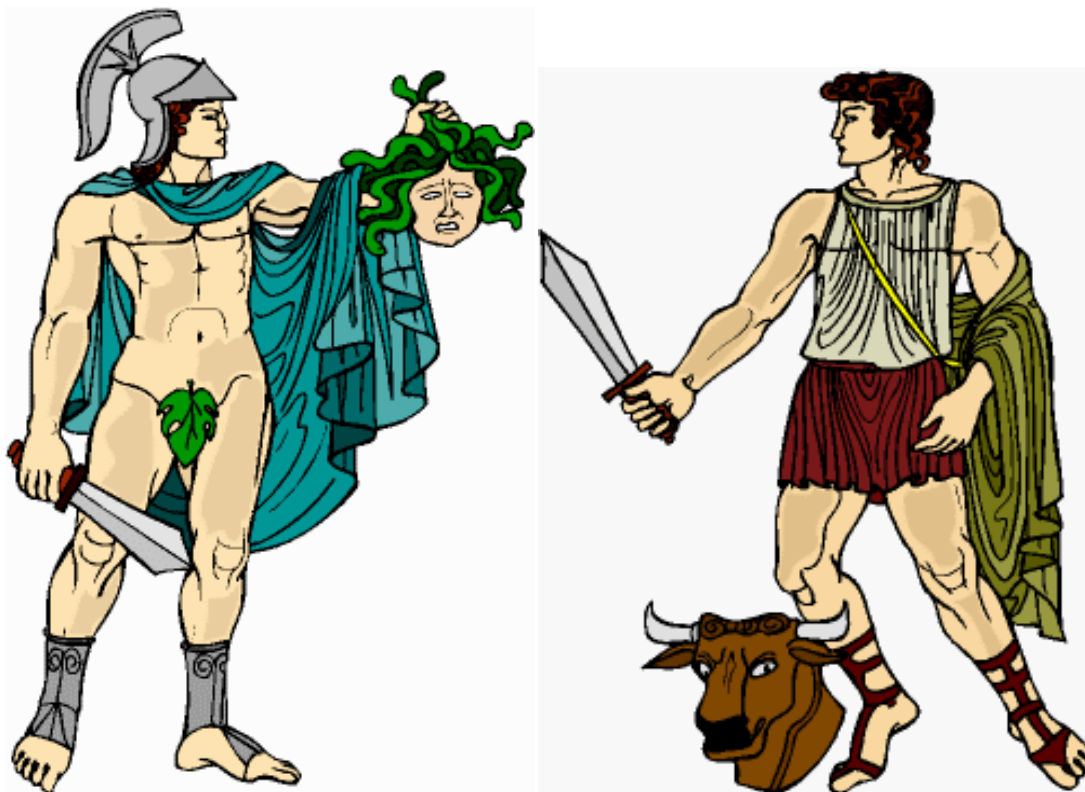


Issue 11

September 2013

MINOTAUR

The Official Webzine of the [Mazes & Minotaurs](#) RPG



LORE & LEGENDS OF MYTHIKA

EXPLORE THE SECRETS OF SERIPHOS ~ BECOME AN ARCHAEOLOGIST
UNEARTH LOST MYSTERIES ~ RAID THE HOUSE OF THE ARTIFICER
STUDY THE LANGUAGES OF MYTHIKA ~ LEARN HOW TO PLAY A SATYR
SAVE THE MEGARA OF DEMETER ~ DISCOVER NEW PERILS & WONDERS





MINOTAUR n°11



A Word from the Editor The Eleventh Hour

Welcome, dear readers, to the eleventh issue of the *Minotaur*, the one-and-only official webzine of the *Mazes & Minotaurs* movement – a long-awaited issue, considering that issue 10 was released more than one year ago (but no, we are NOT changing our title to the *Minotaur Annual*).

So why the long wait, you ask? Well, as often with this kind of things, multiple factors came into play: unpredictable production delays, impact of other projects on the intended schedule, failed saving rolls by the editor, real life interference and, of course, various disturbances in the time vortex.

But here it is, at last – our good old horned beastie, with its usual tons of free M&M stuff, including, among other things, two adventures, a gazetteer of Seriphos, the cradle of Minean civilization (with some stunning original illustrations by our own Emmanuel “Croquefer” Roudier), two new character classes (Archaeologists and, yes, Satyrs!), erudite studies on the history and languages of Mythika and the usual assortment of creatures and mythic items.

Oh – did I mention the *Play Nymph*?

There is, however, something missing from this issue: the second part of *The Spear of Tamro*, the epic Charybdean adventure begun in issue 10. This absence, which we deeply regret, is due to reasons which are completely beyond the *Minotaur*’s control. Of course, should parts 2 and 3 of *The Spear of Tamro* ever come to fruition, they will be promptly published, but at the time of this writing it seems far likelier that Maze Masters will have to imagine their own versions of the End of the Story.

See you in (hopefully early) 2014 for issue 12! In the meantime, enjoy these 60+ pages of free *Mazes & Minotaurs* goodness. Shield wall!

Olivier Legrand (2013)

MINOTAUR MIRTH



- At last! Rules for Satyr PCs! First level, here I come!

Academia of Mythika Archaeology Department

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Intrepid Field Researchers: Marcus Bone, R. Dan Henry, Darren Peech and Igor A. Rivendell.

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All game material included in this webzine uses the **Revised M&M** rules (Silver Jubilee edition).



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MYTHIKA GAZETTEER

SERIPHOS

JEWEL OF THE MIDDLE SEA, CRADLE OF THE MINEAN CIVILIZATION

by Anagnosis of Thena, translated by Andrew Pearce



Introduction

Although there are several scholars from Seriphos currently teaching at the Akademia, it is surprising how readily even educated Mineans within the Land of the Three Cities still overlook our island cousins.

It is in response to this woeful ignorance that I have decided to write a short monograph outlining a little of the culture and history of our illustrious kinsmen. I confess that in so doing I am stepping outside my usual areas of expertise – but such has been the positive response to my most recently published works, *Observations on the Desert Kingdom* and *The Almanac of Mythika*, that I hope this latest humble offering will be of some interest to the inquiring mind.

The most important cataloguer of Seriphan history was, of course, **Cleobulos the Erudite**, who lived in the second century of the current Age.

Cleobulos' greatest works included *The Rise and Fall of the House of Midas*, and *Marvels of the Wizard-Engineers*. He is, alas, little read today, but I readily commend anyone wishing to know more about Seriphos to read Cleobulos, or of course, the magisterial writings of **Hesidos**, the finest Lyrist Seriphos ever produced.

I cannot compare myself with writers such as these: but if my modest efforts result in an increased interest in the 'Sleeping Lion' (as Seriphos is often called by other Mineans), then I shall be content.

The Geography of Seriphos

Seriphos is the third largest island in the Middle Sea (only slightly smaller than Tritonis, but considerably smaller than Proteus).

It is a fairly mountainous island, with most of the arable land being restricted to the northern, western and southern coastal districts. The tallest mountain is **Mount Phaestra** in the south-eastern part of the island, which according to some legends is home to the forges of Hephaestus. Whatever the truth of this story, Mount Phaestra is well-known for its occasional, if terrifying, volcanic eruptions.

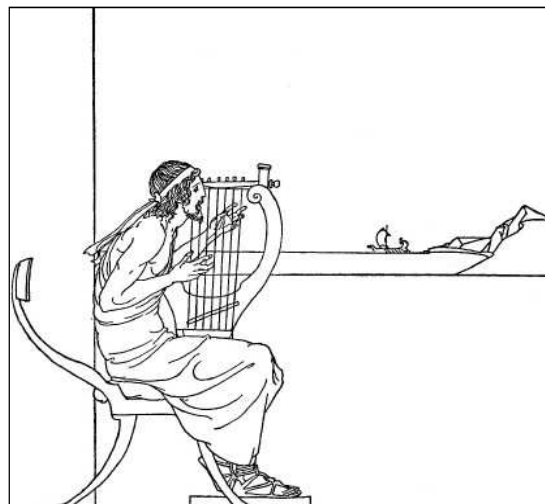
The principal city on the island of Seriphos is **Minea**, which is located near the extreme north-east corner of the island. The kings of Minea exercise authority over the whole of the island. None of the many villages of Seriphos come anywhere close to comparing with Minea in size and splendor. Indeed, the only settlement on Seriphos ever to rival Minea was the city of **Phaistos** on the southern coast, which was buried by volcanic ash when Mount Phaestra experienced its most devastating eruption in the dying days of the Age of Magic.

