

## CLAS109.07 FROM HERM TO HERMES

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**M** Maurizio ch.7.1 HISTORY— *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*  
*synchronous*

before class: skim HISTORY for context; refer to leading questions; focus on ancient texts

Active Reading **FOCUS** • *H.Hom.4*, p296-309

NB read for one hour, taking notes (fill in active reading worksheet)

RAW notes & post discussion question • B4@11h00

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**W** Maurizio ch.7.3 COMPARE— *Hymn to Thoth*  
*asynchronous*

before class: skim COMPARE for context; refer to leading questions; focus on ancient text

Active Reading **FOCUS** • **CR07** *Thoth* (Lichtheim 1976: 102-103, *NOT* Maurizio)

Active Reading **FOCUS** • **CR07** Plato *Phaedrus* 270b-278e (Plat.*Phaed.*, *NOT* Maurizio)

NB read for one hour, taking notes (fill in worksheet); finish previous as necessary

WATCH Lecture 06.2 • B4@12h00

RAW notes & post discussion question • B4@12h00

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**F** Maurizio ch.7.2 Theory—Mind Structures & Archetypes

SKIM Maurizio ch.7.4 Hermaphroditus

*synchronous*

before class: skim THEORY for context; refer to leading questions; summarize modern text

tl; dr • Hyde 1998, p313-319

tl; dr notes & post discussion responses (on each, *Hermes* & *Thoth*) • B4@11h00

Q07 • MAP & IDs (p.283, p.333)

FINAL notes • B4@23h59

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### HERMES & HESTIA

How does myth/folktale represent the culture hero (i.e. the trickster)?

How does myth represent religious ritual?

How does myth represent civic order?

How does myth represent structural oppositions?



# Statue Inscription of Haremhab • MMA 23.10.1<sup>1</sup>

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James P. Allen

Haremhab was a royal scribe and general of the army under Tutankhamun. He continued to serve during the reign of Ay and eventually succeeded Ay as king. This statue was made before Haremhab ascended the throne. By having himself depicted as a scribe, Haremhab declares himself to be among the elite group of literate individuals, thus following a tradition more than a thousand years old of depicting great officials as men of wisdom and learning.

He sits erect, but relaxed, his gaze slightly down. Across his knees he unrolls a papyrus scroll on which he has composed a hymn to the god Thoth, patron of scribes. A shell containing ink lies on his left knee. Over his left shoulder is a strap with a miniature scribe's kit attached to each end. A figure of the god Amun is incised on his forearm, perhaps indicating a tattoo.

In this statue the unlined, youthful face is belied by the potbelly and the folds of flesh beneath the breasts. These artistic conventions indicate that the subject has reached the age of wisdom. Although the scribal pose exhibits the frontal orientation common to all formal Egyptian statue, it may be appreciated more fully as a piece of sculpture in the round since it has no back pillar. The youthful face reflects the features seen on many statues depicting Tutankhamun (MMA 50.6), and the style of this magnificent life-size sculpture retains some of the softness and naturalism of the earlier Amarna period while looking forward to later Ramesside art.

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## **base (to right):**

(1) An “offering that the King gives” of Thoth, the Lord of Hieroglyphs, Lord of Khemenu,<sup>2</sup> Weigher of Truth, Conveyor of Re in the Night-barque.<sup>3</sup> May you grant response to a matter in its exactitude. I am an exact one of the court: every crime is reported to me — a perceptive tongue, putting it right. I am one who fixes laws for the King, who gives instruction to the court, wise in my speech. (2) There is nothing I do not know. I am a guide for everyone, who shows every person his way. I do not neglect what has been assigned me. I am one who informs the Lord of the Two Lands, a successful speaker of every neglected thing, who does not ignore anything the King says. I am the herald of the judgement council. I do not forget the plans of His Incarnation. For the *ka*<sup>4</sup> of the hereditary noble, royal scribe Haremhab,<sup>5</sup> justified.

