

# An Iron Meteorite with Micro-Sculpted Patterns of Greek Mythology

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**Abstract:** An iron meteorite collected from the floor of Daling River, Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province, northeast of China reveals many micro images of ancient Greek mythology from different angle, showing the ideas, arts and technology of 2000-3000 years before.

**Keywords:** meteorite, Greek mythology, Daling River, micro-sculpture

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An iron meteorite with micro-sculpted patterns of Greek mythology, collected from the floor of Daling River, Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province, China in recent years, dark colored, 15.5cm long and 11.9cm wide, 3.4kg in weight, reveals many images of Greek mythology from different angle. Surface of the meteorite carries great knowledge and information from ancient human society, seemingly clumsy but extremely delicate in detail, showing the ideas, arts and technology of 2000-3000 years before.

The main shape of the iron meteorite is a face's left side of a young girl lying on her back, good-shaped, eye slightly closing, and mouth wide opening as if shouting or singing. The girl should be Nyx, Night Goddess of Greek mythology. This iron meteorite is a highly integrated historical and cultural carrier, which presents different micro images in different sunshine, angles, temperatures, or surface conditions. Hundreds of personals are orderly arranged, together with three-dimensional images colorful and drizzling. These personals belong to ancient Greek mythology, including the members of Nyx's family, which shows that the Daling River has a direct relationship with ancient Greek civilization. The meteorite found in Daling river is a remain of the ancient worship of Water God, which reflects the folk that worshipping Water God would eliminating bad luck in the history of China.

Nyx is Night Goddess in ancient Greek mythology, a daughter of Chaos. She gives birth to three children with her brother Erebus, the god of darkness, including Space God Aether and Charon, the god of Styx. She also gives birth to a large number of gods alone. Nyx has a lofty position, and she is a symbol of sky, daylight, dreams, death, sleep, fate, pain, aging, vengeance and so on. On the surface of the meteorite, Nyx is a young and beautiful woman with a completely black body, which symbolizes the dark night.

Micro-sculpture is the technical means of information processing on the surface of an object in ancient society. Specifically, it depicts characters, character stories, spirits, plants, insects and animals on the surface which is so called "water mark" or "secret mark", and then uses optical instruments to observe and appreciate. It should be the ancestor of modern compact disc etching technology. Ancient China and ancient Greece are countries with highly developed surface information technology, and the craftsmanship has reached the millimeter, micrometer level, and even more delicate. The historical and cultural information left on the surfaces of these artifacts is a visualized material that records the historical features of ancient societies. The micro-carved characters on the meteorite are three-dimensional and dynamic, and a small amount are selected for discussion here.



Figure 1. A part of the iron meteorite micro-carved with Greek mythology



Figure 2. Left side of Nyx's face

## 1. Dionysus

Dionysus, the god of wine and revelry, is the son of Semele and Zeus. On its surface, Dionysus is a happy short-bearded man with a square face and piercing eyes. There are three-dimensional heads of a man and a woman on his eyes, which should be his father Zeus and mother Semele.



Figure 3. A three-dimensional portrait of Dionysus

## 2. Priapos

Priapos is Orchard God. On its surface, his image is a bearded man, wearing a bowler hat, holding fruit in his hands.

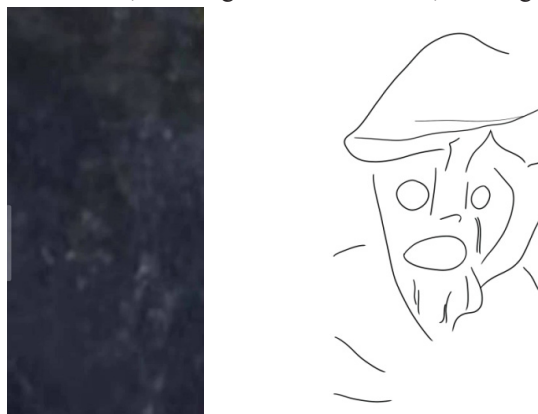


Figure 4. A three-dimensional portrait of Priapos

## 3. Euterpe

Euterpe, Music Goddess, one of the Nine Goddess of Muses, goddesses of art and science, the daughter of Zeus and Memory Goddess Mnemosyne, represents the myths expressed through traditional music, dance, and poetry. On its surface, a goddess is holding a lyre in her hands and playing, which should be Music Goddess Euterpe.