Other famous locations on the island include the **Cove of Shells** (where Aphrodite, according to legend, first came to shore following her birth), the ruins of the **Palace of Gold** (the fabled seat of power of the most famous of Seriphos' kings from the Age of Myth), the **Tower of Daedalos** (where the great Wizard-Engineer and his son Icaros were once imprisoned) and, of course, the **Labyrinth**, until recently home to the one of the most notorious monsters in the whole of Mythika, the fearsome Minotaur of Seriphos.

Seriphan or Minean?

Although Minea is the capital and principal city of Seriphos, the inhabitants of the city almost always refer to themselves not as Mineans but as Seriphans. The term 'Minean' has, at least since the beginning of the Third Age, generally been used to describe someone of the Minean race / culture rather than a citizen of the city of Minea. If they want to distinguish themselves from the more rural inhabitants of the island, most of Minea's citizens are likely to refer to themselves simply as 'Seriphans, from the city'.

However, the usage of the phrase 'I'm from the First City' (a reference to Minea's claim to being the city of origin for all Mineans) is a relatively-new usage that is gaining in popularity today, especially among the young. Inhabitants of the Three Cities by and large disapprove of such bold and lofty statements, and are more likely to refer in response (somewhat disparagingly) to all Seriphans (rural and city folk alike) as coming from 'the Fourth City'.



- Sing, o muse, of the splendor of Seriphos...

Society and Culture

There is actually not a great deal that can be said about the society and culture of Seriphos that will be entirely new to fellow Mineans.

In most respects, Seriphan society is remarkably like that of the other Minean cities. The same gods are worshipped, the same respect is given to the king, and the same freedoms are granted to its citizens. However, there are important differences in outlook of which anyone visiting Seriphos will soon become aware.

A Conservative Worldview

In essence, the people of Seriphos tend to be far more conservative than their more daring Minean cousins. This trait is reflected in their dress, their food, their artistic sensibilities, and their personal interactions; indeed, in every aspect of Seriphan society. Seriphans also tend to be less well-traveled than other Mineans: all the more surprising, given the fact that they live on an island that in bygone ages was home to some of the most adventurous explorers that the Minean people ever produced.

There are no Seriphan colonies in the Middle Sea (at least, not today), and Seriphan traders, though they do exist, are greatly outnumbered in the ports and havens around the Middle Sea by those hailing from other places – Midians, Edonites, Tritonians and, of course, Mineans from the Three Cities. The location of Seriphos in the midst of the Middle Sea means it has always been an important commercial centre, and the meeting-point for many historic trade routes: but today, most of this trade is carried out by merchants from afar traveling to Seriphos, rather than by Seriphans themselves (Of course, some important items are produced within and exported from Seriphos itself, including ceramics, marble, tin, a little gold, pearls and saffron).

An Omnipresent Past

The reasons for this long-standing conservatism are deeply rooted in Seriphan history. In the First and Second Ages (sometimes referred to collectively by Seriphans as the 'Elder Ages'), Seriphos was home to one of the mightiest realms in Mythika. However, the rulers of Seriphos were brought low in the Age of Magic by the Autarchs of Typhon, and then overshadowed throughout most of the present Age of Heroes by the Lord of the Labyrinth, the Minotaur Asterion. The Third Age has been the 'Fading Years' for the Seriphans, as many of their poets of the last few centuries have repeatedly lamented. Seriphans have preferred to look back with sadness to the glories of the past rather than forward with confidence to the possibilities of the future.

An Ancient Culture

The language of Seriphos is, of course, the Minean tongue, which (as its name may imply) is believed by most Seriphans to have originated from the First City. Seriphan ways of speaking stand out in strong contrast to those of the Three Cities. Compared to the fast-talking Argoseans, the matter-of-fact Heraklians or the florid Thenans, Seriphans come across as slow-speaking and languid. The Seriphan dialect of Minean also makes use of many older idioms and grammatical constructions that are now considered archaic within the Land of the Three Cities. However, other Mineans generally have little difficulty understanding Seriphans, and vice versa.

Seriphan literary traditions are just as rich, in their own way, as those of the Three Cities, particularly Thena. The two principal literary festivals of Seriphos today are the **Festival of Arion** (also known as the Dolphin Festival), held in honor of the famed Thessalian Lyrist Arion (see p. 40); and the **Festival of Hesidos**, held in honor of Seriphos' greatest poet (at which competitors are only allowed to recite from the works of Hesidos himself).

It is worth noting that the dramatic tradition of Thespis and his heirs, so important now to the cultural life of Thena, has no Seriphan equivalent: indeed, Seriphans are generally highly dismissive of such artistic 'innovations'.

Amongst Seriphan artistic achievements, the greatest are undoubtedly the colorful frescoes that are found in temples, palaces, noble dwellings and public squares across the island. Many of these frescoes depict either famous scenes from Seriphan history (such as the life of Midas, the Thessalian War, and the building of the Labyrinth), while others depict important cultural aspects of Seriphan life (such as the Festival of Shells or the Feast of Bull Leaping). According to tradition, the gender of people depicted in Seriphan frescoes is readily distinguished by their color: men's skin is always reddish-brown, whilst women's is always white.



Hephaestus, the Smith God of Seriphos

Religion

As already mentioned, the Seriphans worship the same pantheon of Olympian gods as other Mineans. However, just as each of the Three Cities has especially favored patrons, so do the Seriphans. Most Seriphans, nobles and commoners alike, have a special regard for three of the Olympians in particular: Aphrodite, Hephaestus and Poseidon.

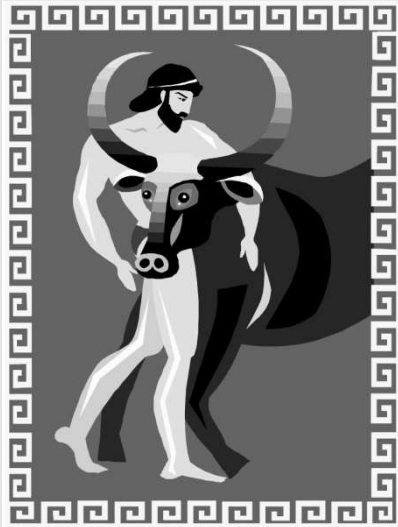
The veneration of **Aphrodite** perhaps goes back the furthest. According to an ancient tradition that is also accepted in the Three Cities, Seriphos was where the newly-born goddess first came ashore after emerging from the sea, at the appropriately-named Cove of Shells.

Every year, in Aphroditeon, the **Festival of Shells** is held there. Unmarried maidens, scantily dressed only in specially-threaded garments made solely of shells, will come to the seashore and offer sacrifices to Aphrodite, asking that she will bless them in their search for love.

The worship of **Hephaestus** is only a little less ancient than that of Aphrodite. Hephaestus, of course, is the husband of the goddess of love, as well as the Olympian master-smith.

According to ancient legend, Hephaestus built a smithy for himself beneath Mount Phaesta, the tall grey mountain that looms ominously over southern Seriphos. Here he labors tirelessly, assisted night and day by his Cyclopes servants. The people of Phaistos, second city of Seriphos, particularly embraced the worship of Hephaestus.

The Art of Bull Leaping



The custom of Bull Leaping seems to be peculiar to the island of Seriphos. The ritual itself consists of an acrobatic leap over a bull. When the leaper grasps the bull's horns, the bull will violently jerk his head upwards. This gives the leaper sufficient momentum to perform somersaults and other acrobatic tricks.

Bull Leaping is a significant rite of passage for young Seriphan men, and is usually undertaken by them sometime between their fifteenth and twenty-first birthdays (although it is generally rare for men as young as fifteen or sixteen to take part, except for princes of the royal line). Although participation is not compulsory, most regard it as a shameful act of cowardice for a young man not to take part at least once, unless prevented by good cause (such as physical disability). Noblemen who refuse to take part are usually ostracized by their families.