## **base (to left):**

(1) An “offering that the King gives” of Ptah South of His Wall, of Sekhmet, beloved of Ptah, of Ptah-Sokar, Lord of the Secret Chamber, and of Osiris, Lord of Rosetau.<sup>6</sup> May you (all) grant that my *ba*<sup>7</sup> come forth by day to see the solar disk. May you hear (my) request for him every day, like the spirits you made spirits. May you (Re) command me to follow you day and night like all those you favor, because I have been proper to the god since (2) I was upon the earth,

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from J. Allen translation, with supplements and notes from M. Lichtheim (1976: 102-103, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, II: The New Kingdom*).

<sup>2</sup> Khemenu (“City of the Eight,” i.e. of the Ogdoad), Greek Hermopolis, modern al-Ašmūnain

<sup>3</sup> solar-barque, which carries the sun through nightly chaotic threats to its continued existence.

<sup>4</sup> “life force,” or double.

<sup>5</sup> alternatively Horemhab or Horemheb (“Horus-is-in-Jubilation”), ruler of Dynasty 18 (Late Bronze) Egypt (ca. 1319-1292 BCE) who led the restoration of religious orthodoxy following the Amarna Age; dedicated during his previous service as general and scribe under Ay and Tutankhamun.

<sup>6</sup> necropolis of the Giza plateau.

<sup>7</sup> “soul” or “spirit,” represented as a bird.

satisfying him with order every day: I have repudiated evil before him. Never have I [done evil] since I was born, for I am one who is steady of heart before the god, one conclusive of heart, one peaceful of heart when he hears the Truth. May you (all) cause me to be in the crew of Osiris's boat on the feast of the Region of Peqer.<sup>8</sup> For the *ka* of the hereditary noble, sole companion, deputy of the king in front of the Two Lands, royal scribe Haremhab, justified.

**scroll:**

(1) Adoration of Thoth — the son of Re, the moon beautiful in emergence, lord of appearances, who illuminates the gods — by the hereditary noble, high official, fanbearer on the King's right, (2) chief general, royal scribe Haremhab, justified, saying:

Hail to thee, Moon: Thoth,  
Bull in Hermopolis, dwelling in (3) Hesret,<sup>9</sup>  
Passer-by of the gods!<sup>10</sup>  
Knower of secrets,  
Establisher of their utterance,  
Who distinguishes one report from (4) another,  
Who judges everyone;  
Wise one in the barque of millions,<sup>11</sup>  
Who waits for human beings,  
Who knows a person by (5) his utterance,  
Who denounces an affair against its doer.  
He who satisfies Re,  
Who informs the Sole Lord,  
Letting<sup>12</sup> him know everything that has happened (during the night)  
(6) When he calls from the sky at dawn,  
not forgetting the report of yesterday('s events).

(7) Sprout of the night-barque,  
who makes the day-barque content,  
who stretches out his arm at the prow of the boat  
Pure-Faced, who takes the stern-rope (8) of the day-barque for him,  
rejoicing<sup>13</sup> as the night-barque rejoices  
on the feast of crossing the sky.  
Who overthrows the Rebel Serpent<sup>14</sup>  
(9) And breaks open the western horizon,  
While the Ennead<sup>15</sup> in the night-barque give adoration to Thoth,  
Saying (10) to him: "Hail, [Son of] of Re,

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<sup>8</sup> mod. Umm al-Qa'ab, necropolis of Abdu (Gk. Abydos).

<sup>9</sup> precinct sacred to Thoth in Khemenu (Gk. Hermopolis, mod. al-Ašmūnain).

<sup>10</sup> literally, one who "opens a place for the gods."

<sup>11</sup> solar-barque.

<sup>12</sup> the scribe reverted to the second person and wrote "you let him know."

<sup>13</sup> sentence division is problematic.

<sup>14</sup> serpent Apopis, representing the forces of chaos.

<sup>15</sup> The Nine, primeval deities of On (Gk Heliopolis), ruled by the solar deity Re-Atum.

