

## Geryon the Hero, Herakles the God

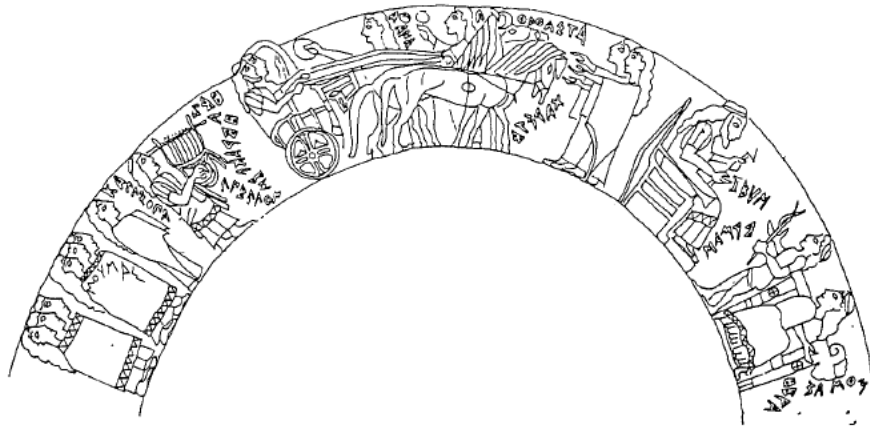
### 1. *Theog.* 287-94

Χρυσάωρ δ' ἔτεκεν τρικέφαλον Γηρυονῆα  
μιχθεις Καλλιρόη κούρη κλυτοῦ Ὠκεανοῖο.  
τὸν μὲν ἄρ' ἐξενάριξε βίη Ἡρακληεῖη  
βουσι παρ' εἰλιπόδεσσι περιρρῦτω εἰν Ἐρυθείη  
ἡματι τῷ ὅτε περ βοῦς ἤλασεν εὐρυμετώπους  
Τίρυνθ' εἰς ἱερὴν διαβάς πόρον Ὠκεανοῖο  
Ὅρθον τε κτείνας καὶ βουκόλον Εὐρυτίωνα  
σταθμῷ ἐν ἠερόεντι **πέριην** κλυτοῦ Ὠκεανοῖο.

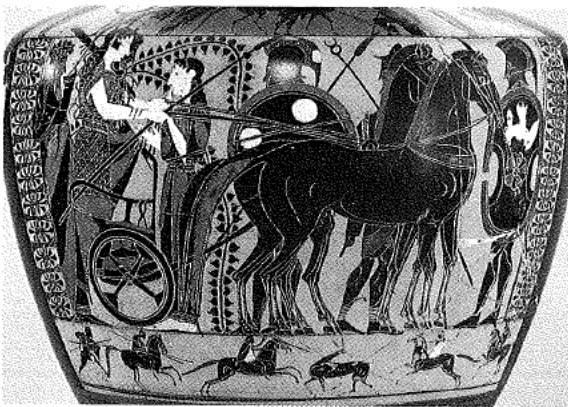
Chrysaor engendered three-headed Geryon after he slept with Kallirhoe, the daughter of famous ocean. The strength of Herakles killed him among his cows on sea-girt Erytheia, on that day when he drove the wide-browed cows to holy Tiryns, crossing the strait of ocean after he killed Orthos and the herdsman Eurytion in the gloomy homestead beyond famous Ocean.

All translations are my own.

### 2. Early Images of Herakles' Apotheosis



a) Corinthian aryballos from Vulci, c. 600 BCE: Herakles and Hebe in procession (Carpenter, fig. 233)



b) black figure hydria c. 530: Herakles in Athena's chariot (Carpenter, fig. 232)



c) Samian cup c. 570-560: Herakles' introduction to Olympus on foot (LIMC, Herakles 2847)

### 3. *HH Herakles 6-8*

πολλά μὲν αὐτὸς ἔρεξεν ἀτάσθαλα, πολλὰ δ'  
ἀνέτλη:  
νῦν δ' ἤδη κατὰ καλὸν ἔδος νιφόντος Ὀλύμπου  
ναίει τερπόμενος καὶ ἔχει καλλίσφυρον Ἥβην.

