

U

Ucalegon (*Ούκαλέγων*). One of the elder statesmen of Troy who would watch the fighting on the plain from the city-walls 'like cicadas along a tree'. His house was among the first to be fired by the Greeks coming out of the *Trojan Horse. [Homer *Il* 3.148-53; Vergil *Aen* 3.310-1]

Ulysses or **Ulyxes**. *See* Odysseus.

Underworld. *See* Hades.

Urania (*Ούρανία*). One of the nine *Muses, born of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, and Zeus. She was the muse of astronomy, and usually portrayed seated, with her elbow resting on a large celestial globe, a pair of dividers in her hand, and the other hand pointing upwards to the sky. Urania was also an epithet of Aphrodite as 'heavenly' love associated with the soul, and distinguished from Aphrodite Pandemos, 'popular' and physical love by Pausanias in his speech on *Eros* in Plato's *Symposium*. [Apollodorus 1.3.1; Hesiod *Theog* 78; Plato *Symp* 180d-185c]

Uranus (*Ούρανός*, Latin 'Caelus' or 'Caelum'). In ancient times Uranus was the sphere or vault of the outer heaven, to which were attached the fixed stars; the name is now given to the most distant planet of the solar system. In myth Uranus was the oldest of the gods, being the first-born of *Gaia ('Earth') as well as her lover, covering her on every side. Gaia conceived by him the generation of twelve Titans, the three Cyclopes and the three Hundred-Handers, but as soon as each was born Uranus would not let the children come into the light, so that she was in great distress at the wrong done to her. So Gaia plotted with the youngest Titan *Cronus, gave him a jagged sickle, and hid him within her. When Uranus came at night to lie on her, Cronus came from his ambush and, with an act that was interpreted as an obvious allegory for the primeval separation of earth and sky, castrated his father. The genitals fell in the sea, and as the white foam spread around them, the goddess Aphrodite emerged and came ashore in Cyprus. The drops of blood from the wound that fell on earth were also fertile, and Earth bore from them the Erinyes, the giants and the ash-tree nymphs called Meliae. Cronus in turn was overthrown by his youngest son Zeus, and with the rise to power of the new gods the bright sky of *Ouranos* was allotted to Zeus as his portion. [Hesiod *Theog* 126-7, 167-91; Homer *Il* 15.192]

Ursa Major (Greek *Ἄρκτος*, Latin 'Septentriones' or 'Triones'). The constellation of the Great Bear, known in Homer also as *ἄμαξα* ('wagon'). With Ursa Minor it is exceptional in not setting in the west, but circles around the pole, and so also has the name Helice (*Ἑλίκη* 'revolving'). The Latin Septentriones means 'seven threshing oxen' who plod a circular path. The constellation is connected with that of Bootes ('ox-driver'), later renamed Arktouros or Arktophylax ('guardian of the bear'); the word for 'Arctic' is also derived from the 'bear' constellation. [Cicero *ND* 2.105 (Aratus); Homer *Il* 18.487, *Od* 5.273; Hyginus *Astr* 2.1; Vergil *Georg* 1.245-6] *See* Callisto, Constellation *I*.

Ursa Minor. (Greek *Κυνόσουρα*, and also *Φοινίκη*). The constellation of the Little Bear, and named after the Greek nymph Cynosura (whose name means 'dog's tail'). She and Helice were nymphs who nursed the infant Zeus on Mount Ida, but the names were confused with those of Phoenice and Callisto, and Ursa Minor was then also explained as a second transformation of Helice/Callisto by Artemis. Thales, the first philosopher, is said to have studied this

constellation, and to have advised navigating by it as more accurate than Ursa Major, this was the Phoenician practice, and so might account for the name *Phoenice*. [Aratus 31-37; *Catastr* 2; Hyginus *Astr* 2.2; Manilius 1.299-301, 2.30; schol *Il* 18.847] See Constellation 2.