Bull Leaping is, of course, highly dangerous, and it is not uncommon for participants to be seriously wounded, or even killed. Only a few years ago, Prince Pagasis, a grandson of King Pellam, was fatally injured whilst taking part in the ritual. Those who take part in at least three annual contests are lauded as **Bull Champions**. The most famous of all Bull Champions was Prince Tauretes, who in the last century competed in an unprecedented five successive contests, and was only prevented from taking part in a sixth and final contest by getting involved in a drunken brawl, with fatal consequences to himself, just the night before he was due to make his final Bull Leaping appearance.

Bull Leaping in Game Terms

In game terms, Bull Leaping can be resolved as an Athletic Prowess saving roll. As usual, the target number is equal to the character's Encumbrance total (i.e. 10 for a completely unencumbered character). If this Athletic Prowess roll is failed, the character must immediately make a Danger Evasion roll against a target number of 15 or suffer 2D6 Hits of damage (as per the Bull's *Charge* or *Trample* attack).



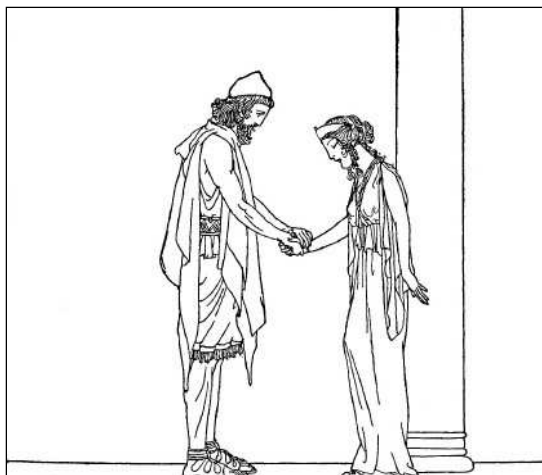
Poseidon, the mighty King of the Sea

The worship of the smith-god reached its zenith on Seriphos during the Second Age, partly under the influence of the early Wizard-Engineers. However, the apostasy of most of these magically-inspired craftsmen, together with the turning of the rulers of Phaistos towards the dark ways of the Autarchs, resulted in Hephaestus withdrawing his favor from Seriphos. The destruction of Phaistos caused by the eruption of Mount Phaesta on the very last day of the Age of Magic is generally attributed to the arousing of the wrath of Hephaestus.

Every year, during the month of Hephaestoon, a relay race is carried out by twenty-one specially-selected young men, who run from the Temple of Hephaestus in Minea to the summit of Mount Phaesta carrying a lighted torch aloft. This race, the highlight of the **Festival of Torches**, is the annual propitiation offered by the Seriphans to Hephaestus in repentance for their past offences against him.

Although Hephaestus remains officially one of the three patron gods of Seriphos, he has been somewhat displaced in the affections of most Seriphans by their third patron, Poseidon.

The major veneration of **Poseidon** is a relatively late development in Seriphan history – possibly dating back only to the beginning of the current Age of Heroes. In all likelihood, it is linked to the story of Asterion, the Minotaur Lord of the Labyrinth (according to some accounts a son of Poseidon himself, and the scourge of Seriphos from the last decades of the Age of Magic until only a few years ago). The principal festival on Seriphos in the Sea God's honor is the **Fest of Bull Leaping**, held over the first seven days of the month of Poseideon.



Minaeus and Halimede – just about to elope

The History of Seriphos

Founding Myth

Three ruling Houses have reigned over Seriphos during the three Ages: the **House of Minaeus** (in its later years known as the House of Midas) in the First Age; the **House of Hypseos** in the Second Age; and the **House of Phaedron** in the Third.

According to most myths, the island was first settled by a cow-herd named **Minaeus**, who had eloped with **Halimede**, the youngest daughter of the Bull King of Proteus. A devotee of Aphrodite, it was with her aid that Minaeus was able to elude the wrathful Bull King and find a new home on Seriphos, building the city of Minea just a few miles from the Cove of Shells. Minaeus was joined in later years by many other refugees from Proteus, particularly after the self-inflicted downfall of the Bull King and his realm.

Following Minaeus' death, his sons quarreled amongst themselves over the succession. Most of them eventually left Seriphos, going on to found other cities (including the original Three Cities on the mainland shore opposite Minea). Two remained: **Sarpedon**, the eldest, who now succeeded Minaeus as king; and **Phaistos**, the sole brother to support Sarpedon in his claim to the kingship. In reward, Sarpedon granted Phaistos extensive lands along the southern coasts of Seriphos, and Phaistos built his own city, named after him, in the shadow of Mount Phaesta. His descendants reigned as clients to the lords of Minea for many centuries, eventually coming to rival them in power and wealth.

The House of Midas

Perhaps the most famous of the kings of Minea during the First Age was **Midas the Golden**, famed both for his military prowess and his love of gold. Under Midas, the power of Seriphos expanded, with the rulers of the Land of the Three Cities coming to acknowledge the rulers of Seriphos as High Kings.

Following his wars of conquest, Midas dedicated himself to constructing his famous Palace of Gold. However, his life ended in misery following his foolish compact with Athena, who granted Midas the Golden Touch – the ability to turn everything he touched into gold. Far from a blessing, this gift turned out to be a dreadful curse...

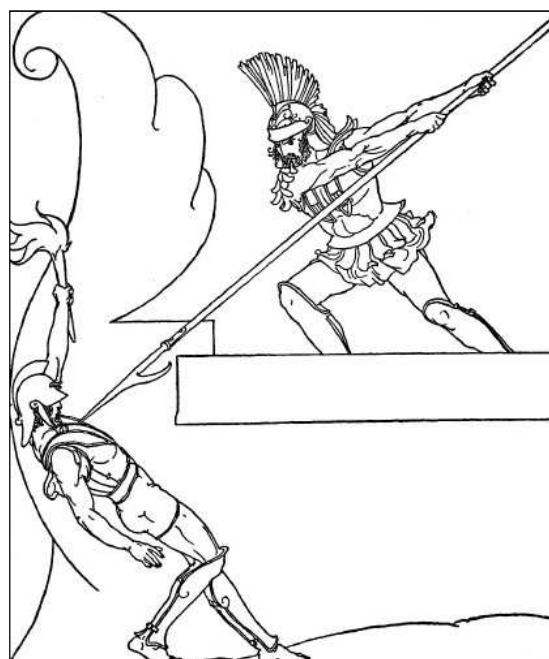
Midas was succeeded by his son **Antagoras**, a brutal warlord who tightened the grip of Seriphos over the other Minean cities. One Minean city, though, succeeded in defying the autocratic rule of Antagoras: the remote city of **Thessalia**.

The Thessalian War

The war between the Minean Empire and Thessalia was sparked by a woman – the infamous princess **Helene** – but it was the pride of men that sustained it and turned it into the titanic struggle described in the greatest of the works of the poet Homeros, the *Thessaliad*.

Antagoras was succeeded by his son **Perilaus**, under whom the Minean alliance finally vanquished their Thessalian foe. However, Perilaus did not live long to enjoy the spoils of victory, instead meeting his death at the hands of a vengeful Helene.

The last living descendant of Midas, Perilaus' nephew **Telamon**, was but a child. A council of regents was appointed to govern in his name. Chief amongst this council was the scheming **King Parmedon of Phaistos**. Before Telamon could reach adulthood, Parmedon had him murdered, and tried to claim the High Kingship for himself. Instead, civil war broke out on the island of Seriphos, and the vassal Minean kings in the Land of the Three Cities declared themselves independent.



Unidentified tragic episode from the Thessalian War



Hypseos the Tall, a mighty king of the Second Age

Soon afterwards, the first great eruption of Mount Phaesta took place, and ushered in the Dark Days – the final century of the Age of Myth, a time of barbarism, bloodshed and chaos upon Seriphos, as elsewhere in Mythika.

The House of Hypseos

The actions of Prometheos in ushering in the Age of Magic had a profound effect on the development of human civilization – not least on Seriphos. Many of the first generation of Sorcerers and Elementalists came from this island, as well as the most notable Wizard-Engineers of the Second Age.

With the help of these early magicians, **Hypseos the Tall** – a supposed descendant of the ancient line of Minaeus – became the first king of the Second Ruling House of Minea. Under Hypseos and his successors, the power of Seriphos grew once again. Seriphan ships visited many of the islands of the Middle Sea, as well as the coastlands of Kandaria, the Desert Kingdom and the Land of the Three Cities, where the Minean cities of Cadmea, Heraphile and Thuria had been rebuilt.

