete to other parts of the world. Minos' son, Androgeus, attended the festival in Athens.³⁰ This is just one of many examples of travel by the ancients.

Atreus, the King of Mycenae and father of Agamemnon and Menelaus, was the grandson of Tantalus, King of Phrygia, in Asia. His son, Pelops, became the King of Peloponnesus, thus connecting Greece with the Asian throne.

Returning to King Agamemnon of Mycenae, the King of many men and sometimes saluted as "Zeus Agamemnon," he who had successfully defeated the Roman forces at Troy, met with an untimely death upon his arrival home. Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's wife, and her lover, Aegisthus, planned a banquet to celebrate his victory, but he was killed while preparing for his bath.

For many years the story of Agamemnon in plays, histories and especially in Homer's Iliad (which describes the battles of Troy) was looked upon as a myth, a tale or a legend. Most scholars refused to believe the story, and cautioned their readers not to be taken in by tales and sagas. Dr. Henry Schliemann, an archaeologist who believed that Homer,

²⁸See Diodorus IV, 60 Appolodorus III, I and II, and Arthur Eveans, Palace of Minos At Knossos, Vol. I, New York, Bilbo and Tannon, 1964, Vol. I, p. 9.

²⁹The Iliad of Homer, Vol. I, New York, Chicago; Richard Lattimore, University of Chicago Press, 1951.

³⁰Diodorus, Book IV, 60, 4.

Herodotus, Thucydides and others were true historians, started archaeological operations at Hissarlik. If was there that he discovered the plains of Troy in 1882.³¹ Dr. Schliemann also found the graves and treasures of Agamemnon and his party. In Chapter 10 of his book Mycenae he said: "my firm faith in the traditions made me undertake my late excavations in the Acropolis, and led to the discovery of the five tombs, with their immense treasures."³²

Dr. Schlieman's discoveries not only proved that the so-called "myths" and "poetry" of Homer were true history, but also that there exists a true history of the migration of Black people from Egypt to Asia, Greece, and Rome.

Sixteen years later, further archaeological discoveries were made by Sir Arthur Evans on the island of Crete. He unearthed the Palace of Minos at Knossos. So, he in turn proved that Minos had existed as a real person. In speaking of Minos as a lawgiver, Evans said: "Of ordered government we have the proof, and in less striking degree, the evidence of extraordinary achievements in peaceful arts. The Palace traditionally built for Minos by his great craftsman Daedalos has proved to be no baseless fabric of the imagination."³³

³¹Dr. Henry Schliemann, Troja, New York, Harper Brothers, 1884, pp. 277-288.

³²Dr. Henry Schliemann, Mycenae, Scribner, Armstrong and Company, 1878, pp. 333-336.

³³Sir Arthur Evans, Vol. I, p. 2.