Whom Re favors for what he does!"  
The gods have become elated,  
(11) repeating (12) what your *ka* loves  
You (13) open the way for the place of the barque  
You do (14) what is necessary against that Rebel Serpent,  
lopping off his head, shattering his *ba*,  
taking (15) his essence into the fire.  
You are the god who performs his slaughter.  
Nothing can be done without you,  
The orderly one, son of Order, who came forth (16) from her flesh,  
Savior of Harakhty,<sup>16</sup>  
Who enters On<sup>17</sup> wise,  
Placemaker of the gods, who knows secrets,  
And reveals (17) matters.

Let us praise Thoth,<sup>18</sup>  
The accurate plummet in the balance,  
Who rejects (18) disorder,  
And accepts the one who is not inclined to transgression  
The vizier who judges affairs,  
Who resolves conflict (19) peacefully,  
The scribe of the mat, who fixes the scroll,  
Who drives off falsehood  
But accepts the bearer of a healthy greeting,  
(20) Who supports the oath-taker,  
Wise amidst the Ennead,  
Who raises up the one who has been ignored,  
Who has a wise face for one who (21) has gone astray.  
He who remembers the fleeting moment,  
Who reports the hours of the night,  
And whose words (22) remain forever  
Who enters the netherworld (*dat*),  
Finds those in it,  
And registers them on his list.

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<sup>16</sup> mid-day sun (Re-Harakhti), manifest as a hawk.

<sup>17</sup> or lunu, center of solar worship (Gk. Heliopolis).

<sup>18</sup> The form "let us" in the invitation to praise god, so common in biblical psalms, is rare in Egyptian hymns, where the usual forms are "I will" or "ye shall."



## Plato of Athens *Phaedrus* 270b-278e (370 BCE)

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Benjamin Jowett<sup>1</sup>

Socrates is having a conversation with his young pupil, Phaedrus under a plane-tree, by the banks of the Ilisses. Socrates presents the myth following a discussion of what forms of rhetoric and writing are pleasing to the gods. The myth, which involves an Egyptian king, Thamus, and Theuth (Thoth), the god of writing. One lesson seems to be that some truths can only be communicated personally, by oral tradition, and in this respect writing is over-valued (cf. Plato's Seventh Letter). Psychologically, perhaps the myth is making a statement about similar epistemological limitations of the word-oriented parts of the human mind.

SOCRATES

<sup>[274b]</sup> We have, then, said enough about the art of speaking and that which is artless.

PHAEDRUS

Assuredly.

SOCRATES

But we have still to speak of propriety and impropriety in writing, how it should be done and how it is improper, have we not?

PHAEDRUS

Yes.

SOCRATES

Do you know how you can act or speak about rhetoric so as to please God best?

PHAEDRUS

Not at all; do you?

SOCRATES

<sup>[274c]</sup> I can tell something I have heard of the ancients; but whether it is true, they only know. But if we ourselves should find it out, should we care any longer for human opinions?

PHAEDRUS

A ridiculous question! But tell me what you say you have heard.

SOCRATES

I heard, then, that at Naucratis in Egypt, was one of the ancient gods of that country, the one whose sacred bird is called the ibis, and the name of the god himself was Theuth. He it was who <sup>[274d]</sup> invented numbers and arithmetic and geometry and astronomy, also draughts and dice, and, most important of all, letters. Now the king of all Egypt at that time was the god Thamus, who lived in the great city of the upper region, which the Greeks call the Egyptian Thebes, and they call the god himself Ammon. To him came Theuth to show his inventions, saying that they ought to be imparted to the other Egyptians. But Thamus asked what use there was in each, and as Theuth enumerated their uses, expressed praise or blame, according as he approved <sup>[274e]</sup> or disapproved. The story goes that Thamus said many things to Theuth in praise or blame of the various arts, which it would take too long to repeat; but when they came to the letters, "This invention, O king," said Theuth, "will make the Egyptians wiser and will improve their memories; for it is an elixir of

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<sup>1</sup> Plato. 1925. *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, IX. Harold N. Fowler, Translator. Loeb Classical Library 36. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

memory and wisdom that I have discovered.” But Thamus replied, “Most ingenious Theuth, one man has the ability to beget arts, but the ability to judge of their usefulness or harmfulness to their users belongs to another; <sup>[275a]</sup> and now you, who are the father of letters, have been led by your affection to ascribe to them a power the opposite of that which they really possess. For this invention will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practice their memory. Their trust in writing, produced by external characters which are no part of themselves, will discourage the use of their own memory within them. You have invented an elixir not of memory, but of reminding; and you offer your pupils the appearance of wisdom, not true wisdom, for they will read many things without instruction and will therefore seem <sup>[275b]</sup> to know many things, when they are for the most part ignorant and hard to get along with, since they are not wise, but only appear wise.

