Γανυμήδης

Perhaps the Angel of Service [and Synthesis] on the physical plane can be traced back to Ganymede, the son of a king according to Greek legend.

Price, John Randolph (2010-11-24). *Angels Within Us: A Spiritual Guide to the Twenty-Two Angels That Govern Our Everyday Lives* (p. 235). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Ganymede (mythology)

For other uses, see Ganymede.

In Greek mythology, **Ganymede** (/ˈgænɪˌmiːd/; /ˈgænɪˌmid/; Greek: Γανυμήδης, *Ganymēdēs*) is a divine hero whose homeland was Troy. Homer describes Ganymede as the most beautiful of mortals. He was the son of Tros of Dardania, from whose name "Troy" was supposed to derive, and of Callirrhoe. His brothers were Ilus and Assaracus. In one version of the myth, he is abducted by Zeus, in the form of an eagle, to serve as cup-bearer in Olympus. The myth was a model for the Greek social custom of *paiderastía*, the socially acceptable erotic relationship between a man and a youth. The Latin form of the name was **Catamitus** (and also "Ganymedes"), from which the English word "catamite" derives. [1]

The Abduction of Ganymede (ca. 1650), by Eustache Le Sueur

Myth

Ganymede was abducted by Zeus from Mount Ida, near Troy in Phrygia. $^{[2]}$ Ganymede had been tending sheep, a rustic or humble

pursuit characteristic of a hero's boyhood before his privileged status is revealed. Zeus either sent an eagle or turned himself into an eagle to transport the youth to Mount Olympus.



Roman-era relief depicting the eagle, Ganymede wearing his Phrygian cap, and a third figure, possibly his grieving father

In the *Iliad*, Zeus is said to have compensated Ganymede's father Tros by the gift of fine horses, "the same that carry the immortals", [3] delivered by the messenger god Hermes. Tros was consoled that his son was now immortal and would be the cupbearer for the gods, a position of much distinction. Walter Burkert found a precedent for the Ganymede myth on an Akkadian seal that depicts the hero-king Etana riding heavenwards on an eagle. [4]

In Olympus, Zeus granted him eternal youth and immortality and the office of cupbearer to the gods, supplanting Hebe. Edmund Veckenstedt associated Ganymede with the genesis of the intoxicating drink mead, which had a traditional origin in Phrygia. [5] All the gods were filled with joy to see the youth, except for Hera, Zeus's consort, who regarded Ganymede as a rival for her husband's affection. Zeus later put Ganymede in the sky as the constellation Aquarius, which is

associated with that of the Eagle (Aquila). A moon of Jupiter, the planet named for Zeus's Roman counterpart, was named Ganymede by astronomer Simon Marius. [6]

Ganymede was afterwards also regarded as the genius of the fountains of the Nile, the life-giving and fertilizing river. Thus the divinity that distributed drink to the gods in heaven became the genius who presided over the due supply of water on earth. Wikipedia: Citation needed

Plato accounts for the pederastic aspect of the myth by attributing its origin to Crete, where the social custom of *paiderastía* was supposed to have originated (see "Cretan pederasty"). [7] He has Socrates deny that Ganymede was the "catamite" of Zeus, and say the god loved him non-sexually for his $psych\bar{e}$, "mind" or "soul," giving the etymology of his name as ganu-, "taking pleasure," and $m\bar{e}d$ -, "mind." Ganymede, he points out, was the only one of Zeus's lovers who was granted immortality. [8]

In poetry, Ganymede became a symbol for the beautiful young male who attracted homosexual desire and love. He is not always portrayed as acquiescent: in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes, Ganymede is furious at the god Eros for having cheated him at the



Ganymede pouring Zeus a libation (Attic red-figure calyx krater by the Eucharides Painter, c. 490-480 BCE)

