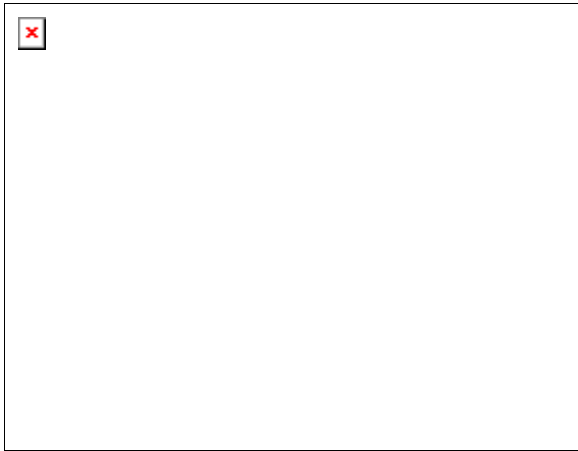


HEROES OF DELPHI



A Classical Greece Setting for Dungeons & Dragons 3rd Edition

Created by [Paul Elliott](#)

INTRODUCTION

Centaur, chimera, dryad, griffon, hydra - creatures like these litter the pages of D&D's Monster Manual. Creatures from Greek myth. Of course, there are plenty of other entries that would fit nicely into a Greek campaign with a suitable name change: merfolk (Greek tritons), giants, wraiths and so on. The great pull of roleplaying the ancient Greeks, however, is not the 'fit' of many monsters or races, but the unique and atmospheric society of the day. Nodding horse-hair crests, long-shadowed spears, many-columned temples of marble, triremes surging across turquoise seas guided by painted eyes on the prow, phalanxes of grim hoplites, unconformist philosophers debating science under shady colonnades ... classical Greece.

Heroes of Delphi, as a fantasy supplement, gives you a way to mix the vividly historical with the monsters and magic of Greek myth. We get both halves of Greece - as long as you enjoy a little 'imaginative interpretation' at the expense of rigorous historical accuracy. The aim of the book is firstly to map out the amendments and rules additions needed to convey the Greek setting. Secondly it is to provide a solid gaming 'hook' taken straight out of classical Greek history that can be used as a foundation for building scenarios and campaigns. The hook I've chosen is the Third Sacred War, a violent and bitter struggle in the mid-4th century BC for the holy shrine of Apollo at Delphi (hence the term 'Sacred War'). With its focus on a religious shrine the **Heroes of Delphi** campaign can legitimately be pumped full of magic and supernatural elements. We can tap D&D's epic potential to build a conflict of vast and unearthly proportions. One of the important historical aspects of the Third Sacred War is the intervention of the new Macedonian king, Philip - father of Alexander the Great. Using this war as a foot in the door, Philip later conquered the entire Greek peninsula. In **Heroes of Delphi** the player characters get a chance to stop Philip and battle his allies, both human and monstrous!

Why not leave the field open for DM's to pick any date? Well historically the Greeks were constantly at war with each other. Long term rivalries, feuds, petty bickerings, allegiances, leagues, differing governmental systems and competing interests meant that the Greeks never enjoyed co-operation. There was never a Greek nation in ancient times. There were very occasionally unifying events such as the Persian invasions of 490 and 480 BC, but even these epic battles for Greek survival were marred by infighting. The Third Sacred War is one of these epic unifying events. Too late, the Greek city states realised that the barbarian Philip and his Macedonians posed a threat to the future of Greece. Spartans and Athenians fought on the same side (a rare event!). To see just how deep the Greek rivalries could get take a look at the ultimate Greek-on-Greek conflict: the Peloponnesian War (431 - 404 BC). A war that is filled with bone-shuddering atrocities.

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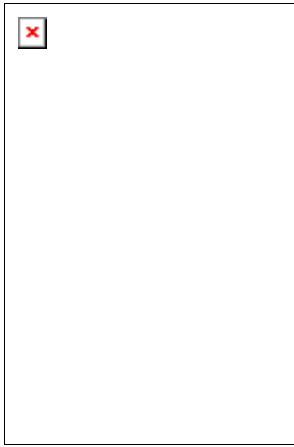
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HEROES OF DELPHI



THE SACRED WAR

Delphi, the holiest shrine of the Greeks is under threat from warlike Macedon in the north. The shrine is guarded by an alliance of local cities called the Amphictyonic League, an alliance led by the mountain state of Phocis. Such are the riches of Delphi that control of the shrine has proved contentious - much blood has been spilt in recent years in an attempt to control, or to ensure the freedom of, Delphi. The most serious conflicts have only just begun, and the most powerful city-states of Greece have become embroiled in the affairs of the Amphictyonic League. Most recently the city of Thebes was able to get an ally on the League council to vote against the Phocians. The Phocians, allies of great power Sparta, decided not to stand for this and in 356 marched on Delphi - seizing it. The Phocian statesman Philomelus urged his countrymen on, and he was encouraged by Athens, who also wanted to see the power of Thebes eclipsed.

Phocis sent out ambassadors to justify its actions, but soon had to defend the shrine against the hoplites of another League state called Locris. The Locrians weren't happy and had declared war on Phocis. They appealed for help from the Boeotians, the Thessalians and other Amphictyons. While Sparta and Athens watched their ally Phocis with interest, Phocis plundered the treasuries of Delphi to fund a huge mercenary army. It was determined to hold on to Apollo's sacred shrine.

The Sacred War saw ten years of bloody fighting concentrated in Phocis, Locris and western Boeotia. Philomelus died in a bloody rout of Phocian hoplites in 355, and his successor Onomarchus rallied the Phocians, and doubled the number of mercenaries after more plundering of the holy treasuries. In 354 the Phocians enjoyed numerous victories. The Thessalians needed some help in fighting the city-state of Pherae and turned to the barbarian warlord King Philip of Macedon. Looking for a way to take Delphi for himself and gain control over all the Greeks, Philip agreed to help the Thessalians. He became the tagos (leader) of the Thessalian League. Onomarchus with his larger army and use of catapults twice faced the Macedonians in battle, and twice defeated Philip's forces. In 353 the victorious general also fought the Thebans successfully; but Philip wanted vengeance and began the siege of Pherae in Thessaly. The Phocians, led by Onomarchus, faced Philip of Macedon once again, but this time they were defeated and brave Onomarchus was himself slain. The 3,000 Phocian prisoners were executed by drowning as a punishment for plundering the Delphic treasuries.

King Philip took Pherae and became the undisputed overlord of Thessaly. He would have pressed home the Phocian defeat by marching south, but Athenian hoplites blocked the pass at Thermopylae. It was becoming clear to all of the city-states what Philip intended, and in the years of brutal and unrelenting warfare to come the Sacred War would undoubtedly provide an opportunity for the warlord to pounce on the Greeks.

The Athenians had already come to blows with Philip; the warlord had captured the northerly Athenian outpost of Amphipolis in 357. The city controlled gold and silver mines which were a great source of income for Athens. Now Philip uses these riches to fund his Macedonian war

machine and his expansion into northern Greece. He's already faced Athenian forces who were dispatched to retake Amphipolis, as well as the phalanxes of Olynthus and the Chalcidian League. Olynthus was once a Macedonian ally that helped capture a number of Athenian possessions in the north. It then became a turn-coat friend of Athens and the betrayal of this Chalcidian ally has inspired a ferocious campaign of Macedonian vengeance. This campaign continues.

In 356 Philip's sorceress wife Olympia gave birth to a son, Alexander. Rumours abounded that the boy was not his, but Philip declared Alexander his heir and began to groom him for kingship. Other rumours circulate that the boy is cursed with horns and that his real father is either a god or a monster. In the same month as the birth of his son, Philip entered the Olympic Games and won a spectacular victory in the four-horse chariot race. This victory gave him a great deal of prestige amongst the Greeks. Philip the Warlord may be uncouth, but he celebrated all of the best Greek traditions.



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HEROES OF DELPHI



APOLLO & HIS SHRINES

"Phoebus Apollo heard [the] prayer and came down in fury from the heights of Olympus with his bow and covered quiver on his back. As he set out, the arrows clanged on the shoulder of the angry god; and his descent was like nightfall. He sat down opposite the ships and shot an arrow, with a dreadful twang from his silver bow. He attacked the mules first and the nimble dogs; then he aimed his sharp arrows at the men, and struck again and again. Day and night innumerable fires consumed the dead".

The Iliad, Book I

The deadly wrath of the god Apollo, summoned to act by a vengeful priest, begins the famous Greek poem known as The Iliad. In this epic story the gods of Olympus are ranged along the battlelines of the Trojan War, some on the side of the Greeks, others with the Trojans, while still others are neutral. Apollo's deadly plague upon the Greeks (for the arrows are a poet's metaphor for disease) begins a feud amongst the Greek camp. Later in The Iliad even the gods fight each other in their attempts to sway the outcome of the war one way or another.

The fabulous and stately gathering known as the gods of Olympus has been deeply ingrained into the psyche of Western minds for centuries. The Olympians were the twelve central gods and goddesses of ancient Greece, and between them they controlled practically every conceivable aspect of mortal life, since each held sway over a particular sphere of nature or of human activity. The twelve deities were: Zeus - King of the Gods, Poseidon, Hephaestus, Hermes, Ares and Apollo; Hera - Queen of the Gods, Athene, Artemis, Hestia, Aphrodite and Demeter. A plethora of other deities also dwelt on Mount Olympus, but none matched the power of the Olympian twelve. Some of these other gods included Helios, Dionysus and Selene and between them they made up a vast array of divine beings that could be called on to aid in some particular venture or other. Whether it was a marriage that needed the blessing of Hera, a business transaction that required an oath to Hermes, or the fear that the Fates would conspire to ruin one's future, all aspects of classical life revolved around the divine. The gods were present everywhere, always, and could be appeased or approached depending on one's needs.

Zeus was the leader, or more accurately, master, of the Olympian twelve, and the most powerful of all the gods. He held sway over both the material universe and those gods and goddesses who controlled it. He was omnipotent and all-seeing, fearless and far-reaching. No one dared question his authority or challenge his rule. The warnings of mighty Zeus were severe: 'Let no god, let no goddess, attempt to curb my will ... or I shall seize him and cast him into darkest Tartarus. Then he will recognise how much mightier I am than all the gods!' The other eleven Olympians could not match his power, even if they had worked together to overthrow him. Yet one of these eleven lesser gods and goddesses had a special pre-eminence, recognised even by Zeus, his father. That god was Apollo.

As the youthful looking Apollo entered an assembly of the Olympians, all the gods and goddesses rose to greet him as a sign of great respect. Leto, his mother, approached to relieve him of his bow and quiver and Zeus welcomed him with a golden cup of nectar. Once Apollo had greeted his father, the gods returned to their seats and began their business. Apollo was special. Not only did the Olympian deities revere him, but the classical Greeks, and later the Romans, also thought highly of him. He was known to the ancients as the 'most Greek of gods ...', and with his self-proclaimed motto of 'everything in moderation', the god epitomized the Greek character and mood. Of all the Greek gods that the Romans chose to hold up as the token of Greek civilization and reconciliation between the Roman and Greek cultures, it was Apollo that triumphed. When Rome began adopting personalities and natures of the Greek gods into their own pantheon during the 5th century BC, the transformation of that city's religion began, and a place of almost unequalled prestige was carved by the youthful god.