He did many reckless things and endured  
many; now indeed he dwells in delight on the  
lovely seat of snowy Olympos and has Hebe  
with the lovely ankles as his wife.

### 4. *Geryoneis S 11\**

.) χηρσὶν δ[                    τὸν  
   δ' ἀπαμ[ειβόμενος  
   ποτέφα [κρατερὸς Χρυσάορος ἀ-  
   θανάτιο [γόνος καὶ Καλλιρόας·  
μὴ μοι θά[νατον προφέρων κρυόεν- (  
   τα δεδίσκ[ε' ἀγάνορα θυμόν,  
   μηδεμελ[  
   αἰ μὲν γὰρ γένος ἀθάνατος πέλο-  
   μαι καὶ ἀγή[ραος ὥστε βίου πεδέχειν  
   ἐν Ὀλύμπ[ωι,  
κρέσσον[                    ἐ-  
   λέγχεα δ[  
καὶ τ[  
   κερα[                    ἀ-  
   μετέρω [  
λέγχεα δ[  
αἰ δ' ὃ φί[λε χρῆ στυγερόν μ' ἐπὶ γῆ-  
   ρας [ίκ]έσθαι,  
ζώ[ει]ν τ' ἐν ἐ[φαμερίοις ἀπάνευ-  
   θε θ[ε]ῶν μακάρω[ν,  
νῦν μοι πολὺ κά[λλιον ἐστι παθῆν  
   ὅ τι μόρσιμ[ον  
καὶ ὀνειδέ[  
καὶ παντὶ γέ[νει  
   ὀπίσω Χρυσ[άο]ρο[ς υ]ιόν·  
μ]ῆ τοῦτο φ[ί]λον μακά[ρε]σσι θε[ο]ῖ-  
   σι γ]ένοιτο  
....].[.].κε[.].[.] περι βουσὶν ἐμαῖς  
.....]  
.....]  
[                    ]κλειοσ.[  
...

with his hands...  
answering him...  
he spoke.....immortal  
do not.....to me death(?)...  
frighten...  
nor...  
for if...  
and ageless....  
on Olympos....  
better...  
shame....  
and..  
...  
....our  
shame....  
but if, oh dear one,...  
to reach old age  
and to live among...(apart from)  
the blessed gods,  
now it is much (better) for me....  
whatever is fated  
and reproach  
also to my whole (race)  
after the son of Chrysaor;  
may this not be dear to the blessed gods  
....concerning my cows  
...  
...  
.....

\* The text is Page's edition; my translations  
depend on the extant text.

**5. II.12.322-328**

ὦ πέπον εἰ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμον περὶ τόνδε φυγόντε  
αἰεὶ δὴ μέλλοιμεν ἀγήρω τ' ἀθανάτω τε  
ἔσσεσθ', οὐτέ κεν αὐτὸς ἐνὶ πρώτοισι μαχοίμην  
οὐτέ κε σὲ στέλλοιμι μάχην ἐς κυδιάνειραν:  
νῦν δ' ἔμπης γὰρ κῆρες ἐφ' ἑστέασι θανάτοιο  
μυρίαί, ἃς οὐκ ἔστι φυγεῖν βροτὸν οὐδ'  
ὑπαλύξαι,  
ἴομεν ἢ ἐτῶ εὖχος ὀρέζομεν ἢ ἐτις ἡμῖν.

Oh foolish friend, if, fleeing this war, we  
would be ageless and immortal, I myself  
would not fight in the front lines, nor would I  
send you to battle, where men find glory. But  
since a thousand death spirits stand around  
our heads, which a mortal can neither flee  
from nor escape, let us go and grant someone  
their prayer, or let them grant us ours.

**6. II. 22.79-83**

μήτηρ δ' αὖθ' ἐτέρωθεν ὀδύρετο δάκρυ χέουσα  
κόλπον ἀνιεμένη, ἐτέρηφι δὲ μάζον ἀνέσχε:  
καὶ μιν δάκρυ χέουσ' ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα:  
"Ἐκτορ τέκνον ἐμὸν τάδε τ' αἶδεο καὶ μ'  
ἐλέησον  
αὐτήν, εἴ ποτέ τοι λαθηκῆδεα μάζον ἐπέσχον..."