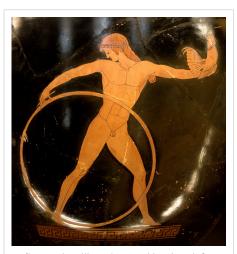
game of chance played with knucklebones, and Aphrodite scolds her son for "cheating a beginner." The Augustan poet Virgil portrays the abduction with pathos: the boy's aged tutors try in vain to draw him back to Earth, and his hounds bay uselessly at the sky. ^[9] The loyal hounds left calling after their abducted master is a frequent motif in visual depictions, and is referenced also by Statius:

Here the Phrygian hunter is borne aloft on tawny wings, Gargara's range sinks downwards as he rises, and Troy grows dim beneath him; sadly stand his comrades; vainly the hounds weary their throats with barking, pursue his shadow or bay at the clouds." [10]

In the arts

Ancient

One of the earliest depictions of Ganymede is a red-figure krater by the Berlin Painter in the Musée du Louvre. Zeus pursues Ganymede on one side, while on the other side the youth runs away, rolling along a hoop while holding aloft a crowing cock. In fifth-century Athens, vase-painters often depicted the mythological story, which was so suited to the all-male symposium or formal banquet. The Ganymede myth was treated in recognizable contemporary terms, illustrated with common behavior of homoerotic courtship rituals, as on a vase by the "Achilles Painter" where Ganymede also flees with a cock. Ganymede is usually depicted as a well-developed, muscular young man. Leochares (about 350 BCE), a Greek sculptor of Athens who was engaged with Scopas on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus cast a (lost) bronze group of Ganymede and the Eagle, a work that was held remarkable for its ingenious composition, which boldly ventured to the verge of what is allowed by the laws of sculpture, and also for its charming treatment of the youthful form as it soars into the air. It is apparently imitated in a well-known marble group in the Vatican, half



Ganymede rolling a hoop and bearing aloft a cockerel, a love-gift [11] from Zeus, who is pictured in pursuit on the obverse of a vase by the Berlin Painter (Attic red-figure krater, 500–490 BC)

life-size. Such Hellenistic gravity-defying feats were influential in the sculpture of the Baroque.

Renaissance and Baroque

In Shakespeare's As You Like It (1599), a comedy of mistaken identity in the magical setting of the Forest of Arden, Celia, dressed as a shepherdess, becomes "Aliena" (Latin "stranger", Ganymede's sister) and Rosalind, because she is

"more than common tall", dresses up as a boy, Ganymede, a well-known image to the audience. She plays on her ambiguous charm to seduce Orlando, but also (involuntarily) the shepherdess Phebe. Thus behind the conventions of Elizabethan theater in its original setting, the young boy playing the girl Rosalind dresses up as a boy and is then courted by another boy playing Phebe.

When painter-architect Baldassare Peruzzi included a panel of *The Rape of Ganymede* in a ceiling at the Villa Farnesina, Rome, (ca 1509-1514), Ganymede's long blond hair and girlish pose make him identifiable at first glance, though he grasps the eagle's wing without resistance. In Antonio Allegri Correggio's *Ganymede Abducted by the Eagle* (Vienna) Ganymede's grasp is more intimate. Rubens' version portrays a young man. But when Rembrandt painted the *Rape of Ganymede* for a Dutch Calvinist patron in 1635, a dark eagle carries aloft a plump cherubic baby (Paintings Gallery, Dresden) who is bawling and urinating in fright.

Examples of Ganymede in 18th century France have been studied by Michael Preston Worley. ^[12] The image of Ganymede was invariably that of a naive adolescent accompanied by an eagle and the homoerotic aspects of the legend were rarely dealt with. In fact, the story was often "heterosexualized." Moreover, the neoplatonic interpretation of the myth, so common in the Italian Renaissance, in which the rape of Ganymede represented the ascent to spiritual perfection, seemed to be of no interest to Enlightenment philosophers and mythographers. Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre, Charles-Joseph Natoire, Guillaume II Coustou, Pierre Julien, Jean-Baptiste Regnault and others contributed images of Ganymede to French art during this period.