The Wizard-Engineers

The Wizard-Engineers (also known as the Geometrists or Artificers) were the supreme architects and builders of the Age of Magic, who combined mathematical precision, engineering acumen and mystical insight to produce the most wondrous works of human ingenuity. Although Artificers could be found in many lands, the most famed were those of Seriphos.

Emerging in the first century of the Second Age, by the second century most sovereigns of Mythika had at least one Wizard-Engineer advisor as part of their household. The greatest of all the Wizard-Engineers was Daedalos.

Most of the early Wizard-Engineers were devotees of Hephaestus, the craftsman of the gods. From Hephaestus they learnt superlative techniques of forging and smelting, the best ways to use different materials, the sciences of load-bearing and foundation-building, and the intricacies of leavers, pulleys, weights and mechanical movement.

This fantastic knowledge allowed the Wizard-Engineers to design and build some of the most marvelous buildings of Mythika, as well as many different types of automaton (such as the famed Iron Warriors and Bronze Animates that are still to be found guarding half-forgotten palaces and remote temples on scattered islands of the Middle Sea centuries later).

However, by the third century of the Age of Magic, most of the Wizard-Engineers had forsaken their worship of Hephaestus and had become allied with the most evil of all Sorcerers and Elementalists, the Autarchs of Typhon. Those few that remained true to Hephaestus suffered persecution, torture and death.

Most of the secrets of the Wizard-Engineers were lost when they perished alongside their Autarch allies at the end of the Age of Magic in the Days of Wrath.

Towards the end of the first century, **Lampados I**, the great-grandson of Hypseos, became the king of Seriphos. A strong and vigorous ruler, Lampados established the Minean League, an alliance of all the Minean cities, in 103 AM.

From the beginning, the kings of Minea were able to establish themselves as the paramount leaders of the League. Minean influence grew throughout the second century, and Seriphan colonies were established on several islands across the Middle Sea. The riches and splendor of the court of Lampados and his son and successor **Labyrinthos** attracted many talented magicians; amongst them was the great **Daedalos of Cadmea**, the most famed Wizard-Engineer of all time.



Daedalos, the greatest of all Wizard-Engineers

Labyrinthos and Daedalos

The House of Hypseos reached its zenith under Labyrinthos the Great (117-153 AM). Under Labyrinthos, the Seriphans faced the only naval power of that time able to challenge their supremacy on the Middle Sea – the sea-lords of **Acheiros**.

In 136 AM Labyrinthos defeated and killed Antileon, the greatest king of Acheiros since Perseos, in a great sea-battle. The consequences of this event were more far-reaching than Labyrinthos could have dreamed, as the Council of Autarchs – up to that time a major but far from dominant influence upon the island of Acheiros – seized effective control of Antileon's realm (although the House of Perseos continued to provide puppet-kings for the realm for almost another half-century).

Labyrinthos devoted the rest of his reign to the building of monuments to celebrate his success. In this he was aided by Daedalos the greatest of all Wizard-Engineers. Although Daedalos' creations and achievements were many (including the most celebrated automatons ever built), his greatest accomplishment was probably the **Maze of Minea** – popularly known as the **Labyrinth**.

Named after the king of Minea, the Labyrinth was the largest and most complex maze ever built. It is said that the walls and corridors of the Labyrinth were designed to move, in accordance with intricate mathematical computations, and by means of immensely complex and powerful machinery. Only someone possessed of the most brilliant mind could possibly hope to navigate his way through the ever-changing pattern of chambers and corridors.

When the maze was complete, Labyrinthos filled it with an assortment of dangerous creatures, and then began to use it as the ultimate prison for his enemies. Even if they were able to survive against the monstrous inhabitants, he postulated, his enemies would be unable to navigate their way out of the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth very quickly came to be regarded as the most impregnable and terrible fortress in all Mythika.

The only person who might possibly be able to reveal the secrets of the Labyrinth was its creator: so Labyrinthos had Daedalos imprisoned, along with his young son **Icaros**, in a high tower on an isolated promontory. Thus did Labyrinthos reward the great Wizard-Engineer. But after three years, Daedalos formulated a means of escape, by devising two magical pairs of wings, one for himself and one for Icaros. The quill feathers of these wings were cunningly threaded together, but the smaller ones were held in place by wax.

Now Daedalos warned his son: 'See that you neither soar too high, lest the sun melt the wax; nor swoop too low, lest the feathers be wetted by the sea.' Then together they made their escape: but after a while Icaros disobeyed his father's instructions, and began soaring upwards. Presently Daedalos looked over his shoulder, and found that he could no longer see his son, only scattered feathers floating on the waves below. The heat of the sun had melted the wax, and Icaros had fallen into the sea and drowned. And Daedalos returned alone to his home town of Cadmea, where he died of grief soon afterwards.



King Labyrinthos, monarch of Seriphos

Cultural Apogee

Labyrinthos was succeeded by his son, **Erastes** (153-183 AM). Erastes was completely unlike his father. A gentle and compassionate ruler, Erastes fostered the growth of learning during his reign.

The most important figure during this period of unparalleled artistic endeavor was **Hesidos**, the greatest Lyrist that Seriphos ever produced. Most Mineans rank his works second only to Homeros – but on Seriphos, it is Hesidos who is accorded the greater honor. His works include the *Theogony*, an account of creation; *Works and Days*, a meditation on the cycle of the agricultural year; the *Lament of Midas*, a contemplation on the perils of greed and materialism; the *Shield of Perseos*, an epic telling of the deeds of Perseos (regarded, at least by adoption, as perhaps the greatest Seriphian hero); and the *Catalogue of Women*, a long poem reflecting on the role of the most significant women of the Age of Myth, from Pandora to Helene.

The Rise of the Autarchs

Erastes was succeeded by his son **Lampados II** (183-195 AM), the seventh and last king of the House of Hypseos. During his reign, the Autarchs of Typhon – as the island of Acheiros was now renamed – began to extend their evil influence beyond the shores of their home island.

The Autarchs found a ready ally in **Megamedes of Phaistos**, the supposed ally of the Minean kings. Megamedes sought to channel the jealousy that the people of Phaistos had long felt towards the citizens of Minea. First Megamedes repudiated Phaistos' membership of the Minean league: then he sought a pretext for war. The so-called **Megamedian War** was, in truth, but the opening round of a far wider series of conflicts that were to plunge most of Mythika into war over the next century. With the help of the Autarchs, Megamedes was successful in destroying the House of Hypseos, and uniting the island of Seriphos under his rule.

Under the oppressive rule of Megamedes and his successors, the people of Seriphos – whether from Minea, Phaistos or the villages – suffered greatly. The Labyrinth was employed as the doom-laden and inescapable prison for all those who opposed the rulers of Seriphos.

Those Seriphians who cherished liberty found that they had little choice but to flee overseas, to the Land of the Three Cities and elsewhere. However, as the third century of the Age of Magic progressed, so the power of the Autarchs grew. Autarch fleets moved against the Desert Kingdom, Kandaria, Thessalia, the Three Cities and many other places besides. Only a very few groups – such as the Barbarians of Hyperborea, the Wizard-Kings of Ishtar, and the Centaurs of Sicania – were successful in resisting the Autarch advance.



An Autarch Sorcerer from ancient Seriphos

The Autarchs' grip over Seriphos tightened. By 280 AM, the House of Megamedes had outlived its usefulness; and in that year the Autarch warlord **Syleos Scar-face**, second only in power to the Sorcerer **King Taltos of Typhon**, poisoned the last ineffectual king of the Megamedian line, Theopes III. Under Syleos, and his lieutenant, the Minotaur **Asterion**, the already wretched condition of the people of Seriphos deteriorated still further. Asterion's monstrous hordes of various beast-men terrorized the people, murdering and plundering at will, and reducing whole settlements to ash and ruin.

Then, in 300 AM, the Autarchs made the fatal error of believing that their power was great enough to challenge the Olympian gods themselves. In three fateful days – the **Days of Wrath** – they paid a dreadful price for their mad delusion.

Although the greatest visitation of divine judgment was upon the Autarchs of Typhon itself – leaving Acheiros utterly devoid of life, even so much as a single blade of grass – the punishment meted out upon the Autarchs and their allies elsewhere was scarcely less dreadful. This was true on Seriphos too, and especially for the city of Phaistos, which had been so ready to aid the Autarchs as they had begun their ascendancy.