And again his mother mourned and wept,  
opening her garment with one hand, and with  
the other she offered her breast and, weeping,  
spoke these winged words: Hektor, my son,  
show regard for me and pity me, if ever I  
offered you this soothing breast...

**7. Geryoneis S13**

[.....] μ.[  
.....] ἐγὼν [μελέ]α καὶ ἀλασ-  
τοτόκος κ]αὶ ἄλ[ασ]τα παθοῖσα  
..... Γ]αρυόνα γωνάζομα[ι,  
αἶ ποκ' ἐμ]όν τιν μάζ[ον] ἐ[πέ]σχεθον  
.....]ωμον γ[  
.....]  
.....] φίλαι γανυθ[ε-  
.....]ροσύνας  
.....]δεα πέπλ[ον  
[.....] κλυ....[  
[.....] ρευγων·  
[.....] γον ελ[

I, wretched and miserable-(in my child?)  
and suffering cares that cannot be forgotten  
...Geryon, I beg....  
...(my) breast to you...  
...  
...to your dear (mother?) delighting  
...  
...  
...peplos  
...  
...

**8. II. 24.104-105; 18.54**

ἤλυθες Οὐλύμπων δὲ θεὰ Θέτι κηδομένη περ,  
πένθος ἄλαστον ἔχουσα μετὰ φρεσίν...

You have come to Olympus full of care,  
divine Thetis, your heart full with  
unforgettable grief...

ὦ μοι ἐγὼ δειλή, ὦ μοι δυσαριστοτόκεια,

Alas I am wretched; alas I am unfortunate in  
my child...

### 9. *Geryoneis* S15

[ ]ν[	
[ ]ναντ[	
[ ]ανδρο.φ.[	
[ ]	
[ ]τα νόωι διέλε[ν]	...he considered in his mind
[ ]ν·	
[ ] πολὺ κέρδιον εἶν	...it would be much better
[ ]οντα <b>λάθραι πολεμε[ῖν]</b>	...to attack stealthily
[ ] κραταιῶι·	...powerful
[ ]ξ κατεφράζετ[ό] οἱ	...he considered for him
[ πι]κρὸν ὄλεθρον·	...bitter destruction
[ ἔ]χευ ἀσπίδα προσ[	...shield against
[ ]	...
[ ]ετο· τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ κρα-	...from his head
τὸς ]	
[ ]π]πόκομος τρυφάλει'·	...plumed helmet
[ ] ἐπὶ ζαπέδωι·	...on the dirt
(desunt ep. + str. 1—5) (1n)	....
[ ]ων στυγε[ρ]οῦ	...
[ θανάτοι]ο ..[ ]	of hateful death
κ]εφ[αλ]ῆ περι [ ] ἔχων, πεφορυ-	around his head...having...
[γ]μένος αἵματ[ι .....]..[.]ι τε χολῆι,	smear'd with blood...and bile,
ὄλεσάνορος αἰολοδε[ίρ]ου	of the manslaying dapplenecked
ὀδύναςιν Ὑδρας· <b>σιγαῖ δ' ὄ γ' ἐπι-</b>	Hydra, with its pains. And he in silence
<b>κλοπάδαν</b> [έ]νέρεισε μετώπωι·	slantwise struck his forehead
διὰ δ' ἔσχισε σάρκα [καί] ὀ[στ]έα δαι-	and drove through the flesh and bones by
μονος αἴσαι·	divine will.
διὰ δ' ἀντικρὺ σθέθεν οἰ[σ]τὸς ἐπ' ἀ-	The arrow held fast straight through the top
κροτάταν κορυφάν,	of his head
ἐμίαινε δ' ἄρ' αἵματι πορφ[υρέωι	and he was stained with purple blood, his
θώρακά τε καὶ βροτόεντ[α μέλεα·	armour and his limbs gory:
ἀπέκλινε δ' ἄρ' ἀχένα Γαρ[υόνας	Geryon's neck bent over
ἐπικάρσιον, ὡς ὄκα μ[ά]κφ[ν	at an angle, like a poppy
ἄτε κατασχύνοισ' ἀπαλὸν [δέμας	when it spoils its delicate...
αἶψ' ἀπὸ φύλλα βαλοῖσα ν[	suddenly, dropping its petals