Copy after a lost original (1532) pencil. Royal Collection, Windsor Castle



The Rape of Ganymede, (1611) by Rubens



Rape of Ganymede (1635) by Rembrandt



The Induction of Ganymede in Olympus (1768) by van Loo

Modern

- José Álvarez Cubero's sculpture of Ganymede, executed in Paris in 1804, brought the Spanish sculptor immediate recognition as one of the leading sculptors of his day.
- Vollmer's Wörterbuch der Mythologie aller Völker, (Stuttgart, 1874) illustrates "Ganymede" by an engraving of a "Roman relief," showing a seated bearded Zeus who holds the cup aside to draw a naked Ganymede into his embrace. That engraving however was nothing but a copy of Raphael Mengs's counterfeit Roman fresco, painted as a practical joke on the eighteenth-century art critic Johann Winckelmann who was growing desperate in his search for homoerotic Greek and Roman antiquities. This story is very briefly told by Goethe in his *Italienische Reise*.
- At Chatsworth in the nineteenth century the bachelor Duke of
 Devonshire added to his sculpture gallery Adamo Tadolini (it)'s
 Neoclassic "Ganymede and the Eagle," in which a luxuriously
 reclining Ganymede, embraced by one wing, prepares to exchange a
 peck with the eagle. The delicate cup in his hand is made of
 gilt-bronze, lending an unsettling immediacy and realism to the
 white marble group.



Ganymede (1804) by José Álvarez Cubero

- In the early years of the twentieth century, the topos of Ganymede's
 abduction by Zeus was drafted into the service of commercial enterprise. Adapting an 1892 lithograph by F.
 Kirchbach, the brewery of Anheuser-Busch launched in 1904 an ad campaign publicizing the successes of
 Budweiser beer. Collectibles featuring the graphics of the poster continued to be produced into the early 1990s.
- The poem "Ganymed" by Goethe was set to music by Franz Schubert in 1817; published in his Opus 19, no. 3 (D. 544). Also set by Hugo Wolf.
- In stories by P. G. Wodehouse, the Junior Ganymede is a servants' club, analogous to the Drones, to which Jeeves belongs. Wodehouse named it after Ganymede presumably in reference to his role of cup-bearer.
- Ganymede is a reluctant music fan in Kurtis Blow's 1980 song "Way Out West". After hours of rap by "The Stranger" (Kurtis), he eventually gets up to dance.
- American artist Henry Oliver Walker painted a mural in the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. circa 1900, depicting an adolescent, nude Ganymede on the back of an eagle.
- Ganymede and the god Dionysus make an appearance in *Everworld VI: Fear the Fantastic*, of K.A. Applegate's fantasy series Everworld. Ganymede is described as attracting both males and females.

My first thought, my first flash was that it was a beautiful woman.... The angel was beautiful, with a face dominated by immense, lustrous green eyes and framed by golden ringlets, and with a bow mouth and full lips and brilliant white teeth.

And only then, only after I had felt that first rush of improbable carnal lust, did it occur to me that this angel was a man. [13]

- In 1959 Robert Rauschenberg referenced the myth in one of his best-known works, *Canyon* and in another work, *Pail for Ganymede*. In "Canyon", a photo of Rauschenberg's son Christopher beautifully reiterates the infant portrayed by Rembrandt in the 17th century. A stuffed eagle emerges from the flat picture plane with a pillow tied to a piece of string very near his claw. The pillow also reflects upon the young boy's body and Rembrandt's painting.
- Felice Picano's 1981 novel *An Asian Minor* reinvents the story of Ganymede.
- In Anne Rice's 2010 novel *Of Love and Evil*, she refers to a troop of young boys, acting as cup-bearers at a party, as Ganymedes.



Ganymede Waters Zeus as an Eagle by Bertel Thorvaldsen (Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen).