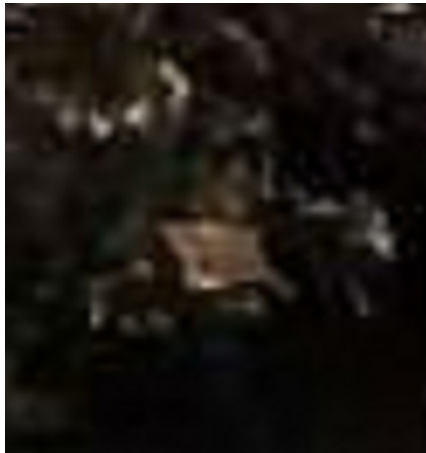


Figure 5. A three-dimensional portrait of Music Goddess Euterpe



#### 4. Thanatos

Thanatos is the god of death in ancient Greek mythology, in charge of the power of death with a cold temperament. On its surface, he is a thin, short-bearded man with energetic eyes and a slightly opened mouth, gnashing his teeth.

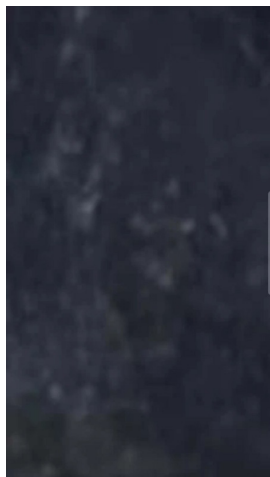


Figure 6. A three-dimensional portrait of Tanatos



#### 5. Ernie

Ernie is the goddess of war and destruction, blood-thirsty, the daughter of Ares. On its surface, she is a young woman drinking with a cup in front of her mouth.



Figure 7. A three-dimensional portrait of Ernie



## 6. Graces

Graces, the three beautiful goddesses, Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne, represent the charming, graceful and beautiful qualities in ancient Greek mythology. They are singers and dancers, bringing beauty and joy to the world. On its surface, the three goddesses are three young women standing side by side.

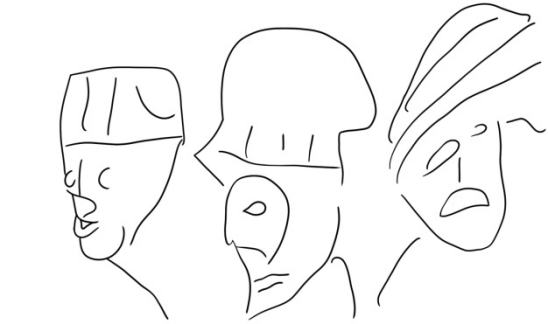


Figure 8. A three-dimensional portrait of Graces

## 7. Ate

Ate is the goddess in ancient Greek mythology who bewitches people to irrationality, leading the arrogant people to elimination. Ate is the eldest daughter of Zeus. On its surface, she is a woman with long hair and a round face, and looks in great joy.

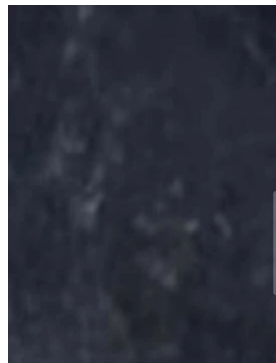


Figure 9. A three-dimensional portrait of Ate

## 8. Prometheus and Asia

Prometheus is the god of wisdom, the ancestor of mankind. He has created mankind, brought fire and taught many knowledge and skills to mankind. On its surface, he is a man with a long face and a short beard, looking up into the heaven. Next to him, there is a face's left side, who should be his wife Asia.



Figure 10. A three-dimensional portrait of Prometheus and Asia

## 9. Eris, Hysminai and Androktasiai

Eris, sister of Ares, is the goddess of disputes, spreading plagues and disasters in the world. On its surface, she is a happy and beautiful woman with very elegant eyes, wearing a sun hat.



Figure 11. A three-dimensional portrait of Eris

Hysminai is the goddess of battle, daughter of Eris. On its surface, she is a woman with big eyes, opening her mouth and showing her teeth, which should be an expression of fighting.