On the third Day of Wrath – the very last day of the Age of Magic – Mount Phaesta erupted with more devastating force than ever before (or since), and the city of Phaistos was completely destroyed. Syleos Scar-face and the other Autarchs of Seriphos all perished in the cataclysm.



One of the many depictions of Asterion the Minotaur

The Lord of the Labyrinth

As the new Third Age began, the surviving nobles of Seriphos – mostly from Minea, a few from Phaistos – returned from exile, and took counsel for the future. They chose **Phaedron the Fair** as first king of a new Ruling House. Unlike Hypseos before him, Phaedron made no claim to descent from the House of Minaeus. For Phaedron, a new start was required for the people of Seriphos, and he had no wish to hearken back to a past best forgotten. Under Phaedron (ruled 3-31 AH), the slow process of healing a ravaged land was begun.

Phaedron was succeeded by his son **Aristomenes the Proud**, a haughty and determined ruler, who dedicated himself to hunting down the remnants of the hordes of Asterion that lingered still in remote parts of the island. When after thirteen years of scouring the island Aristomenes was convinced that he had purged it of the remnants of evil, he held a great feast of thanksgiving. The following extract from the *Minotauread* of the Lyryst **Danope of Zethos** tells what happened next:

'Now as the climax of the feast approach, Aristomenes boasted that such was his power the gods would answer whatever prayer he offered to them. He then dedicated an altar to Poseidon, and making all preparations for a sacrifice, he then prayed that a bull might emerge from the sea. At once, a dazzling white bull swam ashore: but Aristomenes was so struck by its beauty that he sent it to join his own herds, and slaughtered another in its stead. In so doing he acted against the advice of the oracle Themisto.

'Then Poseidon, greatly affronted, appeared before Aristomenes, and the assembled people, and proclaimed: "You shall pay a high price for your insolence, king of Seriphos: and your people shall continue to pay that price for long years after your death. You have spurned the gift of Poseidon: and so a son of Poseidon will seal your doom."

At this, a loud bellowing roar echoed along the shore, and the panicking crowds parted, to reveal the imposing figure of Asterion the Minotaur, one-time warlord of the Autarchs, surrounded by many foul creatures. And Asterion mocked Aristomenes, saying, "You thought that you had rid this island of all my servants. Yet there is one place where you failed to look, and which no man dares willingly to enter - the Labyrinth. There, in the most impenetrable fortress in the world, I and the fiercest of my servants have remained hidden, until today. Now, if your dare, face me, mortal man."

'Then Asterion and Aristomenes fought, and the Minotaur had the victory, and tore the king limb from limb. And the other members of Asterion's loathsome retinue turned upon the people, and there was great slaughter: and the people cried out to the gods, and most of all to Poseidon, who stood still out to sea, watching impassively. But the sea god did nothing: and after awhile he turned his back upon the slaughter, and slowly vanished once more beneath the waves.

'Then Asterion and his army of beast-men ravaged the land for three years, undoing much of the good work of Phaedron the Fair. But Panocles the Valiant, the brother of Aristomenes, refused to be daunted by the forces of chaos, and rallied the men of Seriphos against Asterion.

At last, Asterion's army was driven back to the Labyrinth, and there before its very doors a mighty battle took place: and Panocles prevailed.

Then Asterion made ready to retreat once more into the Labyrinth, taking the remnant of his army with him. But as he did so, Asterion turned and made this offer to the people of Seriphos:

"I shall remain within the Labyrinth, and my servants also, and not trouble the land or people of Seriphos further, provided that seven maidens of this land are presented at this gate every seventh year from this day. If you will keep this bargain, men of Seriphos, you will have peace from the Lord of the Labyrinth. But if not, I will come again to ravage your land, with all my hordes. Do not doubt the word of Asterion, son of Poseidon."

'Now Panocles, in wrathful indignation, would not accept any such bargain, and pursued Asterion into the Labyrinth, though his chief counselors tried to dissuade him. Within the Labyrinth, he met his doom: and Hylas his young son ruled in his stead. And when almost seven years had passed, Hylas took counsel with the nobles and wise men of Seriphos, as to whether or not the bargain of Asterion should be accepted. And Themisto the oracle warned that the disfavor of Poseidon was still upon the people of Seriphos.

"Ignore this pact, and the words of the Minotaur shall prove true," he said. "Asterion will emerge with renewed strength, and cause great devastation. But if we abide by this compact – however unwillingly – Poseidon himself will ensure that Asterion honors his pledge."

Then one of the noblemen said, "Surely it is better that a few die rather than thousands?" And all agreed that this was so. But another of the king's counselors said to Themisto: "How long must we respect this terrible bargain?" To which Themisto replied, "Until Poseidon himself sends a champion to release us from it: for only one son of Poseidon can be a match for another."¹

'Then Hylas and his counselors arranged for seven maidens of Seriphos to be chosen by lot as sacrifices to the Minotaur. And the seven were brought to the Labyrinth, and thrust beyond the doors. Thus was the first of many sacrifices made.

But Asterion honored his side of the bargain: the Lord of the Labyrinth and his hordes remained within. Thus was the long Truce of Minea first established, and from time to time, brave warriors and courageous princes would undertake to follow in the footsteps of Panocles the Valiant, and enter the Labyrinth to challenge its Master: but none ever emerged victorious, until the coming of Theseos.'



King Pellam does not seem too thrilled by his nephew Prince Antiober's heroic decision to slay the Minotaur

The Sleeping Lion

The House of Phaedron continued to rule over Seriphos throughout the Age of Heroes. Compared with previous ages, the Third Age was one of faded glories for the people of Seriphos.

Whereas other Mineans from the Land of the Three Cities had lost nothing of their adventurous spirit, the people of Seriphos by and large eschewed long and perilous voyages, preferring instead to remain on their island home. This more insular, isolationist approach was little understood by the people of the Land of the Three Cities, who came to view their Seriphan cousins and their cautious spirit with bewilderment, even contempt. The 'Sleeping Lion' became a common nickname for Seriphos within the Land of the Three Cities. But for Seriphans, the lessons of history were clear: involvement in the affairs of others rarely have happy results.

The Woes of King Pellam

In 306 AH, **King Pellam** succeeded his father Pelliaides, becoming the fourteenth (and current) king of the House of Phaedron. Pellam has been a cautious king, much like most of his predecessors – willing in extremis to assist his fellow sovereigns of the Three Cities against a common threat, such as the Umbrians or Tritonians, but otherwise desiring to keep out of the affairs of other Mineans – such as the simmering enmity between Argos and Heraklia.

Pellam and his wife **Kallista** had four children: sons **Pellias** and **Pellamon**, and daughters **Ariadne** and **Phaedra**. Although the heir-apparent, Pellias took a strong interest in sorcery from an early age, much to the disapproval of his father.

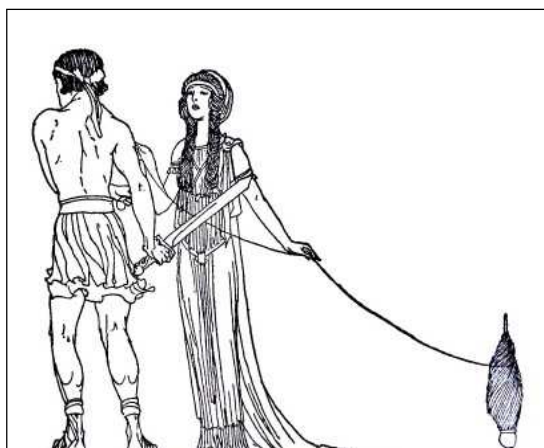
Things came to a head following his seventeenth birthday, when Pellias refused for a third time to take part in the Feast of Bull Leaping. The fact that his younger brother Pellamon, then just turned fifteen, was eager to do so, only made matters worse. Yet it was not cowardice that motivated Pellias – as his father thought – but rather a complete indifference to the spirit of 'pointless machismo' (in Pellias' words) that the Feast of Bull Leaping celebrated.

Following a fierce confrontation with Pellam, Pellias renounced the throne and accepted the sentence of banishment pronounced by his father. Although going on to become a renowned and much-fêted sorcerer, Pellias has never been seen on Seriphos since (for more about Pellias, see the article *Mythika's Mightiest*, pp. 24-25 of *Minotaur N°3*).