PHAEDRUS

Socrates, you easily make up stories of Egypt or any country you please.

SOCRATES

They used to say, my friend, that the words of the oak in the holy place of Zeus at Dodona were the first prophetic utterances. The people of that time, not being so wise as you young folks, were content in their simplicity to hear an oak <sup>[275c]</sup> or a rock, provided only it spoke the truth; but to you, perhaps, it makes a difference who the speaker is and where he comes from, for you do not consider only whether his words are true or not.

PHAEDRUS

Your rebuke is just; and I think the Theban is right in what he says about letters.

SOCRATES

He who thinks, then, that he has left behind him any art in writing, and he who receives it in the belief that anything in writing will be clear and certain, would be an utterly simple person, and in truth ignorant of the prophecy of Ammon, if he thinks <sup>[275d]</sup> written words are of any use except to remind him who knows the matter about which they are written.

PHAEDRUS

Very true.

SOCRATES

Writing, Phaedrus, has this strange quality, and is very like painting; for the creatures of painting stand like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence. And so it is with written words; you might think they spoke as if they had intelligence, but if you question them, wishing to know about their sayings, they always say only one and the same thing. And every word, when <sup>[275e]</sup> once it is written, is bandied about, alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to protect or help itself.

PHAEDRUS

You are quite right about that, too.

SOCRATES

[276a] Now tell me; is there not another kind of speech, or word, which shows itself to be the legitimate brother of this bastard one, both in the manner of its begetting and in its better and more powerful nature?

PHAEDRUS

What is this word and how is it begotten, as you say?

SOCRATES

The word which is written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent.

PHAEDRUS

You mean the living and breathing word of him who knows, of which the written word may justly be called the image.

SOCRATES

[276b] Exactly. Now tell me this. Would a sensible husbandman, who has seeds which he cares for and which he wishes to bear fruit, plant them with serious purpose in the heat of summer in some garden of Adonis, and delight in seeing them appear in beauty in eight days, or would he do that sort of thing, when he did it at all, only in play and for amusement? Would he not, when he was in earnest, follow the rules of husbandry, plant his seeds in fitting ground, and be pleased when those which he had sowed reached their perfection in the eighth month?

PHAEDRUS

[276c] Yes, Socrates, he would, as you say, act in that way when in earnest and in the other way only for amusement.

SOCRATES

And shall we suppose that he who has knowledge of the just and the good and beautiful has less sense about his seeds than the husbandman?

PHAEDRUS

By no means.

SOCRATES

Then he will not, when in earnest, write them in ink, sowing them through a pen with words which cannot defend themselves by argument and cannot teach the truth effectually.

PHAEDRUS

No, at least, probably not.

SOCRATES

[276d] No. The gardens of letters he will, it seems, plant for amusement, and will write, when he writes, to treasure up reminders for himself, when he comes to the forgetfulness of old age, and for others who follow the same path, and he will be pleased when he sees them putting forth tender leaves. When others engage in other amusements, refreshing themselves with banquets and kindred entertainments, he will pass the time in such pleasures as I have suggested.

PHAEDRUS

[276e] A noble pastime, Socrates, and a contrast to those base pleasures, the pastime of the man who can find amusement in discourse, telling stories about justice, and the other subjects of which you speak.



SOCRATES

Yes, Phaedrus, so it is; but, in my opinion, serious discourse about them is far nobler, when one employs the dialectic method and plants and sows in a fitting soul intelligent words which are able to help themselves and him <sup>[277a]</sup> who planted them, which are not fruitless, but yield seed from which there spring up in other minds other words capable of continuing the process for ever, and which make their possessor happy, to the farthest possible limit of human happiness.