Figure 12. A three-dimensional portrait of Battle Goddess Hysminai

Androktasiai is the goddess of slaughter, daughter of Eris. On its surface, she is a young woman in great anger.



Figure 13. A three-dimensional portrait of Androktasiai

## 10. Pan

Pan is the god of mountains and forests. On its surface, he is a black man with a thin face, wearing a round hat, and looks lively and cute.

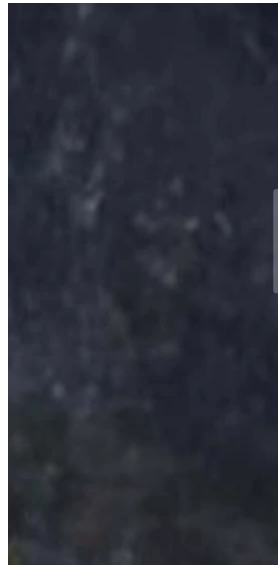


Figure 14. Pan's three-dimensional portrait

## 11. Ares

Ares, the god of war, the god of strength and bravery, represents the tyranny, blood of war and the disaster of mankind, one of the twelve gods of Olympus, the son of Zeus and Hera. On its surface, Ares is glaring his eyes, opening his mouth, and looks in a state of desperately fighting.

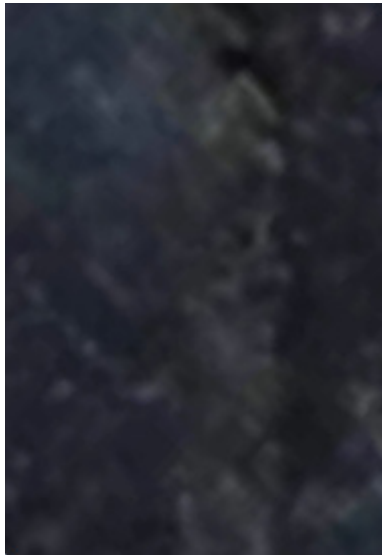


Figure 15. A three-dimensional portrait of Ares

## 12. Supnos

Whenever night falls, Supnos, the god of sleep, follows his mother Nyx and flies across the sky to make the world fall into sleep. On its surface, Supnos is a sleepy man.

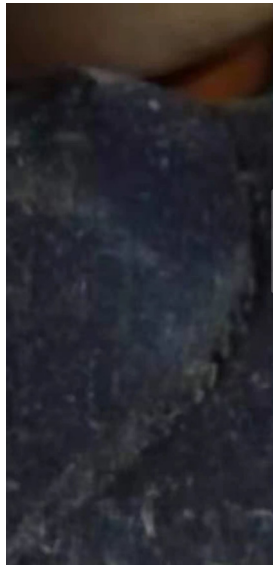


Figure 16. A three-dimensional portrait of Sleeping God

### 13. Hera the Queen

Hera, the Queen of ancient Greek mythology, the wife of Zeus, the patron god of noble women, is responsible for marriage, childbirth, and defending the family. She is also the goddess who is naturally jealous. On its surface, the goddess of jealousy is a young and beautiful woman with a look of jealousy, teeth clenched.

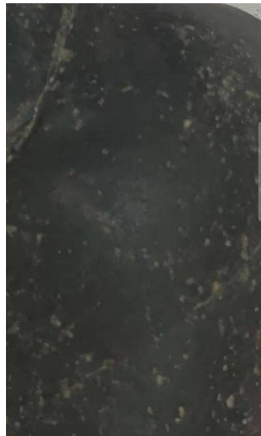


Figure 17. A three-dimensional portrait of the goddess of jealousy

### 14. Ores

Ores, the goddess of worry, sorrow and anxiety, the daughter of Nix, makes people melancholy and disturbed, and produces negative emotions. She is the goddess of sorrow. On its surface, she is a mid-aged woman with an expression of anxiety.