Apollo, the divine being, like the other classical gods, was actually the intangible aspect of a religious cult, a very real organisation that was defined by prayers, sacrifices, temples, statues and oaths, by festivals and priests. The body of the cult was made up by its congregation, the loyal worshippers who regularly came to the altars at the front of the glorious temples and made offerings to the god. Greek religion did not just survive on its rich background of intricately woven myths, it lived and breathed on a daily basis by the actions of its followers. Their beliefs, their prayers and taboos formed a living testament to the god of that cult. And so a Greek sea captain would be a very reckless man indeed if he were not a regular worshipper of Poseidon, god of the sea, for his very survival might depend on courting the favour of that god. Thus went life.

As the first so-called 'Indo-European' peoples moved westwards into the European continent during the early stages of the agricultural revolution, they split up and divided. Some of these settled in the cold northern forests, others in the wooded country north of the Alps, while others journeyed further south into Italy and Greece. Some of the very oldest of the Olympian cults moved with these original Indo-European people (ancestors of the classical Greeks) down through the Balkan peninsula into Greece and the Greek islands sometime after 2000 BC. Other religious cults arrived a little later in the historical record, and the resident Greek priests and mythographers quickly sought to tie the gods of these new cults into the established Greek pantheon. Apollo seems to have been one such late-comer. Exactly when his cult began to gain popularity in Greece, and from which direction it arrived, is a historical mystery that has bedevilled scholars since the classical age. What is known for certain is that the cult soon gained ground on its rival religions, and would enjoy great success, measured not in size, but certainly in wealth and influence. Indeed, the cult of Apollo matured to become one of the richest and most powerful religious organizations within the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Much of this was due to the role of prophecy played by the god at his sanctuary at Delphi in central Greece.



Delphi, the mountainous retreat that became Apollo's greatest shrine, was a site of religious pilgrimage for worshippers from all of the Greek cities, and for individuals rich and poor alike. All wanted to touch the future, to have a prophecy told on their behalf, and to leave behind a token of thanks in return. Over a period of time one-thousand years in length, and with such prestigious visitors as Alexander the Great and ambassadors from the Persian king, these tokens amounted to a considerable fortune in exotic and not so exotic treasures. In fact several "treasuries" were constructed at Delphi with the sole purpose of housing the growing wealth. Wars were later fought over this wealth and over the influence that the cult's leadership enjoyed. Greek scholars regarded Delphi as the 'navel of the world', in other words it became, for the self-centred Greeks, the very centre of the world, and was sometimes depicted as such on maps of the period. This practice, of underpinning the entire cosmos on a singular religious site of great importance was also practiced by Medieval map-makers. For them, the centre of the universe became Jerusalem, combining overpowering religious tradition with a viable excuse to make war on the Holy Land. By elevating Jerusalem in this way, its importance was clearly spelt out: it wasn't just a dusty little Palestinian town, but the focus of the Christian religion, and the centre of the entire world! Delphi, too, benefitted from such aggrandisement, becoming the undisputed soul of Greek culture, an untouchable icon of

all that the Greek's valued.

Prophecies made by the god at Delphi were received in utter seriousness by all who travelled to the sanctuary, whether the proclamation involved the trivialities of a court case or business transaction, or the crucial decisions involving armies, invasion plans and the founding of overseas colonies. This was true power, the power to affect international (or at least rival Greek city-state) policy and to make money while doing so. But why was Apollo's cult as a whole so 'blessed', so revered by the Greeks? Why did the hierarchy of this one religion have an authority that transcended petty political bickerings, religious feuds and commercial rivalries? Every individual Olympian cult was in some sense "pan-Hellenic", being worshipped in almost every corner of Greece, but most were given local flavour, and were associated with local heroes, and local locations. Apollo came closer than any other Greek religion to becoming a unifying Greek god, not only uniting the race in religion but also intellectually and perhaps even politically.

The depth with which the Greeks regarded Apollo can easily be judged by the way in which the powerful and successful Athenians dedicated an entire island to the god. This in itself was not entirely unique, Cyprus, for example was the birthplace of Aphrodite, goddess of beauty and she was highly revered there. Many cities and towns focussed their worship towards one or two particular deities, often connected in some way with the district's local folklore. But on Delos, the Athenians spared no effort to totally transform the island into a vast religious site dedicated to, and solely devoted to, the god Apollo and his associated cults. The population was allowed to continue living there, after a fashion, but no human was henceforth allowed to die on this most sacred of islands, and equally, no child was allowed to be born on the island. Graves were exhumed and the remains were transhipped to a neighbouring island. Delos was then ritually purified. No other Greek island ever underwent such a thorough divine cleansing and became so utterly dedicated to the maintenance of a single religious cult.



Apollo's functions and powers were diverse and seemingly unconnected, making it difficult to establish his true role within the Greek pantheon. Most of his fellow gods and goddesses reigned supreme over some element or human concern - Zeus over storms, Demeter over agriculture, Nemesis over revenge, and Aphrodite over love, for example. Apollo lacked any such focus. He was essentially a sun-god, yet he had no 'blood-ties' with the god of the sun, Helios, and did not actually represent the sun in any way. He was 'light' itself, and this association provided the young god with a host of epithets; he was Phoebus (the 'brilliant'), Chrysocomes ('of the golden locks'), Xanthus (the 'fair') and as the deity of light that separated earth from heaven, he frequented the 'high places, the frowning peaks of high mountains'.

As we have already seen from his role at Delphi, Apollo dominated the art of prophecy, the divination of future events. However, from time immemorial in Greece this power was always one that had been associated with the earth goddess. She of the ground, the underworld and the snakes and other creatures that inhabited it. How did the god of light (or his cult, to be more precise) wrestle away patronage of this important religious custom from the deities of the earth? His domination of the rituals of divination throughout Greece brought considerable prestige to the cult, and elevated it to such a level that it caught the attentions of the new-born Roman Republic.

The god was a huntsman, and was well known (as Apollo Nomius) to be the patron of shepherds invoked to watch over flocks. This pastoral aspect of the cult sits uneasily with his other interests, but it is one that seems to have been popular. Apollo took the epithet Lycian which can be variously interpreted. Firstly, and most obviously as being of Lycian (ie. Asiatic) origin, but also as the title of a wolf-god, since the word also equates with the Greek for 'wolf'. Apollo Nomius then, was an agricultural god fostering healthy flocks, driving away wolves and, as Apollo Carneios, the ram-god, ensuring the fertility of the animals. Amongst his sacred attributes were the bow and the shepherd's crook. But not only was he a hunter and a shepherd, but he was also considered a builder and a colonizer, a founder of cities and a civilizer.

There are several more such contradictions, raising questions that are difficult to answer. As the embodiment of light, Apollo had mastery over the intangible forces of warmth, health

and happiness. Because of this, health, medicine and the curative powers were attributed to him, and he was able to subsume the role of an existing Greek deity, Paeëon, to become Apollo Paeon (the healer). Likewise, the fertility of the land depended on sunshine, and the harvests of two holy sites where Apollo was especially venerated, at Delphi and at Delos, were dedicated to him. Yet through some association with the sun's rays, he was also the pre-eminent god of archery. His shots killed instantly, and he was known as the 'destroyer', the dispenser of instant death from afar. The healer was also the god of disease. This clash of interests is compounded by the belief that the mother, Leto, of this god of light, was originally the Asiatic deity Lada, a goddess of the night.



Apollo was born of Zeus and one of the numerous nymphs whom he layed with. That nymph was Leto, daughter of the Titans Coeus and Phoebe. Jealous Hera, Zeus's wife, pursued Leto all over the world and decreed that her baby should not be delivered in any place where the sun shone. Carried on the wings of the South Wind, Leto at last came to the island of Ortygia, close to Delos, where she bore Artemis. Artemis was no sooner born than she helped her mother across the narrow straits, and there, between an olive-tree and a date-palm growing on the north side of Mount Cynthus, helped her give birth to Apollo on the ninth day of labour. Delos, then a floating island, became immovably fixed in the sea and, by decree, no one is now allowed either to be born there or to die there. Sick folk and pregnant women are ferried over to Ortygia instead.

Themis fed Apollo on nectar and ambrosia and the boy called for a bow and arrows which Hephaestus at once provided for him. On leaving the holy isles of Delos Apollo made straight for Mount Parnassus, where the serpent Python, his mother's enemy, was lurking. He wounded the dragon severely with arrows. Python fled to the oracle of Mother Earth at Delphi, a mountain city named in honour of the monster Delphyne, Python's own mate. But Apollo dared to follow him into the shrine, and there despatched him beside the sacred chasm. Mother Earth reported this outrage to Zeus, who ordered Apollo to visit Tempe for purification and then instituted the Pythian Games in honour of Python. Apollo disregarded Zeus' order and went instead to Aigialaea for purification, accompanied by Artemis; and then, disliking the place, sailed to Tarrha in Crete, where King Carmanor instead performed the ceremony.

On his return to Greece, Apollo sought out Pan, the disreputable old goat-legged Arcadian god, and having coaxed him to reveal the art of prophecy, seized the Delphic Oracle and retained its priestess, called the Pythoness, in his own service. Leto, on hearing this news, travelled with Artemis to Delphi where she turned aside to perform some private rite in a sacred grove. A local giant called Tityus interrupted her devotions, and was trying to violate her when Apollo and Artemis, hearing screams, ran up and killed him with a volley of arrows. This was a vengeance which Zeus, Tityus' father, was pleased to consider a pious one.

Next Apollo killed the satyr Marsyas, follower of the goddess Cybele. He had picked up a flute discarded and cursed by Athene who had originally made the double-flute from stag's bones, and played it at a banquet of the gods. Music delighted the other gods, but Hera and Aphrodite laughed silently behind their hands. Athene went away to a Phrygian wood and played again by a stream, seeing how her cheeks were swollen and face blue making her look ludicrous. Marsyas picked up this flute, and it played by itself. He went about Phrygia in Cybele's train delighting the ignorant peasants. They cried out that even Apollo with his lyre could not make better music, and Marsyas did not contradict them. The anger of Apollo was provoked and he invited Marsyas to a contest. The winner could inflict whatever punishment he wished on the loser. Marsyas consented, and the Muses (the goddesses of the arts) were the jury. The contest proved to be an equal one and the Muses were charmed by both instruments. Then Apollo cried out to Marsyas 'I challenge you to do with your instrument as much as I can do with mine. Turn it upside down, and both play and sing at the same time.' This was impossible with a flute but Apollo reversed his lyre and sang such delightful hymns in honour of the Olympian gods that the Muses gave the verdict in his favour. Apollo's revenge was to flay Marsyas alive and nail his skin to a pine-tree near the source of the river which now bears his name.