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TABLE A TABLE A: THE BLACK RACE OF INACHUS AND ITS BRANCHES

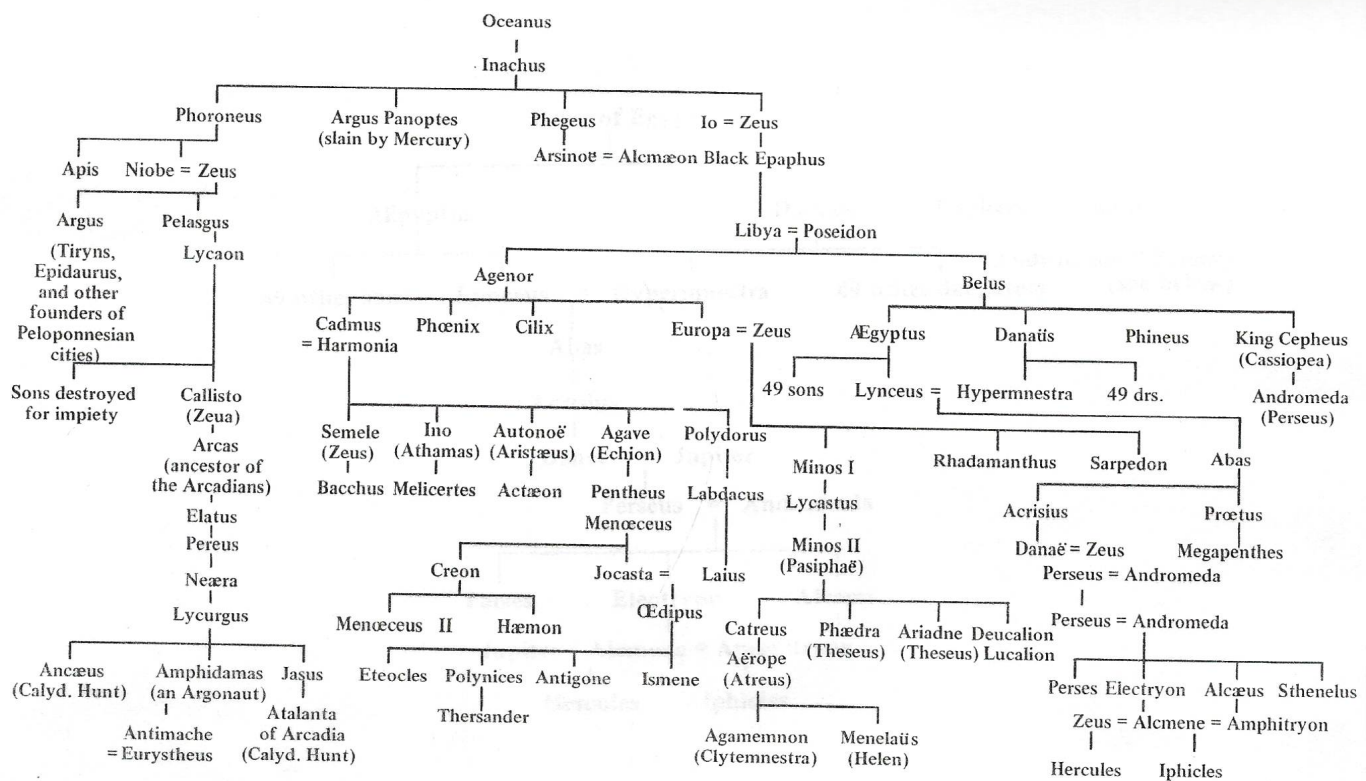


TABLE B: THE DESCENDANTS OF AGENOR

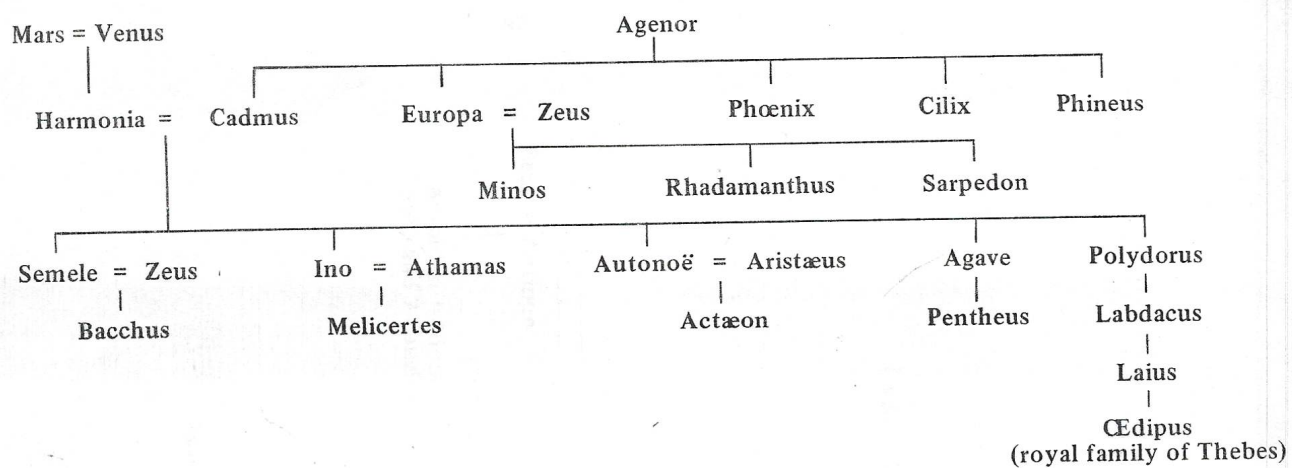


TABLE C: THE DESCENDANTS OF BELUS

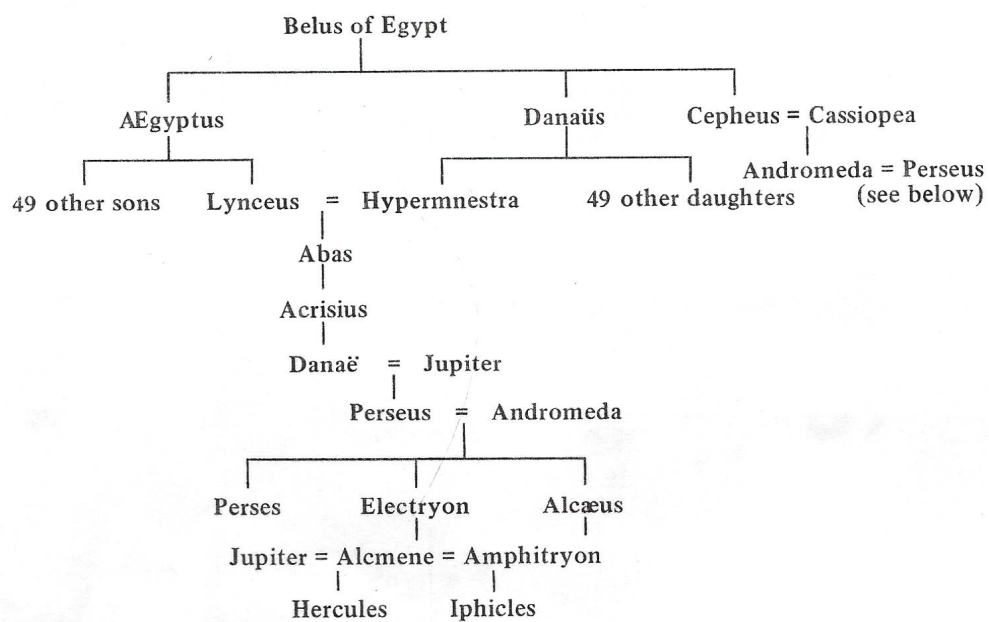


TABLE D: THE DYNASTY OF TANTALUS AND ITS CONNECTIONS