The banishment of Pellias greatly affected his mother Kallista, who eventually died of grief in 321 AH, ten years later. Even today, Pellias' name is never mentioned at the Seriphan court – at least, not in the hearing of King Pellam. The estrangement with his son and the death of his wife were not the only tragedies to be experienced by King Pellam. In 326 AH his nephew, **Prince Antiober**, decided to challenge Asterion the Minotaur – the first such challenge to the Labyrinth Lord for over a century. Alas, like so many before him, brave Antiober did not emerge again from the Labyrinth.

Then, the following year, the time came for the fortieth heptennial selection of Seven Maidens to be sacrificed to the Labyrinth, thereby renewing the Truce of Minea between Seriphos and its Minotaur enemy. As on thirty-nine previous occasions, the names of all the unmarried women of Seriphos between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one were entered into the ballot.

¹ According to some traditions, both Asterion and his eventual slayer Theseos were offspring of the sea god.



Prince Theseos, Princess Ariadne and the most famous ball of twine in all Mythikan history

However, much to the consternation of Pellam, for the first time ever the chosen victims included a princess of the royal household – Ariadne, the twenty-year-old elder daughter of the king. Pellam, it is said, was reluctant to allow his daughter to be sacrificed, even though withholding her would involve breaking the Truce, with dire consequences for Seriphos. And his counselors prevailed upon him not to follow such a rash course of action.

Pellam then appealed for a champion to come forward once again to battle with the Minotaur – but after the recent death of the noble and valiant Antiober, there was no Seriphian willing to risk what seemed to be certain death in a futile cause – not even Prince Pellamon, the brother of Ariadne, ashamed though he was to admit it.

The Coming of Theseos

Then, as the day of sacrifice drew nigh, a single ship from Thena arrived, bearing its young king, **Theseos**. Already a renowned champion throughout the Land of the Three Cities, Theseos had heard of the dire need of the royal house of Seriphos, and had determined to answer the call. Nevertheless, he made one request of Pellam – ‘the hand of a daughter of the king of Seriphos in marriage’ – for Theseos had recently become widowed following the death in childbirth of his first wife, the Amazon Princess Antiope. To this Pellam reluctantly agreed, for the custom in Seriphos had long been for daughters of the king either to remain unmarried as priestesses of one of the goddesses, or to be married into one of the noble houses of Seriphos. Not for several centuries had a princess of Seriphos married into a foreign royal house.

Now Ariadne, it is said, loved Theseos as soon as she saw him, even more so because of his intent to save her and the other sacrificial victims. Ariadne was a priestess of Demeter; and she had prayed to the goddess following her selection and had received from her an enchanted ball of twine, which the goddess had promised would allow its owner to navigate his or her way confidently even through a

maze as fiendishly complex as the Labyrinth. So Ariadne presented her ball of twine to Theseos, and with its aid he was able not only to find his way to the heart of the Maze, but also to find his way out again. And Theseos killed many of the monstrous inhabitants of the Labyrinth: but his greatest deed was to slay the Minotaur Asterion himself.

After his victory, Theseos claimed his prize: but Pellam (urged on by his son Pellamon, who it is said disliked Theseos as a reminder of his own shame) refused the hand of Ariadne, as requested by Theseos, but instead offered his younger daughter Phaedra. ‘I agreed to the hand of one of my daughters,’ he said, ‘but I reserve the right to chose which it shall be.’

Theseos feigned acceptance of Pellam’s judgment – but that night, following a great feast held in his honor, he stole away with Ariadne.

The next part of the story remains something of a mystery: for upon arriving at the island of Nexos, Theseos left Ariadne asleep on the shore, and sailed away. Why he did this is still unclear.

According to some, the lovers quarreled on their voyage; according to others, Dionysos appeared in a dream to Theseos, demanding Ariadne for himself – and when Theseos awoke, he saw Dionysos’ fleet bearing down on Nexos, and weighed anchor in sudden terror. Whatever the cause, it is believed that Theseos later came to regret his actions – though none at the court of Thena are so foolish as to talk about it openly.

What is known is that a year after he defeated the Minotaur, Theseos returned to Minea to claim the hand of Phaedra. Now Pellam was outraged, seeing that his elder daughter had first eloped with Theseos and then, so it seemed, had been abandoned by him.



Theseos finally kills the Monster of Seriphos

But Theseos was insistent, saying, 'The gods themselves willed that Ariadne and I should not be together. But you promised a daughter to me, king of Seriphos: and so I return to claim the one you willingly offered to me, the Princess Phaëdra.' And Theseos had not traveled alone to Minea this time, but with a large company of ships. Then Phaëdra, fearing war between Seriphos and Thēna, persuaded her father that, for the sake of peace, he should honor his agreement. Thus it was that both of the king's daughters were lost to Seriphos on account of Theseos. And although most Seriphans still hail Theseos as their savior, on account of his defeat of the Minotaur, there is little love between the royal houses of Minea and Thēna.

Seriphos Today

After Theseos

The last thirteen years, since Theseos made his dramatic entrance into the annals of Seriphian history, have resulted in the beginnings of a marked change of attitude amongst many Seriphans. For the first time for centuries, more and more Seriphans are taking an interest in the outside world. Whether this will continue into the future, or is but a temporary aberration, is perhaps too early to say. Has the Sleeping Lion finally awoken?

Notable Seriphans

King Pellam is now aged 75, and having ruled over Seriphos for nearly three and a half decades knows that his long reign is probably drawing towards a close. Increasingly frail, the many losses and setbacks of his reign have left him somewhat embittered. If he has one remaining wish, it is that he should have the chance to see his son Pellias one last time before he dies – yet such is Pellam's pride that he dare not speak of this openly to anyone, even to his beloved younger son Pellamon.

Prince Pellamon is aged 44, in the prime of life, and more than ready to succeed his father when the time comes: indeed, responsibility for many of the day-to-day affairs of state has already been delegated to Pellamon by his ailing father. Pellamon senses that Seriphos is changing, and the time is coming when the 'Sleeping Lion' may take a renewed interest in the wider world. However, his hatred of King Theseos has clouded his judgment. It is rumored that in the last few years, Pellamon has been cultivating friendships with members of the Heraklian royal court. An alliance between Heraklia and Seriphos would almost certainly upset the delicate balance between the Minean cities, and threaten the Thenan Peace that has contributed so much to Minean prosperity for six decades. Pellamon is a stubborn man who is unlikely to listen to more cautious counsels. However, the one person who might be able to persuade him of the follies of pursuing such a destabilizing diplomatic

policy would be his brother Pellias, for whom he still feels great affection even though they haven't spoken to one another for nearly thirty years.

Prince Pellages, the 18-year-old son of Pellamon, is a handsome young man and, since the death of his older brother Pagasis four years ago of wounds suffered in the Feast of Bull Leaping, is next in line to the throne of Seriphos after Pellamon. Pellages is a rather dissolute youth, much interested in wine, women and song, who has no interest in affairs of state – much to the displeasure of his father, who hopes that he will 'grow up' quickly once he becomes heir to the throne.

Diogenes the Esthete is the most renowned Lyrist on Seriphos today. Although only 26 years old he has already won several prizes at both the Festival of Arion and the Festival of Hesidos. He is almost as well known for his readiness to flout social conventions as for his poetry. Diogenes has recently become very friendly with Prince Pellages – much to the disapproval of Pellamon. Only his enormous popularity with the women (and men) of Seriphos has allowed him to get away his outrageous behavior – so far.

Having participated successfully in four annual contests (only one less than the great Tauretes), **Rheseos the Bull Champion** is widely acclaimed as the greatest living exponent of the art of Bull Leaping. Although by birth a commoner, the 35-year-old Rheseos was ennobled following his fourth Bull Leaping victory fifteen years ago – a rare move, but one motivated by King Pellam's great mark of respect for his bravery and athletic prowess. He now runs his own school in the art of Bull Leaping, which is very popular among the young sons of the noble and wealthy.