Afterwards, Apollo won a second musical contest at which King Midas presided. This time

he beat Pan. Having become the acknowledged god of music, he has ever since played on his seven-stringed lyre at the gods' banquet. Another of his duties was to guard the sacred herds and flocks which the gods kept in Pieria, but he later delegated this task to Hermes.

Apollo never married, but he gave numerous nymphs and mortal women children. Among them were Phthia (mother of Dorus and his brothers), Thalia the Muse (mother of the Corybantes), Coronis (mother of Asclepius), Aria (mother of Miletus) and Cyrene (mother Aristaeus). He also seduced nymph Dryope who was tending her father's flocks on Mount Oeta in the company of her friends, the Hamadryads. Apollo disguised himself as a tortoise with which they all played and when Dryope put him to her bosom, he turned into a hissing serpent, scared away the Hamadryads and mated with Dryope. She bore him Amphissus, who founded the city of Oeta and built a temple to his divine father. There Dryope served as a priestess until, one day, the Hamadryads stole her away and left a poplar in her place.

On one occasion Apollo tried to steal the beautiful Marpessa from Idas, but she remained loyal. On another he pursued Daphne the mountain nymph, a priestess of Mother Earth and daughter of Peneius the River God of Thessaly. He had long been in love with Daphne and had brought about the death of his rival in love, a man called Leucippus. Leucippus had disguised himself as a girl to secretly join Daphne's mountain revels. Apollo knowing of this by divination, advised the mountain nymphs to bathe naked and thus make sure everyone in their company was a woman. Leucippus's imposture was at once discovered and the nymphs tore him to pieces. When he finally overtook Daphne, she cried out to Mother Earth who was able to spirit her away to Crete where she became known as Pasiphaë. Mother Earth left a laurel tree in her place, and from its leaves Apollo made a laurel to console himself.

Apollo earned Zeus' displeasure only once after the famous conspiracy to dethrone him. This was when Apollo's son Asclepius, the physician, had the temerity to resurrect a dead man, and rob Hades of a subject. Hades complained to Olympus and so Zeus killed Asclepius with a thunderbolt. In revenge Apollo killed the Cyclopes. Zeus was so enraged at the loss of his armourers that he would have banished Apollo to Tartarus for ever, had not Leto pleaded for his forgiveness and undertaken that he would mend his ways. The sentence was reduced to one year's hard labour, which Apollo was to serve in the sheep-folds of King Admetus of Therae. Obeying Leto's advice, Apollo not only carried out the sentence, but conferred great benefits on Admetus. Having learned his lesson, he thereafter preached moderation in all things: the phrases 'Know thyself!' and 'Nothing in excess!' were always on his lips. He brought the Muses down from their home on Mount Helicon to Delphi, tamed their wild frenzy, and led them in formal and decorous dances.

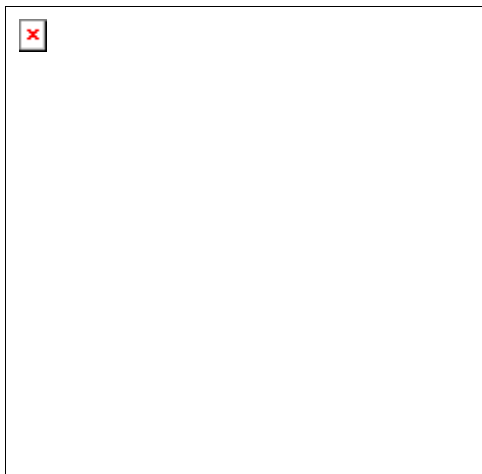


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HEROES OF DELPHI



CHARACTERS OF ANCIENT GREECE

What do you need to change, add and subtract from the D&D rules before your players can create ancient Greek characters? Let's look at the bare bones of the character creation system: a set of undemanding characteristics, a number of non-human races and a spread of interesting character classes. First off, the characteristics don't pose a problem; Strength, Wisdom, and Intelligence work just as well in 350 BC as in the Forgotten Realms. The races, however, have got to go. I'm after a 'fast & loose' Greek game, not an alternate history setting. Humans only.

Race

This isn't saying there is no diversity. The Greeks were at great pains to differentiate themselves from other Greeks, the inhabitants of each state were famous for certain stereotyped attributes. We can use these attributes to create Greek races.

Race Descriptions

Amphictyonic: Unsophisticated, hardy and enduring
Arcadian: Primitive and uncultured, close to nature
Argive: Believers of 'Nothing in Excess'
Athenian: Enterprising, cosmopolitan, artistic thinkers
Boeotian: Rural-people, hard-working, hardy, and athletic
Corinthian: Mercantile-minded, enterprising and industrious
Cretan: Untrustworthy and sly
Ionian: Intelligent, thoughtful and lovers of pleasure and relaxation
Laconian: Hard, uncivilised, brutal and fierce (Only class available is Spartan)
Thessalian: Lovers of open spaces and horses

Racial Ability Adjustments (and Local Dialect)

Amphictyonic: +2 CON, -2 CHA (Western)
Arcadian: +2 WIS, -2 INT (Arcadian)
Argive: no adjustment (Doric)
Athenian: +2 CHA, -2 WIS (Ionian)
Boeotian: +2 STR, -2 INT, -2 CHA (Aetolian)
Corinthian: +2 CHA, +2 INT, -2 STR (Doric)
Cretan: +2 DEX, -2 CON (Doric)
Ionian: +2 WIS, +2 CHA, -2 STR (Ionic)
Laconian: +2 CON, -2 CHA (Doric)
Thessalian: +2 DEX, -2 CON (Aetolian)

Character Classes

We associate each character class with a brotherhood, organisation, cult or college. This will prevent players from taking an unsuitable class and turning it something totally 'way out'. When players take a class they take up the trappings and roles of the Greek organisation that goes with it. Of course plugging the

player characters into the Greek world for a nice side-effect! The following classes (with their D&D equivalents) are available for player characters in **Heroes of Delphi**:

ARCADIAN PRIEST - Most Greek priests tend the altar in front of their temples, and are paid by the local city council. In wild Arcadia, land of ancient forests and towering mountains, worship of the gods is conducted less formally. The priests of Arcadia wander the land and tend altars hidden in caves or woodland grottos, or on mountaintops. The wilder tribes have no cities and their savage rituals are performed by the Arcadian Priests. Close to nature, these holy men revere the wilder sides of the Greek gods rather than their more civilized aspects. They worship Zeus Lycaon (wolf-like) above all the gods, for example, and from him gain the ability to shape change into beast form. Use the Druid class.

HOPLITE - The wars of the Greeks are waged and won by hoplites, heavily armoured soldiers marching shield to shield as a mighty phalanx. With their long thrusting spears, shining armour and nodding horse-hair crests, these tough fighters are very distinctive. In days past the citizens made up a part-time hoplite army, but in the 4th century BC most hoplite armies are mercenary forces. The armoured spearmen wander the world looking for employment, and fight faithfully for their employers. Some states still call their citizens to battle, but many prefer to rely on the hired hoplites. Use the Fighter class.

OLYMPIAN - The Olympians are professional athletes, members of a devoted athletic brotherhood that live to improve their bodies and minds. They are boxers, wrestlers, runners, javelin-throwers, practitioners of pankration fighting, and more. The brotherhood recruits every four years at the Olympic Games (at Olympia in Elis). It recruits from winners of the events. Olympians also compete in other contests around the Greek world. They live for excellence and competition, and make a living training those who pay for their time at public baths and by collecting prize money. Every Greek city has its own games organised on some festival, the largest are shared by several states. The most important are the pan Hellenic games, drawing competitors (and Olympians) from across the Greek world and included the Olympic Games (at Olympia), Pythian Games (held at Delphi), Nemean Games and the Isthmian Games (held near Corinth). These Games are consecrated respectively to Zeus, Apollo, Zeus (again) and to Poseidon. Lesser games are held every year (the Greater Dionysia at Athens) or every two years. Often the games of a city or group of states are only open to citizens of that city or state. Pan Hellenic games (held every four years) are open to any Greek. Use the Monk class.

ORPHIC - Orpheus was an ancient poet and hero that travelled to the underworld to free his love from the clutches of Hades. He was torn to pieces at his death. Orphics honour Orpheus with lyre-playing, music and poetry and they carry the message of reincarnation with them. They travel constantly and earn their living giving performances and teaching music to those who wish to learn this noble art. The Orphics are able to use magic. Imagine them as lyre-playing mystics. Use the Bard class.

PELTAST - While the hoplites, arrayed in their tight formations, form the devastating heart of every Greek army, they are protected on the battlefield by the peltasts. The peltasts are light troops, scouts and auxiliaries, mountain-men, hunters and barbarians who sell their services to Greek city-states. They move freely and quickly, scouting out enemy units, moving along trails, and searching for ambushes. In battle they fling javelins at the enemy in rapid succession, or pepper them with arrows or sling-shot. The peltasts have great knowledge of the wilderness. They get their name from the pelta, the small (and easily carried) wicker shield carried by them into battle. The first and still the best peltasts are from Thrace, but any rough hill-country in Greece (such as Aetolia or Acarnania) can provide hundreds of peltasts, ex-shepherds and huntsmen. Use the Ranger class. The human Feat Bonus must be allocated to Point-Blank Shot, and in return the character gains four javelins as part of his starting gear.

PHILOSOPHER - Philosophers are academics, thinkers, inventors, rhetoricians and wizards. They are men (and sometimes women!) who attempt to control the forces of the universe without regard for the gods. The first and greatest philosophers were Ionic. All philosophers are of 'good' alignment. Every member of this class must select a school from which he receives his training and with which he has an on-going relationship. The most common schools are:

Platonist

Plato, a student of Socrates, is alive and teaching at his Academy, in Athens (Neutral Good/ Conjuraton)

Pythagorean

A school popular in Magna Graecia, founded by Pythagoras (Neutral Good/Necromancy)

Megaran

Founded by a Euclid, student of Socrates, great debaters (Chaotic Good/Enchantment)

Milesians

Ancient Ionian school famous for its astronomers and engineers (Lawful Good/Transmutation)

Cynicism

Founded by Antisthenes, a pupil of Socrates, ascetics, beggars and preachers who revere Hercules (Chaotic Good/Abjuration)

One famous female Philosopher was Hipparchia the Cynic. Philosophers do not receive familiars and do not need to carry around a spell book. Instead their spells need only be kept safe in a library. New spells must be added to this library and the entire works consulted and re-read to go up a level. This takes one week per current level of uninterrupted study. To 'learn' spells ready for casting the next day, the Philosopher spends one hour in feverish calculation the day before. Use the Wizard class.

PYTHIAN - The Pythians are the archer guardians of Delphi and the countryside around it. Named after Python, the great dragon of the valley originally slain by Apollo, these tough mountain-men patrol the hills and slopes. They safeguard the trails, routes and roads used by pilgrims, as well as the treasures of Delphi.

Their wages are paid by the Amphictyonic League council. Apollo blesses the Pythians with magical powers, and like the god, they are skilled warriors and healers. Use the Paladin class.

