Apollo – god of light, medical skills, archery, prophecy, and technical music, also called “Phoebus, Far-Shooter”

- Born from Leto and Zeus; Leto’s parents Coeus (Titan of revolution of the universe) and Phoebe (Titan of light)
  - Hera jealous of Zeus and punishes Leto by telling all the nymphs and dryads to not give her a place to give birth, but Leto finds island of Delos so newly formed, it’s not connected to the earth yet so Hera’s ban doesn’t apply and there are no nymphs/dryads associated with it
  - Apollo’s twin sister: Artemis
  - Delos becomes Apollo’s holy island/winter home
- Helios and Apollo; Helios = Titan god of sun, Apollo = light
  - Apollo consumed Helios though so he’s now associated with both
    - Example of a god taking control of something already in existence (~Poseidon and the sea)
  - Light associated with knowledge (~lightbulb going off) → Apollo also god of prophecy
- Oracles/sibyls = Apollo’s priestess
  - The one at Delphi is most important b/c of the Omphalos
  - Get possessed by him and deliver his prophecies via rambling, knowledge from the sun
    - A priest comes to record what she says
    - Often very vague, so can be misinterpreted but is always “right”
  - They sit on a tripod in the basement of the temple over a crack that is an entrance to Tartarus; prevents knowledge from the earth from coming up (sky over earth)
  - During winter months, Apollo takes the tripod goes back home to Delos so the sibyls can’t prophesize anymore
    - Story of a Roman general demanding a prophecy from a sibyl but she can’t b/c Apollo isn’t there to take the prophecy; she’s possessed by a chthonic deity, the tripod isn’t there to block the opening
    - “Gnothi seauton” = “know yourself,” don’t be arrogant, be humble
- Artificial/technical music vs. natural music
  - Technical = learned skills (i.e. piano, singing, lyre); natural = what comes naturally (i.e. panpipes)
  - Contest between Apollo’s lyre and Pan’s (a satyr) panpipes → Apollo won
  - Technical over natural
- Medicine, another technical skill
  - Apollo is father of medicine, and Apollo’s son Asclepius is the Practitioner
    - Asclepius associated with snake winding around a staff → has come to represent medical (i.e. ambulances have the symbol)
    - Different from Hermes’ caduceus, which is often mistaken for medicine symbol
  - Can use abilities to heal but also spreads disease/plague using his bow and arrow (motif of where there is x, there is also anti-x)
- Apollo and Daphne story:
  - After slaying the Python (sky over earth) with his bow and arrow, Apollo sees Eros and chides him as a child playing with a bow; as revenge, Eros shoots Apollo and Daphne with his arrows, making Apollo fall in love with her and Daphne fall in disgust for him (x, anti-x motif again); Apollo pursues her and when she can’t run anymore, Daphne calls out to her river dad/all the gods and goddess to help her and she’s turned into a laurel tree
  - Apollo makes the laurel his sacred tree