Andropater the High Priest of Poseidon is the most influential priest in Seriphos, and both an old friend and chief counselor to King Pellam. Although at 72 he is only few years younger than the king, he is in much better health. Andropater has heard tales of Pellamon's shady dealings with Heraklia, and is deeply worried by them. He believes firmly in Seriphos holding to its historic traditions of neutrality and non-involvement. Pellamon is, of course, well aware of Andropater's views, and has begun spreading scurrilous rumors of sexual impropriety about Andropater to undermine his authority.

Deraxes 'the Digger', as he is commonly known, is an eccentric 47-year-old scholar who for the past twenty years or so has pursued a bizarre quest to uncover the lost mysteries of the Wizard-Engineers. Since Theseos defeated the Minotaur, Deraxes has repeatedly (and so far unsuccessfully) petitioned King Pellam for permission to enter the Labyrinth, believing that within these ancient walls he will find the answers to his search. His most notorious book, *The Daedelos Code*, has made Deraxes famous far beyond Seriphos – but most reputable scholars dismiss him as a demented crackpot.

TIMELINE OF SERIPHOS

BP = Before Prometheus (Age of Myth), AM = Age of Magic, and AH = Age of Heroes

510 BP Founding of Minea by Minaeus.

471 BP Death of Minaeus. After seven years of civil war, Sarpedon is hailed as King of Seriphos.

463 BP Phaistos founds the city that bears his name.

199 BP Midas becomes thirteenth King of Seriphos.

160 BP Midas is cursed with the Midas Touch.

158 BP Midas dies, and is succeeded by his son Antagoras.

136 BP The Hellenic Games are held in Acheiros for the hand of the princess Helene in marriage.

134 BP An earthquake hits Seriphos, leaving Midas' Palace in ruins. Thessalia is afflicted by a great plague. Both events are seen as signs from the gods.

133 BP The Thessalian War begins.

127 BP Antagoras dies and is succeeded by Perilaus.

126 BP The city of Thessalia is sacked, and Helene is carried off by Perilaus, son of Antagoras.

125 BP Perilaus is killed by Helene, who commits suicide. He is succeeded by his nephew, Telamon.

119 BP Telamon is poisoned. Civil war breaks out on Seriphos. Oulixeus the Wanderer finally returns home to Thuria. The first great eruption of Mount Phaesta takes place, leading to the collapse of the Minean Empire, and the beginning of the Dark Days.

1 AM The Age of Magic begins with the Rebellion of Prometheus against the Olympians.

23 AM Hypseos the Tall becomes the first King of the Second Ruling House of Seriphos.

98 AM Lampados I, great-grandson of Hypseos, becomes fourth King of the Second Ruling House.

103 AM The Minean League is formed.

117 AM Labyrinthos the Great succeeds his father Lampados.

125 AM Daedelos of Cadmea, greatest of all the Wizard-Engineers, comes to Seriphos.

136 AM Labyrinthos defeats and kills Antileon of Acheiros, in a great sea-battle. The Council of Autarchs takes control of the government of Acheiros.

137 AM Daedelos begins working on the Labyrinth – the greatest of his works.

146 AM The Labyrinth is completed. Daedelos is imprisoned.

149 AM Daedelos flees from Seriphos.

153 AM Labyrinthos is succeeded by his son Erastes.

165 AM About this time Hesidos begins his career.

181 AM The Autarchs depose Melisseos, last puppet-king of Acheiros. The island is renamed Typhon.

183 AM Erastes is succeeded by his son Lampados II.

186 AM King Megamedes of Phaistos signs a treaty with the Autarchs of Typhon, and leaves the Minean League.

189 AM The Megamedian War begins.

195 AM Minea falls before the combined forces of Phaistos and the Autarchs. Lampados II is killed, as well as many prominent Mineans – including Hesidos.

280 AM The Autarchs depose the last king of Megamedes' line, beginning their direct rule over Seriphos.

300 AM The Autarch ascendancy ends with the Days of Wrath. The second great eruption of Mount Phaesta takes place, resulting in the destruction of Phaistos.

3 AH The nobles of Seriphos elect Phaedron the Fair as the first King of the Third Ruling House of Seriphos.

31 AH Aristomenes succeeds his father King Phaedron.

44 AH Aristomenes affronts Poseidon and is killed by Asterion the Minotaur. He is succeeded by his brother Panocles.

47 AH After three years of ravaging the land, Asterion is forced to retreat back to the Labyrinth. Panocles enters the Labyrinth, and is killed. He is succeeded by his son Hylas.

54 AH The first Sacrifice of Maidens is made to Asterion, and the Truce of Minea is established. Further sacrifices are made at seven year intervals.

277 AH Prince Tauretes, greatest of all Bull Champions, dies just before participating in a sixth and final Feast of Bull Leaping.

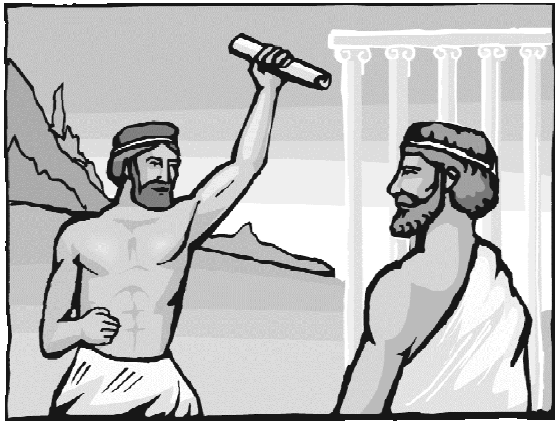
306 AH King Pellam becomes fourteenth King of Seriphos.

327 AH Theseus delivers Seriphos from the Lord of the Labyrinth.

340 AH The Present.

THE MYTHIC LIBRARY

A Selection of Wondrous Tomes of Wisdom & Power for M&M Adventurers



- At last! I've found it! The last scroll of the series!

The Enlightened Elementalist

The **Enlightened Elementalist** (Enc = 1 per tablet) is a scholarly work that was compiled in the Age of Magic by the various Elementalist schools in the distant city of Ishtar. The complete work consists of seven clay tablets, and is written with consummate erudition in the classical Hazarian of Ishtar as used by the Wizard-Kings of the Second Age. The first four tablets (identified by the numerals I, II, III and IV) give detailed, practical knowledge on the Elements of Air, Earth, Fire and Water, whilst the rarer tablets V and VI deal with the Elements of Light and Darkness. An Elementalist who is skilled with a particular element will gain 100 Wisdom points for reading the appropriate tablet (200 Wisdom if it is his primary element). He gains nothing from studying a tablet concerning an element he is not trained to use. Appreciating each tablet takes a week of study and contemplation, and requires a working knowledge of written Hazarian.

A given library, tomb or treasure room will contain 1d6 such tablets. Having first determined the number of tablets in a particular cache, roll one 1d10 on the table below to determine their identity (re-roll repeats).

1-2	Air
3-4	Earth
5-6	Fire
7-8	Water
9	Light
10	Darkness

The incredibly rare seventh tablet contains a synthesis of understanding of all six elements. It is never found these days with the other six tablets, and some have questioned whether it truly ever existed. Should the Maze Master decide that tablet VII is more than just a legend, it is worth 300 Wisdom to any Elementalist.

The Heresies of Zenon

The **Heresies of Zenon** easily qualify as one of the most controversial literary works ever produced. Published by Zenon the Philosopher while he was still a young man some thirty or so years ago, they aroused instant hostility from many quarters. Many of the priests of Thena have publicly denounced Zenon, accusing him of immorality before the gods, and only the protection of King Aegeus (and later his son, the current King Theseus) has been sufficient to spare Zenon from exile, even death. His works are outlawed in every Minean city, save Thena itself. Even under the extremely liberal regime of the Akademia, Zenon's postulations have seemed a step too far for many.

Yet there are others who are clearly excited by Zenon's radical views about the origins and nature of the cosmos. Despite the widespread hostility to them, they have been copied and distributed to many corners of the Minean world in a remarkably short period of time.

The **Heresies of Zenon** (not, strictly speaking, their correct title, as originally Zenon called them simply the *Inquiries*: but this is now the name by which they are known by friend and foe alike) are written on a single scroll in elegant Minean prose. Reading (and appreciating) the Heresies will take a week – though a full understanding is likely to take a lifetime!