ROGUE - The Greeks were fast-talking individuals, entrepreneurs and opportunists - all except the Spartans, at any rate! There were many rogues in Greek society, from the mythical Odysseus, to the Athenian playboy Alkibiades and the traitorous shepherd who led the Persian army around the pass of Thermopylae. In the 4th century BC every major city-state has its underworld of rogues; a secret society of thieves and con-men, assassins, spies, black-mailers and burglars. Some are free citizens; some are immigrants (metics) while others might even be slaves. A Rogue character begins with an affiliation to one such secret society, whether it is the Corinthian Pirates, the Red Thebans, the Elean Underworld, the Long Walls Gang of Athens or the Krypteia (Sparta's own anti-helot secret police). These societies work for themselves and often freelance their espionage and assassination services to factions within the city. Use the Rogue class.

SPARTAN - The Spartans are a brave, honourable warrior-people devoted to prowess in combat. They are a noble elite, a haughty aristocracy that looks down on all weaker races and nations. Its towns are inhabited by poor perioikoi ('dwellers round about') and a class of despised slaves called helots does much of the farming. A Spartan lives in a 'mess' with his mess-mates and rarely sees his family. He trains continually, honing his skills and proving his loyalty to the state. The Spartans are pious worshippers of the gods and of Sparta's ancient heroes - the Dioscurii (the Twins, Castor and Pollux). While they remain courageous and honourable, the Dioscurii grant the Spartan warriors wonderful powers of fortitude, fearlessness and violence on the battlefield. They wear their hair in long ringlets, fancifully kept, and are clad in distinctive scarlet cloaks. These cloaks hide blood-stains and keep up morale. Use the Barbarian class, with the proviso that the character *must* be Lawful (the general alignment of Spartan citizens is Lawful Neutral). In addition the class is proficient with heavy armour as well as medium and light armour. To compensate for this his Hit Die is d10, the same as the Hoplite.

SORCERER - The sorcerers of the 4th century BC have the blood of ancient gods and heroes from Greek myth flowing in their veins. They have magical powers; they are witches (if female) or seers (if male). Medea (lover of Jason) is the archetypal witch. Tireseas is the archetypal seer. Sorcerers are not common figures in Greece but are accepted figures in society. They are neither shunned nor applauded; perhaps they are a reminder of a primitive, unrestrained period in Greek history. All expect to receive payment for their services. There are a number of magical colleges in existence which female sorcerers may join, including the Delphics, the Dactyls, the Empusae and Medeans (the Thessalian Witches). Each focuses on a different school of magical specialisation. Use the Sorcerer class and allow familiars.

Sorcerous Schools

Dactyls Enchantment

Delphics Divination

Empusae Transformation

Medeans Necromancy

All male Sorcerers Divination

TEMPLE PRIEST - The polytheistic religion of the Greeks is world-renowned. Huge temples of marble were erected in the name of individual deities; often a city would adopt a patron god and shower that being with statues, shrines and temples. Priesthoods varied tremendously, in some places priests were permanently employed, in a few children held the posts, in Athens the priesthood was an office held for only a year or two. Assume that all temple priests are permanent staff, conducting daily sacrifices at the temple altar (outside the front of the temple) and overseeing other important rituals (including caring for the statue of the god and preparing the monthly festivals). A priest is devoted to his chosen god, but recognises and pays homage to the other Olympian deities also. He especially venerates any gods, goddesses, heroes or lesser beings related to the god in any way. Use the Cleric class. For a list of Greek deities and their domains, see later.

Notes on Greek Skills

All of the skills listed in the Players Handbook can stand, but the DM and players might like some further detail concerning a number of the skills and how they pertain to the Greek setting.

Craft

The crafts are not a prestigious way of life in Greek eyes; they tie a person down and reduce his independence. Many crafts are carried out by metics, Greeks living in foreign city-states. Greece is famous for its elegant and sophisticated pottery, and vase-painters are well thought of. The artistic skills required to design shields are also appreciated. Greece is also known for the stunning architecture found in many city-states, the stone-masons really know how to work in marble and limestone. Statues adorn temples and agoras, streets and private gardens. Bronzsmiths, creating works of intricate beauty, blacksmiths creating solid works for daily use and carpenters are other common craft occupations. Of course there are also bakers, dyers, tailors, cobblers, ship makers, jewellers, armourers, joiners, basket-weavers, leatherworkers and so on.

Knowledge

In **Heroes of Delphi** the DM might want to allow the players to select Knowledge skills from this list:

Arcana (ancient mysteries, witchcraft, magic traditions of Persia, Egypt, the Druids, etc)

Architecture (buildings, theatres, city-planning, fortifications, weak-points etc)

Geography (the Greek states, the Aegean, barbarian races and their customs)

History (the Greek states, mythic times, the heroes, the Trojan War, the Persian invasion, the Peloponnesian War and so on)

Local (intricate knowledge of the character's city-state, customs, history, people)

Nature (plants and animals, weather etc)

The Olympians (the gods and goddesses, mythic history, symbols, ceremonies, traditions)

Philosophy (knowledge of science, mathematics, geometry, and theories of the universe)

Perform

The Greeks use a number of different musical instruments. The lyre is the most common; it is a harp-like instrument with a sounding box. The kithara is a heavier version of the lyre used by professional musicians. There are bronze horns used by the army and in religious ceremonies, and for dinner parties and banquets the flute and the pan-pipes. Flute-girls are commonly hired to entertain the men at drinking parties. Other popular types of Greek artistic expression include dance, drama, tragedy, comedy, storytelling, Homeric epic, ballad and juggling. The great actors of Athenian theatre are masters of tragedy, drama and comedy.

Profession

There are many professions in the Greek world, some of the more common include herdsman, farmer, scribe, fisherman, engineer, architect, playwright, herbalist, physician, miller, siege engineer, house-slave, steward, barber, innkeeper, school-teacher, cook, sailor, courtesan, merchant, athletic trainer, sycophant and so on...

Speak Languages

The Greeks are insular and not keen to learn other languages. Crude barbarians aspire to learn Greek, not the other way around! Likewise they are very snobbish on the subject of one's own Greek dialect. Separated by mountain chains, a number of separate dialects have developed and these form very distinctive variations of Greek. A character can learn these different dialects and speak them like a native, this means there are no chances of misunderstanding and he will not stand out as an outsider. Greek characters learn dialects as if they were languages. The only foreign languages available for a Greek to learn are Italian and Phoenician.

Dialects

AEOLIC - Lesbos and the Asia Minor coast opposite, Boeotia and Thessaly.

ARCADIAN - The oldest dialect spoken in Arcadia, Pamphylia and on Cyprus.

DORIC - Spoken in Messenia, Laconia, Argos, Corinth, Syracuse (on Sicily), Megara, Crete, Rhodes and the islands of Thera, Melos, the Dodecanese and Cyrene.

IONIC - Attica and Athens, Euboea, the Chalcidian Peninsula, Lemnos, the Cyclades and Sporades and Ionia on the Asia Minor coast.

MACEDONIAN - This dialect of Greek is spoken by the northern mountain kingdoms and tribes.

WESTERN - Elis and Achaea, Phocis, Locris, Aetolia and Doris.



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HEROES OF DELPHI



WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

There are a number of small-scale changes to the weapon and equipment lists that are necessary to convert D20 to ancient Greece.

Coinage

As in D&D the standard coin is a silver piece, called, in Greece, a drachma. Silver coins of greater value are very common, including the didrachm (worth 2 silver pieces) and the tetradrachma (worth 4 silver pieces). A rarer coin is the 10-drachma piece called a decadrachm. Finally tiny silver coins called obols are worth (in **Heroes of Delphi** at any rate) one-tenth of a drachma. This is how D&D coins compare:

1 gold piece = 1 silver decadrachm
1 silver piece = 1 silver drachma
1 copper = 1 silver obol

On page 155 of the Dungeon Master's Guide details are given of the role of the moneychanger. This profession was a lucrative one in ancient Greece. City-states are jealous of their own coinage and often demand that 'foreign' coins are exchanged (for a price) by these middlemen in the city agoras (meeting place market) across Greece. The DM should decide for himself whether or not he wants to use the historical moneychanger in his game, or whether he wants to gloss over this aspect of life for the sake of simplicity.

Weapons

Obviously in any game set within a particular historical period, the entire gamut of D&D weaponry will not be available. In **Heroes of Delphi** there are no exotic weapons and there are only a limited number of simple and martial weapons available for Greek characters. The weapon of choice is the 2-3m long spear, useable one handed (making it a Medium weapon not a Large one) and weighing only 3 lb. It is cheap, dangerous and nasty. By contrast the humble short sword and scimitar are sidearms, second-rate weapons used as a last ditch measure. Likewise shields are very popular, almost a required piece of kit. Get a shield!

*The available **Simple Weapons** are:*

Unarmed Strike
Dagger
Sickle
Club
Quarterstaff (bakterion)
Shortspear
Sling
Javelin

The available **Martial Weapons** include:

Handaxe
Lance (kamax)
Shortsword
Scimitar (machaira)
Great Club
Longspear
Shortbow
Composite Shortbow

Armour

The Greeks recognised the division of combat protection into light, medium and heavy and there was a single type of Greek armour for each category.

Heavy Armour

The combatant wears an expensive bronze breastplate as well as a crested Corinthian helm that protects the nose, cheeks and neck. His legs are protected by bronze greaves and his forearms by bronze vambraces.

Cost 600 gp
Armour Bonus +6
Max Dex Bonus +0
Armour Check Penalty -6
Spell Failure 40%
Speed 20ft*
Weight 40lb
Donning 4 minutes/1 minute/1 minute

Medium Armour

The warrior wears a corselet of white stiffened linen with shoulder straps and a skirt of tough linen strips (pteruges). He continues to wear greaves on his legs and either a Corinthian helm, the simpler Pylos helm (which is a tapered dome shape without any neck or face protection), a Petasos helm (a metal sun-hat worn by cavalry) or a Phrygian helm (tapering to a blunt point).

Cost 200 gp
Armour Bonus +4
Max Dex Bonus +3
Armour Check Penalty -4
Spell Failure 25%
Speed (30ft) 20ft
Weight 30lb
Donning 4 minutes/1 minute/1 minute

Light Armour

The combatant has no greaves or vambraces and has abandoned encumbering body armour. Instead he wears only a metal helmet.

Cost 15 gp
Armour Bonus +1
Max Dex Bonus +8
Armour Check Penalty 0
Spell Failure 5%
Speed (30ft) 30ft
Weight 3lb
Donning 1 round/1 round/1 round

Shields

Two types of shield are very common in Greece, the small leather-covered wicker shield called the pelta, and the large wooden shield covered with bronze called the hoplon. The hoplon is used by hoplites and the pelta used by skirmishers and peltasts. Note that some barbarian tribes might use large wicker shields; the Persian army makes great use of them. In **Heroes of Delphi** shields are more useful than their D&D counterparts.