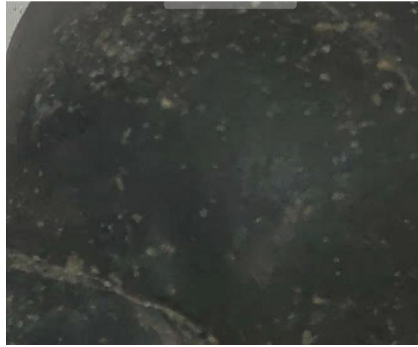


Figure 18. A three-dimensional portrait of Ores

## 15. Hundred-Eyed Giant Argos

Argos, a hundred-eyed giant in ancient Greek mythology, with many eyes on his head. On its surface, the hundred-eyed giant is a tall, strong young man with countless eyes on his head.



Figure 19. Hundred-Eyed Giant Argos

## 16. Deimos

Deimos, Son of Ares, is the god of war. According to Hesiod, the god of fear is Deimos, the second son of Ares and Aphrodite. On its surface, Deimos is a black man with wide eyes and teeth, showing an expression of extreme fear.

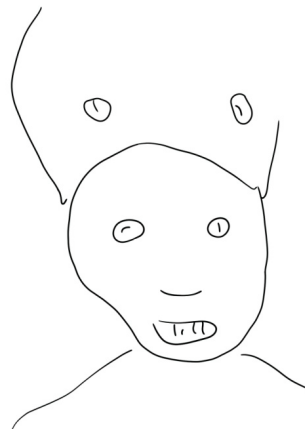
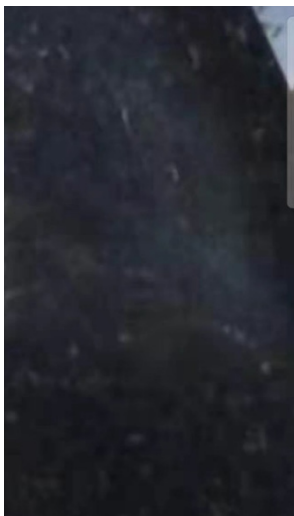


Figure 20. A three-dimensional portrait of the god of fear



## 17. Hades and Persephone

Hades is the ruler of hell and underworld, brother of Zeus. Zeus is in charge of the heavens, Poseidon is in charge of the sea, and Hades is in charge of the underworld. On its surface, the young couple are face to face.



Figure 21. A three-dimensional portrait of Hades and his Queen

## 18. Melinoë

Merinoë is the goddess of ghosts, conspiracy and souls, the daughter of Persephone and Zeus.

Merinoë holds a magic wand, accompanying the night to fall into the world, terrifying the world and taking away the souls of creatures. She appears like a ghost, sometimes visible and sometimes invisible, sometimes dazzling in the dark and attacking from the dark. On its surface, Merinoë is a goddess accompanied by many ghosts.



Figure 22. A three-dimensional portrait of the ghost goddess

## 19. Moira the three goddess of destiny

Moira is the general term for the three goddesses of destiny. The three goddesses are Cloto, Lachesis and Atropos. Among them, the youngest Cloto is in charge of the future and weaving the line of life, the second sister Lachesis is responsible for determining the length of the line of life, and the oldest Atropos is in charge of death, responsible for cutting the line of life. On its surface, Moira are three mid-aged women.



Figure 23. A three-dimensional portrait of the three goddesses of destiny

## 20. Charon

Charon, the god of Styx, son of Erebus and Nix, a man who used a small boat to carry ghosts across the river of Styx, usually portrayed as a bearded man or an old man. On its surface, he is a white-beard old man.



Figure 24. A three-dimensional portrait of Charon

Surface informationization is drawing and processing pictures on valuable historical relics, which refers to the gorgeous patterns and decorations, specifically, formed by various processes such as embossing, painting, micro-carving, gilding, making them an effective carrier of history and culture. In the Hongshan Cultural Area, northeast of China, the vessels of stone, jade, pottery, bone, meteorite and bronze have been found traces of surface processing. Moreover, the phenomenon of surface informationization is found in various historical and cultural systems in ancient China.

Iron meteorite came from the outside world, and the ancients paid huge imagination and hard work for it, which reflects the extremely high artistic standard. The characters on its surface are bright in color and strong in three-dimensionality. The characters at different levels are vivid and dazzling. The iron meteorite preserves the historical images of gods and kings, contains rich historical and cultural information, not only outstanding arts and crafts works, but also graphic historical documents.

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