

sign and token of civilized humanity. Mercury himself, the god of eloquence and persuasion, appears in the theogony of old Rome as the grandson of Atlas. With Ovid he is "Atlantiades," and "Atlantis Pleionesque nepos": so also Horace, as witness his ode commencing

Mercuri, facunde nepos Atlantis  
Qui feros cultus hominum recentum  
Voce formasti eatus;—

Compare also in this connection *λόγος* with *λέγω*. "In the beginning was the Word." Thus also Dante, "non ragionam di lor," and Hamlet speaks of the "brute that wants discourse of reason." Circe appears in the Odyssey as *δεινη θεος*, a special divinity, but with the special attribute *αὐθηεσσα*, or gifted with articulate speech. Our word "dumb" is the analogue of the Teutonic "dumm," which signifies witless: and in the same spirit the Slavians superciliously denote their German neighbours by a term signifying "voiceless," or without words. A similar meaning is attached to the Greek *νήπιος*, whose analysis presents the same results. Later writers place the Meropes on the Nile, but the old home of the Atlantids was the Atlas Range in Western Africa. Even in Pliny's time they had not advanced farther eastward than Libya.

The story of Atlantis appears, in the *Timæus* of Plato, in the following shape:—

Listen now then, Socrates, to a story very strange indeed, yet in every respect true, as it was once related, by Solon, the wisest of the seven sages. He was the kinsman and intimate friend of our great grandfather Dropides as he himself often tells us in his poems: and he informed our grandfather Critias, as the old man himself in turn told us, that this state (Athens) had formerly achieved great and admirable actions, the knowledge of which had nevertheless been lost through lapse of time and the decay of mankind—one act in particular being more illustrious than the rest—in remembrance of which it were fitting that we should not only return you thanks, but also in full assembly hymn forth to the goddess our true and just acclaim of praise.

I will acquaint you with that ancient story which I indeed received from no mere youth; for at that time Critias, as he himself said, was almost ninety years old, and I myself about ten.

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