Shield, small (wicker/wood)

Cost 3 gp, Armour Bonus +2, Armour Check Penalty -1, Spell Failure 5%, Weight 5lb

Shield, large (wicker/wood)

Cost 7 gp, Armour Bonus +3, Armour Check Penalty -2, Spell Failure 5%, Weight 10lb

Shield, large (bronze-covered)

Cost 20 gp, Armour Bonus +2, Armour Check Penalty -2, Spell Failure 5%, Weight 15lb

Equipment

The following items of equipment from the Players Handbook are not found in the Greek world:

Backpack
Barrel
Bottle
Flint & Steel
Lantern
Mirror, Small Steel
Mug
Paper
Piton
Ram
Rope, Silk
Sledge
Soap
Spyglass
Climber's Kit
Disguise Kit
Magnifying Glass
Water Clock
Monk's Outfit
Ale
Barding
Dog, Riding
War Pony
Saddle, Exotic
Sled

However, the DM should add the following items to the equipment lists:

Shoulder Bag 1 gp, 1lb
Amphora 2 gp, 30 lb
Olives 2 cp, 1/2lb
Honey 1 sp, 1/2lb
Fish Cakes 1 sp, 1/2lb
Flint & Tinder 1 sp, *

Ships

The Rowboat and Keelboat (called in ancient Greece a Round Ship) have their Greek equivalents. The Longship is a very light galley called a pentekonter (and the Greek equivalent also sports a ram). Meanwhile the D&D Galley is the formidable Greek trireme, the undisputed mistress of the Mediterranean and the heaviest warship of the period. It has three banks of oars. The D&D Warship is the bireme, sporting two banks of oars, an older design, but useful as a second-line ship and the favoured vessel of small states and pirates. There are no Sailing Ships.

Siege Engines

The earliest known artillery pieces were invented in 400BC in Syracuse, just within our time frame. The D&D Ballista has its Greek equivalent called the katapeltes (literally 'shield-piercer' - the origin of our word catapult). The Greeks had their own Rams, often metal-plated points for penetration. They were also experimenting with the onager ('wild ass') which is an early Heavy Catapult. These cost three times the standard D&D price due to their rarity. There are no Light Catapults. Siege Towers are well known, in fact the Trojan Horse is suspected by many historians to have been a very early siege tower.



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COMBAT - GREEK STYLE

My intention has been to write a Greek setting for D&D, not to rewrite the game. The combat rules as they stand should therefore stand up as well as ever to the rigours of fantasy roleplay. Having read the Iliad and the Odyssey and historical accounts like Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War, it becomes apparent that the Greeks liked a bit of gore. They liked a lot of gore! Flick through the Iliad. Pick a paragraph at random, more than likely it has one hero sticking a spear into the guts of another, spilling crimson blood everywhere, popping his bladder and getting his spear point stuck in the spine of his victim. No, really! So although the intent and epic push of D&D's rules work fine, I include here two or three 'gritty' combat options to make those fights grim and nasty (but not necessarily more fatal!) all in the spirit of Greek tragedy.

Traumatic Damage

If damage is sustained by a character, that exceeds his or her Constitution, then that hero becomes Prone. If a Fortitude save is then failed (DC = damage+10) then the character is also stunned for a number of rounds equal to the amount the damage exceeded CON. He is writhing in agony, hurt and maybe confused.

Impaled

When a character is hit by an arrow, javelin or other piercing ranged weapon (or a piercing melee weapon that does a critical and is stuck in the body) the weapon is stuck. Until it is removed the victim loses his DEX bonus to AC and will take further damage. He can take only a partial action each round, and if he performs any strenuous action he takes 1pt of damage (if an arrow, 2 pts of damage if a hand weapon, or javelin) after completing he act. Strenuous actions include running, attacking, casting a spell or using any ability that requires physical exertion or mental concentration. Removing the weapon requires a DC 15 Fortitude check. If failed the hero suffers the minimum damage inflicted by the weapon (or critical if that occurred).

Critical Effects

A critical hit assumes a hit into a vulnerable body location, usually with some additional effect. Roll on the Hit Location table below - that location is rendered useless.

1d10 Roll

- 1 Right Leg (can drag leg, half speed)
- 2 Left Leg (can drag leg, half speed)
- 3 Abdomen (falls, needs help to move at half speed)
- 4-5 Chest (can stand, no exertions allowed, half speed)
- 6-7 Right Arm (cannot use)*
- 8-9 Left Arm (cannot use)*
- 10 Head (knocked out for 2-12 rounds if a DC 15 Fort check failed, or for 1 round if succeeded)

* Note that a shield arm cannot suffer a critical from a weapon strike if a shield is being held

What Feats Are Appropriate?

There are only two D&D Feats that I would recommend cutting for the purposes of Heroes of Delphi; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (because there are no exotic weapons) and Rapid Reload (because there are no crossbows). A number of other feats are either very uncommon and should be restricted, while a number are highly suitable for a game of hoplite warfare. Let's look at the Feats which have a bearing on the Greek setting:

Dirty Fighting – This Feat is Pankration, the ancient Greek art of all-in wrestling. This type of Greek martial art used every type of nasty move, hold, gouge and break.

Dual Strike – A great Feat for old comrades who've fought on the battlefield together.

Endurance – We all remember the story of the Athenian hoplite who was sent to call for reinforcements during the Battle of Marathon. His heroic run (which ended with his collapse and death) is still celebrated by the modern marathon running race. With all that marching about and the tough mountainous terrain, Endurance is good. Very appropriate.

Hold The Line – Another perfect hoplite-era Feat!

Improved Bull Rush – Recommended! This Feat would work best if it demanded the use of a large shield (especially since it simultaneously protects the 'rusher'). A good hoplite tactic!

Improved Criticals – Spear combat does conjure up images of well placed strikes with spearheads striking vital organs between armour, something harder to imagine with axes and swords. I would recommend limiting Improved Criticals to spear use, again de-emphasizing the use of swords and axes (which are considered back-up weapons).

Mounted Archery – Greek cavalry have no experience with mounted archery, but plenty of practice at lobbing javelins at their enemies. Luckily the Mounted Archery Feat can easily double as a Mounted Javelin Feat.

Run – Perfect for the athletes, the Olympians. In fact it would be a sad Olympian who did not have this Feat.

Shield Expert – Another perfect hoplite-era Feat, focussing on the shield, the main-stay of the tactics of the day.

Shot on the Run – The perfect Peltast Feat! Use with rocks, slings, javelins or short-bows.

Spirited Charge – Greek cavalry were not skilled at using shock cavalry tactics; limit this Feat to the Macedonian Royal Companion Cavalry. They changed the nature of ancient warfare with their shock charges and devastating ability in battle.

Two Weapon Fighting (and Improved Two Weapon Fighting) – This was an age of the spear and shield. Two weapon fighting would be extremely rare. DMs should remember this.



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THE GODS OF THE GREEKS

The gods rule the universe from the top of Mount Olympus. There were originally twelve Olympians, feeding off ambrosia and nectar served to them by Ganymede the cup bearer. Each god has a palace and intrigues with the other Olympians for power and influence. Many times has this august assembly been at odds, the Trojan War for one. At one time each god sponsored their favourite heroes in glorious quests and bitter blood feuds on earth, but today their influence is achieved through the priests of their cult. Each god has a host of temples scattered across the Greek-speaking world. These temples are only very loosely affiliated. In many cases each temple is dedicated to a different aspect of the god. Worship takes place at an altar outside the front steps of a temple, but still within the sacred precinct (temenos). Sheep or goats are sacrificed and burnt as an offering to the god, the cooked flesh then eaten as a sacred meal. Wine can also be offered to the gods as a libation.

Zeus

The king of the Olympian gods. He is a powerful god of sovereignty, mastery, government and victory in warfare. As a god on high he is associated with storms, rain, tempests and with thunder and lightning. He watches over the affairs of the Greeks from on high. He is supreme judge and his realm is the Heavens (Earth belongs to his brother Poseidon, the Underworld to his other brother Hades).

Symbol: The eagle and the thunderbolt.

Main Temples: He has a shrine at Dodonna in Epirus, but his greatest sanctuary is the magnificent temple of Zeus at Olympia in Elis, home of the Olympic Games.

Domains: Law, War, Strength, Air

Worshippers: Nobles, leaders, soldiers

Hera

The matronly wife of Zeus, Hera is associated with the sky and with the moon. God of women and of childbirth and marriage, she is rarely invoked by adventurers. Hera punished many of Zeus' lovers, and could be said to have also embodied jealousy.

Symbol: The peacock is her cult animal, her other symbol is the pomegranate.

Main Temples: At Argos Hera has five or six temples! The greatest of her temples is on Samos and was built by the Argonauts.

Domains: Destruction, Law, Protection

Worshippers: House-keepers, stewards, defenders, seekers of vengeance

Ares

A brash god of warfare, Ares is popular with adventurers. Ares is invoked also for revenge. He is not a subtle god of grand strategy but an up-front believer in raw combat.

Symbol: Blazing torch and the spear.

Main Temples: He has a temple at Athens, Sparta and Olympia. He has a spring and a shrine at Thebes.

Domains: Destruction, Evil

Worshippers: Mercenaries

Hestia

The goddess of the home and hearth. The family and community are associated with her gentle cult.

Bakers also sacrifice to her.

Symbol: A fire

Main Temples: Delphi houses the common hearth of Greece, Hestia's great shrine.

Domains: Fire, Protection

Worshippers: Housewives, magistrates, city officials, stewards

Hephaestus

The god of fire, smiths and craftsmen in general, Hephaestus is a brawny, lame god. He is also associated with volcanoes. In myth he built many fantastic devices, some of which are hidden about the world in labyrinths and on remote islands. His wife is the adulterous Aphrodite.

Symbol: Hammer and tongs

Main Temples: Lemnos, various sites on Sicily (his forge is within Mt. Etna)

Domains: Fire, Strength

Worshippers: Blacksmiths, bronzeworkers, armourers, jewellers

Hermes

The winged messenger of the gods, Hermes is also the god of thieves, travellers and merchants.

Hermes guides the spirits of the dead to the underworld, and wayside marker stones are dedicated to him. The great cults to Hermes are run by the merchant brotherhoods to which they owe their good fortune. Gamblers too, pray to him.

Symbol: Hermae, phallic pillars on street corners, cross-roads and gateways, winged sandals, caduceus (winged staff entwined with serpents)

Main Temples: Strong in Arcadia, but there are no temples, only statues and images - most temple priests of Hermes are permanent travellers, much like their god.

Domains: Luck, Travel, Trickery

Worshippers: Traders, thieves, travellers

Apollo

A god of sunlight, musicians, fortune-tellers and medicine. This bold and potent god is also the protector of herdsmen, but it is his association with the sun that is most strong. His deadly and unerring skill with the bow is symbolic of rays of light. But his typical symbol is the lyre. Many famous seers and soothsayers claim to have been given their powers by Apollo. So pivotal is the cult of Apollo at Delphi, a complete section is devoted to the god, his cult and his origins (see [Apollo and His Shrines](#)).

Symbol: His symbols are the bow and lyre.

Main Temples: The greatest cult centre is Delphi, home of the oracle. The island of Delos is also sacred to Apollo and houses an extensive sanctuary.

