

# Cla birth god female

[History](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Birth of Athena and Aphrodite al affiliation The Birth of Athena and Aphrodite The first thing which may be noticed about ancient Greek mythology is that its female goddesses are as strong and influential as its male gods. Each goddess is associated with a certain thing or aspect of life, which enables her to influence other gods and mortal people. All of them are powerful, ambitious, and knowledgeable, though some of them may be considered good while others are rather disobedient.

Although quite a big number of female deities may be found in Greek mythology, attention in the paper is focused on two of them, Athena and Aphrodite. The number of similarities between them is rather small.

Attention should be paid to their birth, first of all. It is worthy to begin with Aphrodite since she is known as the oldest Olympian god, at least according to Hesiod, a Greek poet whose works are a major source on Greek mythology in general. According to his version, Aphrodite appeared from the sea foam (aphros) which gathered around Titan Ouranos severed genitals. Ouranos son Kronos revenged his father for seducing his wife and castrated him. Thus, it is believed that Aphrodite grew from Ouranos blood and semen. As it also appears from this story, Aphrodite has no parents, in fact.

Nevertheless, another version may be found in works by Homer, the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey who lived around the same time as Hesiod.

According to him, Aphrodite is a daughter of Zeus, the ruler of the Olympians, and goddess Dione who is sometimes claimed to be an ancient Zeus wife. Diones personality is hard to define. In some myths, she is a Titaness. In others, she is referred to as an Oceanid. It is possible to mention some other myths which explain how Aphrodite was born, though Homers version still remains the best-known one.

<https://assignbuster.com/cia-birth-god-female/>

Athenas birth is believed to be among the strangest ones in ancient mythology. She is the daughter of Zeus and his first wife Metis, an Oceanid and the Titan goddess. It is also possible to assume that Athena and Aphrodite are sisters. According to prophesy made by an oracle of Gaea, Metis would give birth to a girl, whose wisdom and strength would be equal to Zeus own, and then to a boy who would later overthrow Zeus, which had actually happened to his father and grandfather. This worried Zeus and he decided to prevent the threat. He opened his mouth and then swallowed his wife and their unborn child. Nine months later Zeus felt a strong headache which made him scream out of pain. Hephaestus tried to help and opened Zeus skull with an ax. Zeus was not hurt, and the moment later Athena sprang out of his head. She was already an adult, wearing a full set of armor. According to myths, Athenas birth took place in Alipheira, an ancient city in southern Greece.

The first thing which may be noticed is that both goddesses never were kids. They were adults the moment they were born. Athena was wearing armor and carrying shield in her hand, while Aphrodite went out of the sea as a naked and completely developed woman of fascinating beauty. Although both goddesses acquire and lose their functions and attributes throughout various myths, their prevailing characteristics may be traced in myths describing birth of both of them. They do not seem to change or develop much from the moment they were born. No matter which myth with the involvement of any of them is taken into consideration, images of both Athena and Aphrodite remain the same. The image of Athena is always associated with armor and wisdom, while passionate Aphrodite is often represented in her naked beauty. The way they were born is especially

<https://assignbuster.com/cia-birth-god-female/>

important. In fact, attributes both goddesses are traditionally prescribed are associated with parts of human body they originate from. Thus, Aphrodite sprang from Ouranos severed testicles, which made her forever associated with sexuality and procreation. Athena, in turn, appeared from Zeus's head and was named a goddess of wisdom. That is what makes the birth of two goddesses similar. Their attributes and characteristics are inseparably associated with the way they were born. What is more, their images remain relatively unchanged throughout the successive myths from the moment of their birth.

The birth of Athena itself marks an important stage in Greek mythology in general. Researchers assume that her birth completes the evolution from a woman-dominated mythology to the one dominated by men. It is possible to say that Zeus takes over the exceptionally female function of childbearing, which, in fact, makes the role of women submissive. As a result, Athena never knows what care of a mother is, though still she is Zeus's favorite child. Researchers also believe that it is the reason why Athena is more prone to demonstrate masculine rather than feminine attributes. For Athena, men are either companions or rivals with whom she may share her ambitions and ideals. Unlike Aphrodite, she is not interested in any kind of intimate relationship with the opposite sex. On the contrast, Aphrodite is an embodiment of female features. Still, she cannot be regarded a wife. She is rather a lover, whose power is to some extent equal to the one of male gods - she can seduce almost anyone on Mount Olympus.

Although both Athena and Aphrodite may be fairly regarded one of the brightest and best known female personalities of Olympus, they never used to be friends. In fact, there are not so many similarities between them. In

order to see this it is worthy to pay attention to their orientation and spheres of influence in general. Aphrodite is a goddess of love with her name symbolizing sexual desire, passion, and procreation. She is famous for her numerous love affairs, both with gods, for instance with Ares, and with men, such as Anchises. At the same time, Athena is considered to be virgin. She has neither lovers nor husbands, unlike Aphrodite. This is the goddess of law, arts, crafts, and war, never engaged into love affairs. Being known for the title Athena Parthenos (Athena the Virgin), Athena tends to demonstrate prevailing male features - she is a wise and cold-blooded strategist, while Aphrodite may be characterized by exceptionally female features. Instead, she is associated with sexuality and childbearing. Thus, it is possible to see that areas of activities of both goddesses were never the same.

Thus, Aphrodite is a love deity, associated with sexual love and passion. In fact, the existence of love deities is rather common in mythology and may be traced in a fair number of polytheistic religions. Aphrodite, for instance, is often equated with Astarte, Semitic goddess of fertility, sexuality, and war. Interestingly, Astarte unites attributes of Aphrodite and Athena. It is possible to say that these two goddesses represent two aspects of the nature of women. On the one hand, this is a passionate lover and a mother. On the other hand, this is a friend and a wise advisor. Still, such a vision of both goddesses implies patriarchal orientation of mythology. Athena was given a birth by a man, while Aphrodite would be unable to carry out her mission in life. This emphasizes patriarchal nature of Greek mythology.