PHAEDRUS

Yes, that is far nobler.

SOCRATES

And now, Phaedrus, since we have agreed about these matters, we can decide the others.

PHAEDRUS

What others?

SOCRATES

Those which brought us to this point <sup>[277b]</sup> through our desire to investigate them, for we wished to examine into the reproach against Lysias as a speechwriter,<sup>2</sup> and also to discuss the speeches themselves and see which were the products of art and which were not. I think we have shown pretty clearly what is and what is not a work of art.

PHAEDRUS

Yes, I thought so, too; but please recall to my mind what was said.

SOCRATES

A man must know the truth about all the particular things of which he speaks or writes, and must be able to define everything separately; then when he has defined them, he must know how to divide them by classes until further division is impossible; and in the same way he must understand the nature of the soul, <sup>[277c]</sup> must find out the class of speech adapted to each nature, and must arrange and adorn his discourse accordingly, offering to the complex soul elaborate and harmonious discourses, and simple talks to the simple soul. Until he has attained to all this, he will not be able to speak by the method of art, so far as speech can be controlled by method, either for purposes of instruction or of persuasion. This has been taught by our whole preceding discussion.

PHAEDRUS

Yes, certainly, that is just about our result.

SOCRATES

How about the question whether it is a fine or a disgraceful thing to be a speaker or writer <sup>[277d]</sup> and under what circumstances the profession might properly be called a disgrace or not? Was that made clear a little while ago when we said—

PHAEDRUS

What?

SOCRATES

That if Lysias or anyone else ever wrote or ever shall write, in private, or in public as lawgiver, a political document, and in writing it believes that it possesses great certainty and clearness, then it is a disgrace to the writer,

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<sup>2</sup> 11

whether anyone says so, or not. For whether one be awake or asleep, ignorance of right and wrong and good and bad <sup>[277e]</sup> is in truth inevitably a disgrace, even if the whole mob applaud it.

PHAEDRUS

That is true.

SOCRATES

But the man who thinks that in the written word there is necessarily much that is playful, and that no written discourse, whether in meter or in prose, deserves to be treated very seriously (and this applies also to the recitations of the rhapsodes, delivered to sway people's minds, without opportunity for questioning and teaching), <sup>[278a]</sup> but that the best of them really serve only to remind us of what we know; and who thinks that only in words about justice and beauty and goodness spoken by teachers for the sake of instruction and really written in a soul is clearness and perfection and serious value, that such words should be considered the speaker's own legitimate offspring, first the word within himself, if it be found there, and secondly <sup>[278b]</sup> its descendants or brothers which may have sprung up in worthy manner in the souls of others, and who pays no attention to the other words—that man, Phaedrus, is likely to be such as you and I might pray that we ourselves may become.

PHAEDRUS

By all means that is what I wish and pray for.

SOCRATES

We have amused ourselves with talk about words long enough. Go and tell Lysias that you and I came down to

the fountain and sacred place of the nymphs, <sup>[278c]</sup> and heard words which they told us to repeat to Lysias and anyone else who composed speeches, and to Homer or any other who has composed poetry with or without musical accompaniment, and third to Solon and whoever has written political compositions which he calls laws: If he has composed his writings with knowledge of the truth, and is able to support them by discussion of that which he has written, and has the power to show by his own speech that the written words are of little worth, such a man ought not <sup>[278d]</sup> to derive his title from such writings, but from the serious pursuit which underlies them.

PHAEDRUS

What titles do you grant them then?

SOCRATES

I think, Phaedrus, that the epithet “wise” is too great and befits God alone; but the name “philosopher,” that is, “lover of wisdom,” or something of the sort would be more fitting and modest for such a man.

PHAEDRUS

And quite appropriate.

SOCRATES

On the other hand, he who has nothing more valuable than the things he has composed or written, turning his words up and down at his leisure, <sup>[278e]</sup> adding this phrase and taking that away, will you not properly address him as poet or speech writer or law maker?