Domains: Healing, Sun, Knowledge

Worshippers: Shepherds, soothsayers, hunters, physicians

Demeter

This gentle goddess presides over agriculture, fertility and the earth. Her sister Persephone spends six months of the year with Hades, symbolising the changing seasons. Her cult is accompanied by orgies, and her temples, often found in forests, are called megara.

Symbol: The sheaf of corn.

Main Temples: Eleusis, where a great mystery festival is held each year for initiates, other centres include Arcadia, Argos and Attica.

Domains: Earth, Plant, Good

Worshippers: Farmers

Poseidon

The brother of Zeus, Poseidon is the god of the oceans and seas, as well as earthquakes and horses.

A harsh and unrelenting god, Poseidon shows his anger with floods, storms and earthquakes. Sailors fear him.

Symbol: The symbol of Poseidon is the trident and horse.

Main Temples: Corinth is the site of his greatest cult, but he is also revered at Rhodes and Taenarus.

Domains: Luck, Water, Strength

Worshippers: Sailors, cavalry-men, horse-breeders

Aphrodite

The amorous goddess of love, beauty and sex, married (in the myths) to Hephaestus. She is fickle and passionate, and prone to initiating liaisons and romances. Young lovers pray to her.

Symbol: A seashell

Main Temples: Her cult centre is on the island of Cythera and Paphos on Cyprus. The Spartans worship her as Aphrodite the Warrior.

Domains: Luck, Trickery, Protection

Worshippers: Courtesans, sailors

Dionysus

A god of wine, pleasure and revelry often invoked at bars, banquets and orgies. Since he is associated with wine cultivation he represents both the pleasures of wine and its darker side of mad passions and abuse. His favourite method of punishing wrong-doers is through madness. His cult throw wild orgies at which respectable women dance wildly in the countryside to the sound of raucous music.

Symbol: Pine-cone staff

Main Temples: Orchomenus, Athens, Lesbos, Naxos.

Domains: Plant, Trickery

Worshippers: Actors, playwrights, entertainers, vintners

Artemis

Artemis is the virgin sister of Apollo, and she is the goddess of hunting and of wildlife. As a fertility goddess she is invoked by mothers as well as more typically hunters. She has a lunar aspect and is well known as a great and deadly archer. She is revered especially in Arcadia.

Symbol: A burning torch, the she-bear or a faithful hound.

Main Temples: Sparta, Delos, Aegina and Caryae in Laconia. Artemis also has a fabulous sanctuary at Ephesus in Ionia.

Domains: Animal, Earth, Protection

Worshippers: Hunters, women

Athena

Athena is the goddess of wisdom and inventiveness, of women and the arts and crafts. Other professions looked to her, including doctors, teachers, actors, poets and students. Athena is the armour-clad virgin daughter of Zeus and burst, fully armed from his head. She is a warrior who fights for order, peace and righteous causes. After her birth she dispensed advice to her father.

Symbol: The owl is her main symbol, but she is also famous for the aegis, a shield emblazoned with the terrifying face of Medusa.

Main Temples: Her cult centre is the city of Athens, and she has a splendid temple, the Parthenon, atop the Acropolis there.

Domains: Knowledge, War, Protection

Worshippers: Soldiers, nobles, defenders, craftsmen.

Hades

The grim and dark god of the Underworld who rules with his wife Persephone. He has no temples and no organised cult. Those who wish to call upon him must dig pits to throw down their sacrifices. He is an aspect of death.

Symbol: Cypress tree, narcissus

Main Temples: His centres of worship are mysterious entrances to the Underworld. He has no temples and no common public shrines.

Domains: Death, Magic, Law

Worshippers: Female sorcerers (witches)

Asclepius

The son of Apollo, the god of medicine and doctors. Asclepius was in trouble with Hades because he was preventing the new intake of the dead from arriving, as they should have.

Symbol: Caduceus, the winged staff with a snake coiled around it, snakes.

Main Temples: Asclepius has a healing temple at Epidauris in the Argolid, a sanctuary

incorporating a holy dormitory where the sick can rest overnight and pray that the god welcomes their sacrifice and heals them.

Domains: Healing, Good

Worshippers: Physicians

Dioscurii

The Twins of ancient myth, Castor and Pollux, great heroes of Sparta and brothers of Helen of Troy. They are the patrons of sailors and other travellers and are associated with hospitality as well as warfare and the legions.

Symbol: The Dioscurii are associated with an egg-shaped cap crowned with a star, horses and St Elmo's Fire.

Main Temples: Sparta

Domains: Travel, War

Worshippers: Sailors, soldiers, travellers

Hercules

This hero from ancient myth became a god long ago and his fabulous feats of daring and strength are known to every living soul, for Hercules travelled far and wide. All know of his Twelve Labours. Today, Hercules embodies endurance, fortitude, courage and stamina. The god is popular amongst mercenaries and other fighters, as well as travellers of many kinds. He is associated with lions, archery, and the club. Many towns and villages in Greece have shrines to this cult.

Symbol: The club.

Main Temples: Thebes, Argos

Domains: Strength, War, Good

Worshippers: Soldiers

The Muses

Nine daughters of Zeus, goddesses of music, the arts, science, dance, theatre and history. Apollo leads the Muses.

Nike

Specifically a goddess of the armies, an embodiment of victory and conquest.

The Furies

Female demons serving the gods. Daughters of Gaea, they are monstrous hags with canine faces and black wings, serpent-haired and wielding long whips. They hunt down offenders and send them mad. The three Furies are not vindictive, but impartial.

Morpheus & Somnus

Two gods of sleep, often mistaken for one another. Somnus rules sleep in general, and Morpheus is the god of dreams.

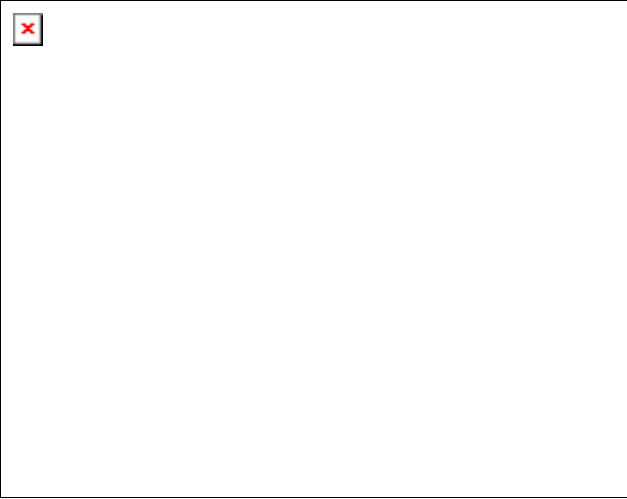


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HEROES OF DELPHI



THE ADVENTURES BEGIN!

Delphi is in trouble. As the omphalos or 'navel of the world', it is the heart of Greece and the centre of the known world. If Delphi falls to King Philip then a shocking blow to Greek morale will have been struck. Phocis, the Amphictyonic League and the other states of Greece have begun (haphazardly and half-heartedly) to rally round to Delphi's defence. What role might a party of player-characters have within such a campaign? Ideally they should be fighting to defend Delphi and its allies from Macedonian domination.

1- Hoplite For Hire: Perhaps the easiest and most unsatisfactory method is to have the PCs assemble as mercenaries, hired by the Delphic priesthood or the Amphictyonic League to fight a guerrilla war and act as agents of the oracle.

2- The Prophecy: What if each PC has been sent by their city-state to Delphi to ask the oracle a question (a very common occurrence). Like many in Greek times they travel on the road together, musing over the oracle's possible answers. The oracle's prophecy for each character ties them together in a sacred venture - their futures are bound together. The goal of this venture forms the goal of the campaign.

3- Wreaths of Olive Leaf: The PCs might meet at the Pythian Games (held at Delphi) or the Olympic Games (held at Olympia in Elis). Any Greek male can compete if they wish, and those who do not can just be conducting other business. The Games are great meeting places for Greeks. Macedonian treachery behind the scenes and an appeal for all the witnesses (the PCs!) to exact vengeance should see the player characters embroiled.

4- Many Streams Make a River: The DM might want to have each PC begin the campaign alone. An introductory scenario could set up antipathy against the Macedonians. When each PC makes inquiries about seeking revenge, the trail leads to a common point - the player characters meet up and have hatred in common.

5- The Seven Spears: The Seven Samurai, Greek-style (or any number actually!). One of the PCs needs to be a Pythian sent out from Delphi to fulfil an oracle and find six (or whatever number fits your gaming group) heroes in the making. The first scenario will detail their eventful meetings, and will be a series of montages in which our Pythian stumbles upon each hero and asks him to join him. Forewarned about the nature of the 'pre-ordained' scenario, each player can create, narrate and resolve his own scene with all the energy and style he can muster. Other players might be able to play the parts of various NPCs in this scene.

As a nifty extra the Pythian might be carrying X number of golden medallions, minted at Delphi, these are handed to a candidate (maybe surreptitiously). The recipient is honoured by Apollo and

bound to serve him until the task appointed is completed. Maybe the medallion can be openly passed on to another hero who is willing to take the PC's place.

6- The Last Men Standing: The player characters who might well have a place on the battlefield (hoplites, Spartans, peltasts, and Pythians) are the survivors of a battle against a Macedonian force that has moved south to take a town in Phocis. The allied contingent has been routed or killed and the Macedonians have forced their way into the city. The player characters meet up in the mountains with scavenged weapons and supplies, surrounded by hostile Macedonian peltasts (probably Thracian tribesmen) scouring the hills for survivors. The player character survivors need help and will find friends quickly (other player characters who could be refugees from the occupied city). Now what? Try to liberate the city single-handed? Or make a dash for help from the Phocians, Delphians or Greeks further a-field? What's the plan?

Scenario Design

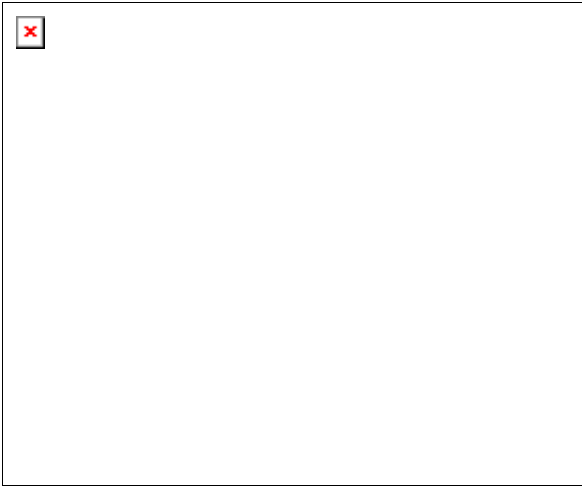
Nearly all of the traditional D&D-style adventure ideas should work to a greater or lesser extent. Of course the fight for Delphi provides an underlying theme, one of protection from evil, with the Macedonians as the evil dominators. Alexander is the evil and twisted heir apparent, a monstrous demon with megalomaniacal designs, Philip is the ferocious warlord married to (perhaps controlled by) his sorceress wife Olympia. Macedonians can be the bad guys, as can their barbarian allies, the Thracians. But still there are dungeons (better called 'labyrinths' in this Greek setting); perhaps old structures left over from the archaic period and of course all those magical labyrinths and hidden places that could have been created in the era of Greek myths. Cave systems where a god was born, the hidden repository of one of Hephaestus' fabulous creations (Talos, anybody?). Think laterally, not just of stone-built corridors and rooms, but of valleys, caves, forest groves, mountain peaks, magical pools hidden deep in the mountains, ancient ruins of some long-dead hero's citadel, or subterranean passages underneath cities - the haunt of secret societies or witches. Greek 'dungeons' are as likely to be situated in and formed out of the wilderness, as they are to be stone constructions.



