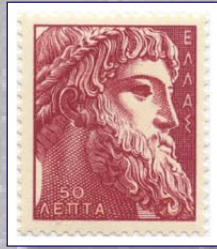


Birth of the Milky Way

In Greek myth, Zeus is the king of the gods and his wife, Hera was the goddess and queen of the gods. It seems Zeus had a wandering eye and found the mortal woman Alceme very attractive.



Zeus
King of the gods

Acting on impulse, Zeus changed his physical shape to resemble her husband returning from battle. That evening time slowed to the length of three and Hercules was thus conceived.



Zeus with ladder
climbing to
Alceme's window

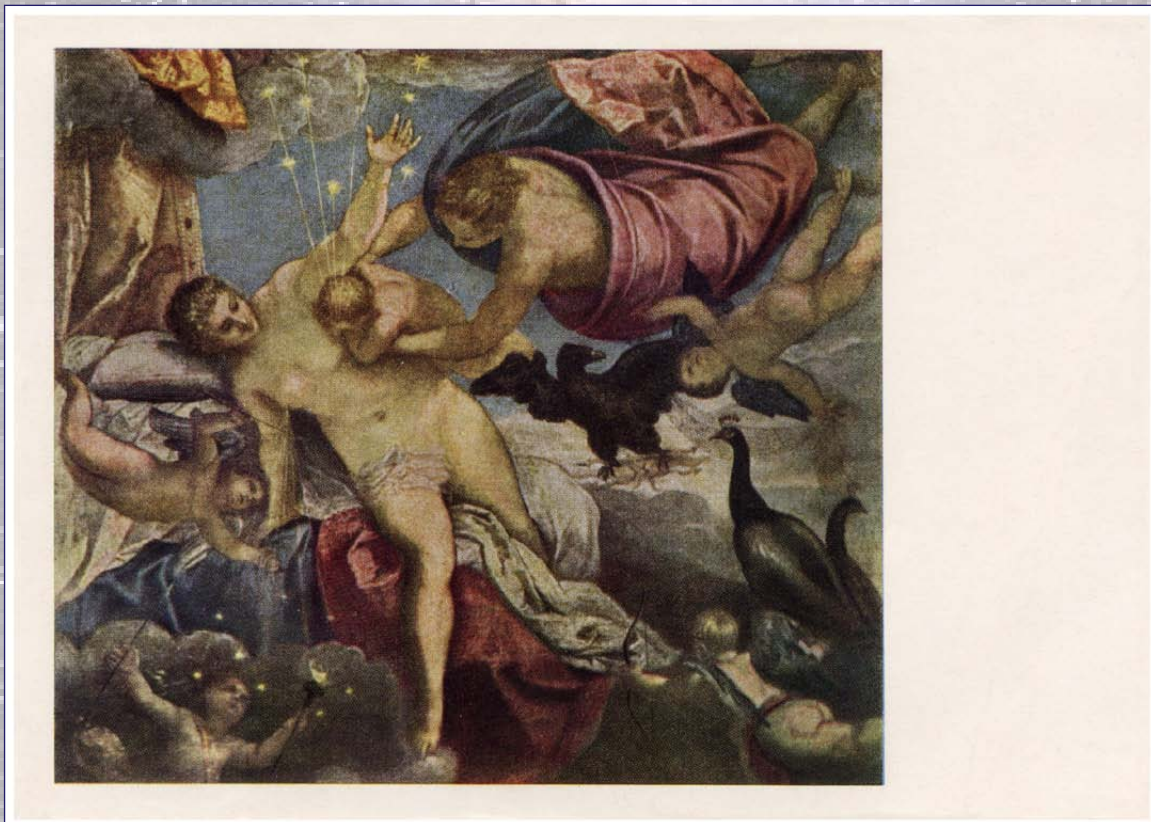
Hermes, messenger of the gods, was instructed by Zeus to put Hercules on sleeping Hera's breast to suckle, thus making him a demigod and later immortal. Hera awoke and pushed Hercules away allowing milk to spill into the heavens and the droplets formed the stars of the Milkyway.



Milkyway with
millions of stars



Hera's milk spillis into the heavens



Russian postcard depicting 'Birth of the Milky Way', Artist Jacobo Tintoretto (1518-1594)
Hera pushing Hercules away and milk then spilling into the heavens
Printed by Lifo. National - Porto, Potugal in 1965, Edition of 15,500, lithographic printing