## 10. Herakles and Geryon: The Battle



Bronze relief shield band from Olympia. c. 560  
(Carpenter, fig. 202)



Attic black figure belly amphora c. 540  
(LIMC, Herakles 2484)

### 11. II. 8.300-308

ἦ ῥα καὶ ἄλλον οἴστον ἀπὸ νευρῆφιν ἴαλλεν  
Ἔκτορος ἀντικρὺ, βαλέειν δέ ἐΐετο θυμός:  
καὶ τοῦ μὲν ῥ' ἀφάμαρθ', ὃ δ' ἀμύμονα  
Γοργυθίωνα  
υἷὸν ἐν Πριάμοιο κατὰ στήθος βάλεν ἰῶ,  
τόν ῥ' ἐξ Αἰσύμηθεν ὀπυιομένη τέκε μήτηρ  
καλὴ Καστιάνειρα δέμας εἵκυῖα θεῆσι.  
μήκων δ' ὥς ἐτέρωσε κάρη βάλεν, ἦ τ' ἐνὶ κήπῳ  
καρπῶ βριθομένη νοτίησί τε εἰαρινῆσιν,  
ὥς ἐτέρωσ' ἤμυσε κάρη πῆληκι βαρυνθέν.

### 12. II. 6.146-148

οἷη περ φύλλων γενεὴ τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν.  
φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἄνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ'  
ὔλη  
τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη:

He released another arrow from the string,  
aiming for Hektor, his heart hastened it on:  
and he missed him and struck blameless  
Gorgythion, the noble son of Priam, through  
the chest with his arrow. Gorgythion, whom a  
mother from Aisume bore, lovely  
Kastianeira, like the gods in form. Like a  
poppy over to the side his head fell, a poppy  
in the garden weighted down with fruit and  
spring damp, thus to the side his head sank,  
weighted with the helmet.

Of the same nature as the generations of  
leaves are the generations of men; a wind  
blows these leaves to the ground, the tree  
flourishes and puts forth others, spring's  
season returns.

### Selected Bibliography:

- BURKERT, W. "Le Mythe De Géryon ; Perspectives Préhistoriques Et Tradition Rituelle," in (eds.), 1977), 273-83.
- CARPENTER, T.H. *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece : A Handbook*, London, 1991.
- CURTIS, P. *Stesichoros's Geryoneis*, Leiden; Boston, 2011.
- DAVIES, M. "Stesichorus' Geryoneis and Its Folk-Tale Origins." *Classical Quarterly* XXXVIII (1988), 277-90.
- DAVIES, M., and P.J. FINGLASS, EDS. *Stesichorus. The Poems*, Cambridge, 2014.
- GANTZ, T. *Early Greek Myth : A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, Baltimore, 1993.
- LIMC. "= Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae ". Zurich, 1981-1994.
- LU, K.E. "Heracles and Heroic Disaster." Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2013.
- PAGE, D. "The Geryoneis." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 93
- ROZOKOKI, A. "Some New Thoughts on Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 168 3-18.
- . "Stesichorus, Geryoneis S 11 SLG: The Dilemma of Geryon." *Wiener Studien* 121 67-69.
- STAFFORD, E. "Herakles between Gods and Heroes," in J. BREMMER and A. ERSKINE (eds.), *The Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations* 2010),
- TSITSIBAKOU-VASALOS, E. "Stesichorus' Geryoneis, SLG 15 1-11." *Hellenika* XLI (1990), 7-31.
- . "Stesichorus, Geryoneis S 11.5-26 : The Dilemma of Geryon." *Hellenika* XLII (1991), 245-56.