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MONSTERS & MAGIC

Looking at the Monster Manual

Although **Heroes of Delphi** has a historical setting, we populate the setting with the monsters of Greek myth and legend (and some others too, in the spirit of the myths). Treat these as you would the traditional Greek monsters. They aren't super abundant, they don't wander the countryside on a daily basis, they exist in out of the way places, or sent to ravage some poor city (or poor soul) by the vengeful gods.

The list that follows has been compiled from the Monster Manual, these are recommended monsters for a Heroes of Delphi campaign. Nearly all others in that book are unsuitable either on locality or flavour. New names, in keeping with the Greek setting, may be given in parenthesis.

Animals (*including: Bat, Black Bea, Bison/Cattle, Boar, Cat, Dog, Donkey, Eagle, Hawk, Horse/Lt., Lion, Mule, Owl, Pony, Porpoise, Rat, Raven, Snake/Viper, Wolf*)

Assassin Vine (*Tantalus Vine*)

Azer (*Cabiri - the forgemasters of Samothrace*)

Centaur

Chimera

Blink Dog (*Laelaps the gifted hunting hound*)

Dire Animals (*various examples occur in the myths including Wolf, Bear, Boar and Lion*)

Dryad

Elemental

Ettin (*Orthrus*)

Hill Giants (*Greek giants are solitary sheep-herding barbarians, and one-eyed Hill Giants make fine Cyclopes*)

Ghost

Giant Eagle (*servant of Zeus*)

Giant Owl (*servant of Athena*)

Golems (*Clay, Stone and Iron - not Flesh*)

Gorgon (*Colchis Bull*)

Griffon

Harpy

Hippogriff

Hobgoblin (*Sown Man; foul warrior springing up from the sown teeth of rare dragons*)

Hydra

Invisible Stalker

Lamia

Lammasu

Lillend (*Echidna*)

Lycanthrope

Manticore

Medusa

Merfolk (*Tritons, ignore the MM 'Triton' entry*)

Minotaur

Mohrg

Monstrous Spider

Monstrous Scorpion

Nightmare (*Poseidon's Steed*)
Nymph
Pegasus
Satyr
Shield Guardian (*Talos*)
Skeleton
Spectre
Sphinx
Titan (*surely these are great candidates for the gods themselves! Reading the Iliad, one notices that mortal heroes can inflict wounds against the gods and sometimes defeat them in battle - just!*)
Treant (*Hammadryad*)
Wraith

Magic Items

Just as there are many Greek-inspired monsters in D&D3E, so too there are plenty of Greek-inspired magic items. Of course the Greek myths were littered with magical devices of every kind, the god Hephaestus, for example, knocked out dozens of them! All of the different categories of magic item; armour and shields, weapons, potions, rings, rods, scrolls, staffs, wands and wondrous items all fit the setting nicely. There are no intelligent magic items, however. One thing to note about Greek magical artefacts is the fact that often they look spectacular. Often beautifully worked and ornate, made of precious metals (or at least inlaid with precious metals). There are exceptions, but generally, the magic within is mirrored by the items appearance. Obviously, with some aspects of the game traditional fantasy world absent some items cannot exist. Things like the Mithril Shirt, Elven Chain, magical nunchaku and so on. Use the notes in Heroes of Delphi as a guide. The Dungeon Master's Guide recommends that DMs provide more evocative names for magical items, and I heartily agree. Having the Greek myths as a backdrop makes such a task a breeze. A +3 Shield of Arrow Deflection? Make that the Golden Shield of Agamemmnnon (who invoked the wrath of Apollo during the Trojan War and who had to watch as the god peppered his troops with deadly arrows). A Javelin of Lightning makes a wonderful Thunderbolt of Zeus (that god always had a fistful of these things!). The Robe of Eyes could be the hide of Argus (the monster with one hundred eyes). And so on. Many of the Wondrous Items resemble the exotic magical items that turn up in the myths.

Artefacts, of course, being the upper end of magical creation could potentially stand in for the relics of the Olympians, the very weapons and tools wielded by the great Greek gods in ages past. However, those listed in the DMG are not particularly suitable for a Greek campaign, but then whole purpose of artefacts is for the DM to create them especially for his campaign. In many cases high level magic items will suffice. Are Winged Boots actually the winged sandals worn by Hermes? Is a +5 Cloak of Resistance the hide of the Nemean Lion worn by Hercules?



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HEROES OF DELPHI



ASPECTS OF GREECE

Although Greece is small, its inhabitants make up a very diverse population. Co-operation is always very rare and the mountains divide one set of Greeks from another. Naturally these groups have become self-sufficient, competitive and defensive, and typically a prominent city has grown up to dominate the local area. This city-state wields tremendous power, forming a corporate body of citizens who often participate in its running through democracy or through a tribal representative. Other states retain a government by traditional aristocratic families, still others by popular leader. Only the Spartans retain a kingship. Best use of this information can be made in combination with a map of Greece printed off from one of the links in the next section. The Greek states of note (in general order of power and importance) include:

ATHENS

The greatest of the Greek city-states, Athens has played a leading role in the affairs and conflicts of Greece for more than a century. Its heyday was during the Persian invasions when the Athenians rallied the Greeks and organised resistance. After this they bound many states together in a defensive treaty (the Delian League), but the Persians never returned and Athens grew richer, mightier and more tyrannical as time passed. The Spartans championed the states that were unhappy with Athens, resulting in the Peloponnesian War. Athens has always been a seafaring city and boasts a powerful navy of triremes (with triple-banked oars). The great harbour of the city is called the Piraeus. Much of Athens wealth comes from the Laurion silver mines (in Attica, the district around Athens) and from overseas dependencies (in the northern Aegean and the Black Sea). In religion the citizens revere Athena, but Demeter is also highly thought-of and a great festival occurs each year with a vast procession to neighbouring Eleusis. The Athenians love free speech and the theatre, holding annual competitions for drama and comedy. The government is an assembly of the city's five hundred free men that vote on issues and are elected to office. They are universally suspicious of any form of government that does not conform to democracy.

SPARTA

The great rival of Athens, Sparta is a very unique Greek city-state. It holds a vast territory in the southern Peloponnese called Laconia and in the past enslaved many inhabitants of near-by Messenia. That state has been free since 371 BC. The Spartans are the only people to retain a kingship; in fact they have two kings and a council of elders (the Gerousia). Affairs of state are overseen by magistrates called ephors. Everything in Sparta is traditionalist and primitive. The citizens who have any say at all are of noble blood, hereditary warriors living in permanent state of military readiness in communal messes. Spartans rarely see their families; to do so is a sign of weakness. Even so, Spartan females are athletic and tough and scandalize their Greek neighbours with their readiness to exercise. Most weak babies are exposed on the mountainsides (hence the increased CON). The early years of a Spartan are one long trial of pain and hardship. By manhood a

Spartan is an unflinching warrior, a pursuer of glory in battle and a loyal fighter for Spartan supremacy. So brutally do they treat their slaves (helots) that the Spartans must be ever ready to defend themselves against helot uprisings. Sometimes they massacre helots who show any signs of boldness. Sometimes the paranoid Spartans eject all foreigners from Laconia and are then free to commit atrocities against the helots away from prying eyes. A secret police (krypteia) is crucial in the fight against rebellion.

THEBES

Thebes is the greatest city state of Boeotia, a wide rural landscape that is stifling hot in summer and bitterly cold in winter. The territory is hemmed in by mountain chains on the north and west, and it has access to the Aegean only indirectly by the narrow Gulf of Euboea. A fertile district, the Boeotians are known as uncivilised farmers. There are two major regions of Boeotia; a fertile plain dominated by Thebes, and the slopes of the mountains dominated by the city of Orchomenus. An oligarchy of great landed proprietors rules the state, and like other territories have come together to form a confederacy. There is a common federal currency (bearing the twin-notched Boeotian shield on the reverse - the symbol of the state), a Boeotian army commanded by ten Boeotarchs and a new and vigorous spirit of Boeotian dominance in Greek affairs. With Thebes at the helm, the Boeotian Confederacy continues to go from strength to strength.

THESSALY

A large, flat and fertile territory in northern Greece. Horse-breeding is popular and powerful aristocratic families have made cavalry the backbone of the military. Some of the most powerful autocratic dynasties include the Aleuadae of Larisa and the Scopadae of Crannon. Democracy has barely had a chance in Thessaly, so powerful are the old aristocratic land-owners. In times of war these families unite into a loose alliance (the Thessalian Confederation) commanded by a nominated official, the tagus. The fortunes of this Thessalian Confederation have been, at best, unhappy. Rarely has it proven to be a threat to the rest of Greece, instead it has been split by infighting. Jason, the tyrant of Pherae, was assassinated in living memory, and his successor, Alexander, proved to be just as ambitious and ruthless. The other dynasties called upon the barbaric Macedonians for help against Alexander, but found their presence odious. Instead they turned to the Greek city of Thebes for assistance. Thebes has intervened in Thessalian affairs, treating it as a protectorate. Thessaly contains the mountains Ossa, Pelion and Othrys, and is crossed by the river Peneus that flows through the magical Vale of Tempe.

CORINTH

Corinth sits on a narrow land-bridge (isthmus) connecting the Peloponnese to northern Greece. Because of its site it became first and foremost a commercial city, shipping goods (and even entire ships) across the isthmus, manufacturing pottery and cultivating olive oil and wine on the adjacent plain. In ancient times successful tyrants ruled Corinth. Its rich merchants are reluctant to engage the city in any wars at all. The city was famed for its temple to Aphrodite and its priestesses were prostitutes, serving the countless visitors, traders and adventurers who passed through the city walls.

MACEDONIA

In the 4th century, Macedonia, forever considered a barbaric and primitive kingdom of warrior-heroes, steps into the light. It is a vast northern kingdom ranging across mountain ranges, marshy plains and dense forests with no large cities. In addition, most of Macedonia's rivers do not dry up in summer, making the land very different from the rest of Greece. Its inhabitants speak a language closely related to Greek and the Greeks scorn them for it. The government of Macedon is a kingship, King Philip the Warlord depends on a strata of warrior-heroes and rival tribes in the old Greek tradition, rather than a state bureaucracy. Gift-giving, blood ties and clan loyalties count for everything. Macedonian society depends on agriculture, stock breeding and hunting for revenue. Philip has entered Greek politics with a flourish (and an army of phalangites), won a victory at the Olympic Games and lived for a time in Thebes where he absorbed Greek culture and ideas. Philip understands the weaknesses of the Greeks - and is ready to exploit them!

