

# אוראניה

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# Urania

For other uses, see [Urania \(disambiguation\)](#).

**Urania** (/ˈjʊˈreɪniə/; Ancient Greek: Οὐρανία; mean-



*Urania, a restored Roman copy after a Greek original of the 4th century BC, Hadrian's Villa.*

ing 'heavenly' or 'of heaven') was, in Greek mythology, the muse of astronomy and a daughter of Zeus by Mnemosyne and also a great granddaughter of Uranus.<sup>[1][2]</sup> Some accounts list her as the mother of the musician Linus<sup>[3][4]</sup> by Apollo,<sup>[5]</sup> and Hymenaeus also is said to have been a son of Urania.<sup>[6]</sup> She is often associated with Universal Love and the Holy Spirit. Eldest of the divine sisters, Urania inherited Zeus' majesty and power and the beauty and grace of her mother Mnemosyne.

## 1 Urania as Muse

Those who are most concerned with philosophy and the heavens are dearest to her. Those who have been instructed by her she raises aloft to heaven, for it is a fact that imagination and the power of thought lift men's souls to heavenly heights.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Urania, o'er her star-bespangled lyre,  
With touch of majesty diffused her soul;  
A thousand tones, that in the breast inspire,  
Exalted feelings, o'er the wires'gan roll—  
How at the call of Jove the mist unfurled,  
And o'er the swelling vault—the glowing sky,  
The new-born stars hung out their lamps on high,  
And rolled their mighty orbs to music's sweetest sound.*

—From *An Ode To Music* by James G. Percival

During the Renaissance, Urania began to be considered the Muse for Christian poets. In the invocation to Book 7 of John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, the poet invokes Urania to aid his narration of the creation of the cosmos, though he cautions that it is extquotedbl[t]he meaning, not the name I call" (7.5)

## 2 Representation

Urania dresses in a cloak embroidered with stars and keeps her eyes and attention focused on the Heavens. She is usually represented with a celestial globe to which she points with a little staff.<sup>[8]</sup> She is able to foretell the future by the arrangement of the stars.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 3 Urania in Astronomy and Navigation

Her name has been used to name astronomical observatories such as the Urania in Berlin, Budapest, Bucharest, Vienna, Zurich, Antwerp and Uraniborg on the island of

Hven. The main belt asteroid 30 Urania was also named after her.

In University of São Paulo, the logo of the Institute of Astronomy, Geophysics and Atmospheric Sciences bears Urania.

The official seal of the U.S. Naval Observatory portrays Urania. Hr.Ms. *Urania* is a sail training vessel for the Royal Netherlands Naval College. There has been a *Hr. Ms. Urania* in the Royal Netherlands Navy since 1832.

## 4 Other uses of “Urania”

*Urania* is the name traditionally given to the eighth book of Herodotus' *Histories*'

Urania Cottage was a refuge for fallen women established by the writer Charles Dickens in Lime Grove, Shepherd's Bush, London in the late 1840s. The funding was provided by millionaire and philanthropist Angela Burdett-Coutts, of the well-known banking family. Some of the inmates may have provided inspiration for certain of the female characters in Dickens' novels.

At Columbia University (end of 18th century) there was a Urania Society, for the improvement of oratory skills, felicity of composition and aptitude to debate philosophical topics. DeWitt Clinton joined that society.

There is a Urania Street in New Orleans, between Polymnia (“Polyhymnia”) and Felicity Streets.

Muse magazine features Urania as one of the characters in the “Kokopelli and Co.” comic strip by Larry Gonick published in each issue of the magazine. She is the only original muse who remains among the “new muses” featured in the magazine.

Urania is the name of a popular female-fronted rock band in Honduras.

Urania is used as the muse in *Paradise Lost* books 7 and 9.

## 5 Notes

[1] Hesiod, *Theogony* 78

[2] Ovid, *Fasti* v. 55.

[3] Suidas s.v. Linos

[4] Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 9. 29. 5

[5] Hyginus, *Fabulae* 161

[6] Catullus lxi. 2.

[7] Diodorus, *Bibliotheca historica* 4. 7. 1

[8] Hirt, *Mythol. Bilderb.* p. 210.

[9] Statius, *Thebaid* 8. 548 ff

## 6 References

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## 7 External links

- Urania: Goddess Muse of Astronomy, Theoi Project
- Britannica Online Encyclopedia
- Facebook Page for Urania
- Warburg Institute Iconographic Database (ca 50 images of Urania)

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