



## Κέντρο Περιβαλλοντικής Εκπαίδευσης Βάμου

### Arion and the Dolphin

**Arion**, semilegendary Greek poet and musician of Methymna in [Lesbos](#). He is said to have invented the [dithyramb](#) (choral poem or chant performed at the festival of Dionysus); that is, he gave it literary form. His father's name, Cycleus, indicates the connection of the son with the cyclic or circular chorus of the dithyramb. None of his works survive, and only one story about his life is known (reported by the historian Herodotus]).

After a successful performing tour of [Sicily](#) and [Magna Graecia](#), Arion sailed for home. The sight of the treasure he carried roused the cupidity of the sailors, who resolved to kill him and seize his wealth. Arion, as a last favour, begged permission to sing a song. The sailors consented, and the poet, standing on the deck of the ship, sang a dirge accompanied by his lyre. He then threw himself overboard; but he was miraculously borne up in safety by a [dolphin](#), which had been charmed by the [music](#). Thus he proceeded to Corinth, arriving before the ship. There Arion's friend [Periander](#), [tyrant](#) of Corinth, eventually learned the truth by a stratagem. Summoning the sailors, he demanded what had become of the poet. Upon affirming that he had remained behind, they were suddenly confronted by Arion himself. The sailors confessed and were punished, and Arion's lyre and the dolphin became the constellations [Lyra](#) and [Delphinus](#).

#### Source

*Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Arion". Encyclopedia Britannica, Invalid Date, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Arion-Greek-poet-and-musician>. Accessed 24 June 2021.*



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**Arion** of Lesbos, who is said to have worked at Corinth in about 600, is credited with being the first to write narrative poetry in this medium. Thespis (6th century bc), possibly combining with dithyrambs something of the Attic ritual of Dionysus of Eleutherae, is...

- [dithyramb](#)

...Greek historian Herodotus, the poet **Arion** composed works of this type, named the genre, and formally presented them at Corinth. In the last decades of the 6th century bc in Athens, during the tyranny of Peisistratus, a dithyrambic competition was officially introduced into the Great Dionysia by the poet Lasus...

- [Periander](#)

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