AMPHICTYONIC LEAGUE

The Amphictyonic League was composed of the states and cities surrounding the sacred shrine of Apollo at Delphi. Each participating state had a vote and was represented by two delegates sent to Delphi called pylagorai and hieromnemones. The league council is responsible for religious ceremonies, administration, the regular athletic games and the other communal festivals held at Delphi. The council tried to abstain from inter-state politics, giving the League a good deal of

prestige amongst the Greeks.

PHOCIS

Phocis is a state to the north of the Gulf of Corinth, bordered by Locris to the north, Boeotia to the east and Doris and Locris to the west. The Phocians have fought viciously against the Thessalians in the past. When Persia invaded in 480 BC the Phocians were overwhelmed and forced to co-operate, but at the earliest opportunity Phocis revolted and fought to expel the Persian army. Phocis has periodically controlled Delphi (a shrine of international importance within Phocian territory) but always lost that control. Today it dominates Delphi once more - at a cost in human life. The state is mountainous and its highest (and most famous) peak is Mount Parnassus. The cities of Phocis include Lilaea, Hyampolis, Anticyra, Parapotamii, Panopeus, Daulis and Abe.

DORIS

A small and mountainous state to the north of Mount Parnassus, caught between Phocis, Locris and Aetolia. Its heartland is a fertile valley between Parnassus and Mount Oeta. Considered by most Greeks to be the birthplace of the race.

AETOLIA

This huge mountain state lies north of the Gulf of Corinth and west of Locris and Phocis. The only city of note is Thermum, the rest of the population being scattered through numerous mountain villages. Thermum is home to a very ancient temple of Apollo. Many Greeks consider the Aetolians uncouth barbarians. They are in fact a brave warrior people that often find employment abroad as Barbarian mercenaries.

LOCRIS

A small state in central Greece, famous in ancient times for its archers (who fought in the Trojan War). The chief towns of Locris are Amphissa and Naupactus. Amphissa sits on the popular approach to Delphi and has found itself in difficulties on several occasions with that town. Locris moved in the circles of more important city-states, Thebes in particular.

ACHAEA

Yet another tiny mountain state, this time on the southern coast of the Gulf of Corinth, just north of Arcadia. There are twelve tiny cities in Achaea and these have united to form the Achaean League, the largest of these cities is Dyme, Patrae, Tritaea and Pharae. The symbol of Achaea is a ligature of the letters 'alpha' and 'chi' (a capital A with the legs extending up past the apex).

ACARNANIA

A state facing the island of Ithaca. Acarnania was important during the Corinthian War (391 - 387 BC) but otherwise is a poverty-stricken and remote backwater. One of the larger cities is Oenidae.

ARCADIA

Arcadia is a mountain wilderness in the heart of the Peloponnese, a land inhabited by poor farmers and primitive shepherds. It is an inaccessible region and its people are of an ancient stock, protected from the civilizing influences of Greek culture by the mountains surrounding them. Surrounding city-states have coveted Arcadia as a bridge to other parts of the Peloponnese. Recently, due to the faltering power of Sparta against the armies of Thebes, the Arcadians created an Arcadian League in 370 BC. This caused some friction with neighbouring Elis and a battle was fought at the Olympic Games of 364, actually in front of the spectators! The symbol of Arcadia is a ligature of the letters 'alpha' and 'rho' (a capital A and an R merging with the right hand leg)

ARGOS

Argos once dominated events in the Peloponnese and has sparred with rivals Sparta many times. It is a very ancient city dominating the coastal plain of Argolis and its lesser cities (Mycenae, Tiryns and others). By the 4th century BC the great days of Argos were over. It still exploits its proximity to the sea as a commercial centre, but greater states have eclipsed once proud Argos. The Argive symbol is the hydra, a water snake (often depicted as just a giant snake).

ELIS

Elis is a state of little political importance in the western Peloponnese. It is famed for the

magnificent temple to Zeus at Olympia. Every four years the Olympic Games are held there and these wonderful events draw in crowds from all across the Greek world. Elis lives in the shadow of the other Peloponnesian states.

IONIA

Ionia is the region on the coast of Asia Minor facing the Aegean Sea. Greeks settled here in the distant past, and were known as slightly more genteel, slightly more refined than others of their race. The Ionians are, however, clever businessmen and wily thinkers - many philosophers grew up in Ionian cities, spurred by the intellectual climate. The greatest city-state of the Ionians is Miletus (which has sent out dozens of colonies along the shores of the Black Sea). The Ionian cities have suffered for their proximity to the Persian Empire, and are currently vassals of Persia, paying annual tribute and under the governorship of a Persian satrap (regional governor). The Ionians would welcome liberation (and have conspired with the Greeks to achieve that in the past).

MEGARA

Megara was a city-state with an illustrious past, it sent out numerous colonies in previous centuries, but was so close to Athens that it was often eclipsed. Its disputes with Athens contributed to the Peloponnesian War. Once Sparta had defeated Athens Megara retained its prestige because of its great past.

MAGNA GRAECIA

When the states of Greece sent out colonists over the last few centuries, many settled in southern Italy, in the heel and toe of the peninsula. Naturally these Greeks established city states that quickly resembled those of their homeland. The fertility of the new land and the prospects for trade encouraged even more colonization - soon the city-states had become rivals. In many ways Magna Graecia resembles the feuding city-states of Greece. However, there are more extremes - more land and space, greater possibilities for trade or expansion, fewer entrenched elites, and a more optimistic and free-thinking atmosphere. The greatest cities of Magna Graecia (distant enough from Greece to form a world on their own) include powerful Syracuse on Sicily, Tarentum, Croton, Rhegium, Messene, Metapontum, Locri, Thurii, Heraclea and Hydrus.



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HEROES OF DELPHI



LINKS & REFERENCES

Web-Links

Rather than provide a water-down and very rushed account of Greek culture and civilization, I would rather give you a short list of very useful web-links, which you can download and print off as required. There is a veritable Olympian amount of information out there, in fact a quick search on any search engine will produce more information than you could use!

[Daily Life In Ancient Greece](#)

I recommend this site. It's aimed at students, but is broad in scope, easy to read and includes all the pertinent information you need to get a handle on Greek culture. You'll undoubtedly want to progress to more sophisticated sites, but as a primer it can't be beat.

[Perseus](#)

This amazing web tool gives you instant access to almost the entirety of Greek and Roman texts in translation. The Perseus Encyclopedia can give you references and material on any subject you like. Type in 'delphi' and scroll through 333 references in Greek and Roman texts (including some fine descriptions of the location), photos and plans. Sparta, Athens, Philip ... you'll be spoilt for choice.

[Argos](#)

This site gives you access to a huge array of ancient sites, nearly all essays and articles written by experts in their subject. You'll be amazed at what you can read about here. From coinage to religious festivals, ship design to the rise of Macedon.

[Ancient Greek Sites on the WWW](#)

A nice collection of useful and interesting Greek web-sites.

[Classical Myth: The Ancient Sources](#)

A fantastic resource; not only including a range of images of each god, but also translated source texts in which they are mentioned. Great!

[Delphi](#)

A useful article on this magical Greek site

[Ancient Greece](#)

Quite a comprehensive site, covering people, places, history politics and philosophy. It has a very useful list of links too!

[Map of Athens](#)

[Map of Ancient Greece](#)

[Map of Central & Southern Greece](#)



References

The Greek texts are full of incident, character and authentic situations. Dipping into any of these will reward the GM who wants to stop pretending what it was like, and instead actually go there and speak to someone who lived in the 4th or 5th century BC. Modern translations are lucid, easy to read and filled with modern energy. There are lots of texts available in translation. I offer here only those I found most useful in conjuring up the style of **Heroes of Delphi**.

Arrian, The Campaigns of Alexander

Arrian, a Roman historian, wrote the best and fullest account of Alexander's life. It is of course an epic story and Arrian's concentration on detail really gives you the feeling that you march alongside the army. The siege of Tyre is a wonder! You have to stop reading now and then to remember "this actually happened, this isn't a story". Find out about life, about Persia, about the Greek military and the mindset of the ancients. And read about my favourite character from ancient history - Alexander, part-man, part-god, part-lunatic.

Homer, The Iliad

OK, we're out by 1,000 years but Homer was the 'Bible of the Greeks', recited at feasts and banquets, quoted by playwrights and politicians. To be Greek one had to know the language and speak some Homer. This is the great account of the Achilles and his tantrum at the Siege of Troy. There are gods fighting hand to hand, chariots, blood and gore, magic, epic battle scenes, death and blood and more gore, discussions on Olympus and more. Forget those cheesy Harryhausen movies - this book is the only Greek epic you need! Easy to read and absolutely wonderfully written with colour and poetry.

"Agamemnon said no more, and his driver whipped his long-maned horses and started them towards the hollow-ships. The pair flew off with a will, and their breasts were flecked with foam, their bellies grey with dust, as they carried off the wounded King from the battlefield."

Herodotus, The Histories

Contemporary with Thucydides, Herodotus instead looked back. Back to the Persian Wars and to the Persian Empire. Less a historical account, The Histories read like the long fire-side tales of a veteran Greek traveller full of fairy tales and strange customs, barbarians and cults from faraway places. Actually The Histories are jam-packed full of accurate detail on Egypt, Scythia, Persia and elsewhere. Although you can find better accounts of these cultures in modern books, The Histories give you wonderful tales, places and events. It shows the ancient world (outside of Greece) to be a wonderful, colourful and vibrant place full of *people*. An easy read but long.

Plutarch, The Age of Alexander

A very easy book, this. Plutarch was a Roman historian who specialised in short biographies. Here are a number of Greek personalities from the 4th century. Because the book looks at different people in different places The Age of Alexander is easy to read, and you don't get bored. The focus of Plutarch's work are great warriors and statesmen, there's plenty of action either on or off the battlefield. Alexander is included here, but my favourite is Pyrrhus, a mercenary general par excellence who fought for Magna Graecia. The story of his death, during bitter street fighting inside the walls of Argos is amazing. A general who was supposed to have cleaved an enemy in half with one stroke - killed by a roof-tile thrown by an Argive woman! Fantastic stuff!

Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War

This book is the definitive account of Greece at war. It was written by an Athenian who experienced it from both sides and is a clean, crisp and concise account of the politics, strategy and

the battlefield tactics. Nothing is missed and the down-to-earth situations are never forgotten. It is a very human account, but like the war itself is long, complex and on occasion difficult to follow. But still, it is my most treasured translation. Greece at war: how, why, where - here.

Xenophon, The Persian Expedition

The account of a Greek mercenary general who took an army of 10,000 hoplites to fight in a Persian civil war. When his side lost, Xenophon had to fight and march and fight his way back to Greece. A harrowing, epic, brutal and breathtaking true story. An easy read and a rewarding one.



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