Ancient sources

Ganymede is named by various ancient Greek and Roman authors:

- Homer Iliad 5.265; Iliad 20.232;
- Homerica The Little Iliad, Frag 7;
- Homeric Hymns Hymn V, To Aphrodite, 203-217;
- Theognis Fragments 1.1345;
- Pindar Olympian Odes 1; 11;
- Euripides Iphigenia at Aulis 1051;
- Plato Phaedrus 255;
- Apollonios Rhodios Argonautica 3.112f;
- ps-Apollodorus Bibliotheke 2.104; 3.141;
- Strabo Geography 13.1.11;
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- Diodorus Siculus The Library of History 4.75.3;
- Hyginus
 - Fabulae 89; 224; 271;
 - Astronomica 2.16; 2.29;
- Ovid Metamorphoses 10.152;
- Virgil Aeneid 1.28; 5.252;
- Cicero De Natura Deorum 1.40;
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- Apuleius The Golden Ass 6.15; 6.24;
- Quintus Smyrnaeus Fall of Troy 8.427; 14.324;
- Nonnus Dionysiaca 8.93; 10.258; 10.308; 12.39; 14.430; 15.279; 17.76; 19.158; 25.430; 27.241; 31.252; 33.74; 39.67; 47.98;
- Suda Ilion; Minos;



"'Modern Version of Ganymede' Introduction of Budweiser to the Gods": ad in *Theatre Magazine*, February 1906

Modern sources



Zeus and Ganymede

Read by Timothy Carter, music by Steve Gorn, from the Lovers' Legends Unbound collection by Andrew Calimach

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References

- [1] According to AMHER (2000), catamite, p. 291.
- [2] Idaea was a mountain nymph, mate of the river god Scamander, and mother of King Teucer a primeval Trojan king. On the same sacred mountain Paris lived in similar exile as a shepherd on Mount Ida, for his disastrous future effect on Troy had been foretold at his birth, and Priam had him exposed on the sacred slopes.
- [3] The Achaean Diomedes is keen to capture the horses of Aeneas because "they are of the stock that great Jove gave to Tros in payment for his son Ganymede, and are the finest that live and move under the sun": *Iliad* 5.265ff.
- [4] Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age*, 1992, p. 122; Burkert notes that there is no direct iconographic link.
- [5] Edmund Veckenstedt, Ganymedes, Libau, 1881.
- [6] Marius/Schlör, Mundus Iovialis, p. 78 f. (with misprint In for Io)
- [7] Plato, Laws 636D, as cited by Thomas Hubbard, Homosexuality in Greece and Rome, p252
- [8] Plato, Symposium 8.29-3-; Craig Williams, Roman Homosexuality (Oxford University Press, 1999, 2010), p. 153.
- [9] Virgil, Aeneid V 256-7.
- [10] Statius, Thebaid 1.549.
- [11] For the cockerel as an emblematic gift to the *eromenos*, see, for example, H.A. Shapiro, "Courtship scenes in Attic vase-painting", *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1981; the gift is "gender specific, and it is clear that the cock had significance as evocative of male potency", T.J. Figueira observes, in reviewing two recent works on Greek pederasty, in *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1981.
- [12] Worley, "The Image of Ganymede in France, 1730-1820: The Survival of a Homoerotic Myth," Art Bulletin 76 (December 1994: 630-643).
- [13] Applegate, K. A., Everworld VI: Fear the Fantastic, p. 50.

External links



Wikimedia Commons has media related to Ganymede.

- World History of Male Love: Zeus and Ganymede (http://www.gay-art-history.org/gay-history/gay-literature/gay-mythology-folktales/homosexual-greek-mythology/zeus-ganymede-gay/zeus-ganymede-gay.html)
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- Ganymede: Subject of the Visual Arts (http://www.glbtq.com/arts/subjects_ganymede.html)
- Goethe, "Ganymed" (http://www.gedichte.vu/ganymed.html) (German)
- Warburg Institute Iconographic Database (ca 200 images of Ganymede) (http://warburg.sas.ac.uk/vpc/ VPC_search/subcats.php?cat_1=5&cat_2=245)

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