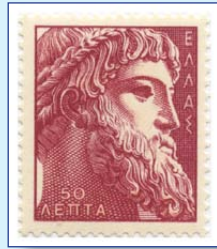


Birth of the Milky Way

Hera Seeds the Stars

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

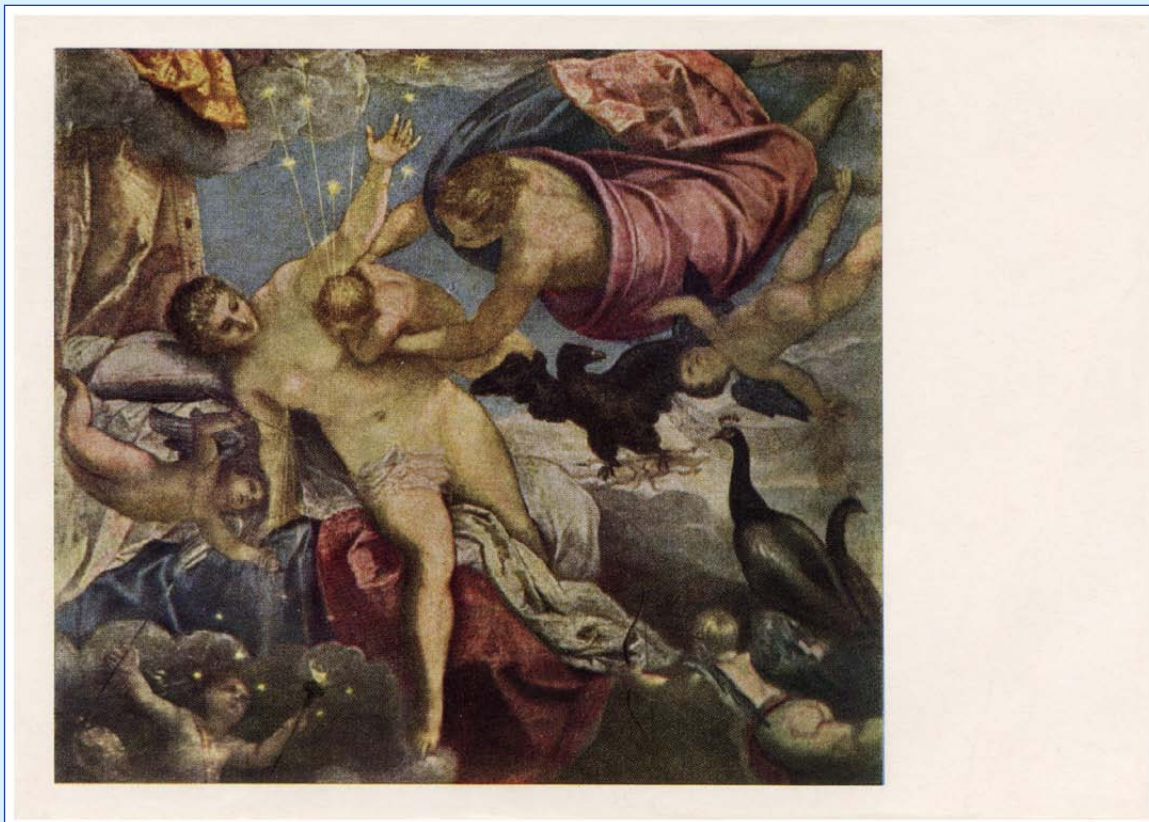


Hera's milk spillis into the heavens

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



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 Lito. National - Porto, Potugal in 1965, Edition of 15,500, lithographic printing