Any magician reading the Heresies will gain 200 Wisdom points from the experience. However, in practice it is nearly always only Elementalist and Sorcerers who will dare to read from this work. Priests would never do so (for fear of offending the gods), and Nymphs have no interest in any literary works, much less ones judged heretical. A daring Lyrist might risk studying them, but might well suffer his patron god's anger as a consequence. One drawback of reading the Heresies is that you can *never* become a Divine Agent – and if you already are an Agent, then you are certain to lose those privileges and arouse the wrath of your patron deity.

The Logs of Hanno the Navigator

Easily the most famed of Midian Mariners, Hanno the Navigator's detailed ship-logs gave details of all his many voyages around the Middle Sea and even beyond the Bronze Gates, exploring the farthest coasts of Charybdis. The Logs give invaluable information about sandbanks, treacherous rocks and natural hazards, tides and winds, good harbors and hostile natives. The Ship Logs are preserved as seven scrolls, numbered from I to VII.

Any Mariner reading these masterworks will gain 100 Experience points per scroll for the first four, and 200 points for each of Scrolls V to VII (the latter give precious information on some of the more hazardous and little-explored reaches, such as the waters around the cursed island of Proteus, the turbulent Typhon Sea and the foreboding vastness of the Great Ocean).

Reading (and appreciating) the Logs of Hanno takes approximately a week per scroll, and requires a working knowledge of written Midian. A given library, lighthouse or shipwreck may contain 1d6+1 such scrolls, in numbered order (thus, a roll of 4 means scrolls I to IV).

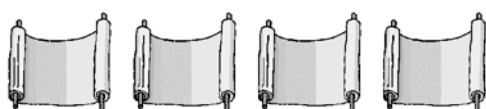
One feature of the scrolls is that they are usually stored in oilskin pouches that have been specially treated to preserve them against the worst effects of water damage. (Enc = 1 per scroll)

The Pronouncements of Telphos

The *Pronouncements of Telphos* contained much of the distilled wisdom of the greatest Oracle of the Mythikan world. The seven scrolls (Enc = 1 per scroll) that make up this work record many of the most famous oracular judgments made at Telphos, as well as many of the lesser prophecies. More valuable, perhaps, are the details that the scrolls give of how these oracles were interpreted – for good or ill – and how they found their fulfillment.

The seven scrolls are numbered from I to VII. Any Priest of Apollo who successfully reads these scrolls will gain 100 Wisdom points per scroll for the first four and 200 points for each of Scrolls V to VII. However, the Pronouncements are written in a style of Minean that is itself highly cryptic and allusive. Only a Priest of Apollo of a least 3rd level can hope to understand the first four scrolls, whilst he needs to be at least 4th level to understand Scrolls V-VI and 5th level to understand Scroll VII. Otherwise their content will remain enigmatic and confusing.

Reading the Pronouncements takes about a week per scroll. A given library, temple or treasure room may contain 1d6+1 such scrolls, in numbered order (thus, a roll of 4 means scrolls I to IV).



A scholarly Satyr? No, a studious Shapeshifter!

The Seven Scrolls of Proteus

The *Seven Scrolls of Proteus* (Enc = 1 per scroll) is an incredible set of scrolls that supposedly contain traditions that in part go right back to Proteus: the father of the Proteusian family of humans (including the Minean race), and the first human to be 'gifted' with Shapeshifting. However this provenance is rarely accepted by scholars today, as even the oldest scrolls extant today clearly date back no further than the last century of the Age of Magic.

The Scrolls, written in Minean, give details of various mythological tales of transformations, both of gods and mortals, as well as a plethora of practical advice on shape-changing techniques. The seven scrolls are numbered from I to VII. Any Shapeshifter reading these scrolls will gain 100 Wisdom points per scroll for the first four and 200 points for each of Scrolls V to VII.

Reading the Scrolls of Proteus takes about a week per scroll. A given library, tomb or treasure room may contain 1d6+1 such scrolls, in numbered order (thus, a roll of 4 means scrolls I to IV).

The Tome of Many Tongues

The voluminous *Tome of Many Tongues* (Enc = 2) is a wondrous work that is capable of translating a piece of speech from one language into two others!

The user must hold the Tome open, and must dictate the words he wants translated (which could be part of a conversation, an epithet from an inscription, a recitation from a literary work, or any other piece of speech). Strictly speaking, the user does not need to know the language he is speaking (he could, for example, be attempting a memorized rendition of someone else's conversation in an unknown tongue; or he could, perhaps, be reading a foreign language from a tomb inscription – provided, of course, he knows the script!).

As the user speaks, a translation of his words in two other languages will appear across the double-spread of the open Tome. Each copy of the Tome of

is attuned to two different languages, and every time it is used, the translation given will be in the same two languages (if the speaker is actually using one of the two languages, then one of the two pages will remain blank, and the translation will appear on the facing page in the second language only).

No more than one hundred words may be spoken at a time over one double-spread of pages of the Tome. If more than one hundred words are spoken, the open pages will be completely filled with the two translations, and will then magically turn the page, so as to present a new double-spread. The translation will then continue to appear for as long as the speaker continues to talk (up to another one hundred words, at which point the page turns over again, and so on). The speaker may pause for breath, or to gather his thoughts momentarily, without disturbing the 'flow' of the translation – but should he pause for more than six seconds or so (or the equivalent of a battle round), the Tome will assume the 'dictation' is at an end, and will turn the page automatically for the next 'session'.

Each Tome originally had twenty double-spreads of blank pages, and could therefore be used on no more than twenty occasions (less if some of the 'dictations' were longer than one hundred words). However, most Tomes have been well-used. Whenever a Tome is discovered, roll 1d10+10 to determine the number of uses (i.e. double-spreads of blank pages) remaining. Once the Tome is full, it may no longer be used to translate fresh 'dictations', though anyone may peruse its past translations.

With each new Tome discovered, roll 1d10 twice to determine the two languages used in each translation. If you roll the same result, re-roll.

- | | |
|-----|--------------|
| 1-2 | Minean |
| 3 | High Khettim |
| 4 | Umbrian |
| 5 | Tritonian |
| 6 | Midian |
| 7 | Hazarian |
| 8 | Edonite |
| 9 | Stygian |
| 10 | Atlantean |

The Tome will translate virtually any language within the known world of Mythika, including extinct ones (like Typhonian, the lost Autarch language), non-written languages (such as Borean, or the various tongues spoken in Charybdis), and even non-human languages. The Tome does *not* grant its user the ability to read the translation if he does not know the language (a Tome that translates into Stygian and Atlantean, for example, may be of limited usefulness compared to one that translates into two more commonly-known languages, such as Minean and Midian).

The origins of the Tome remain deeply mysterious, but they have been found in the Desert Kingdom (usually in the possession of scribes, or priests of

Thoth and Ra), in Midia (where priests of Eshmun, in particular, are known to make use of them), and in the Minean lands (mainly in the hands of Lyrists, and priests of Apollo, Athena, Hermes and Zeus). Purveyors of the dark arts have also been known to make use of those copies that give a translation in Atlantean or Stygian (or, more rarely, both).

The Unfinished Works of Hesidos

The poet Hesidos is regarded as the greatest storyteller that the island of Seriphos has ever produced. Indeed, Seriphan Lyrists rate his work far higher than that of Homeros. Five of Hesidos' works survive today. Sadly, Hesidos died in the barbaric sacking of Minea towards the end of the second century of the Age of Magic, before he could complete his final two works.

His *Unfinished Works* (as they are customarily called on Seriphos) are usually presented as five scrolls of outstanding power and beauty, numbered I to V (Enc = 1 per scroll). Each scroll is written in the distinctive Minean dialect of Seriphos: and any Lyrist of Seriphos reading these scrolls will gain 100 Wisdom points per scroll for the first four and 200 points for the fifth and final scroll (which contains his most famous work, the epic *Shield of Perseos*). Other Lyrists who read the scrolls will only gain half these points (50 Wisdom points per scroll for the first four and 100 points for the final one).

Although respected by Lyrists from the Three Cities and elsewhere, it is only on his home island that Hesidos is rated so very highly: and so it is only Seriphan Lyrists who can receive the particular Wisdom benefits that a scroll of Hesidos' work has the potential to grant. Curiously and conversely, the *Works of Homeros* fail to move Lyrists of Seriphos in the way they do others, and so they receive only half of the usual Wisdom benefits that a Lyrist gains from reading any of Homeros' songs and epics.

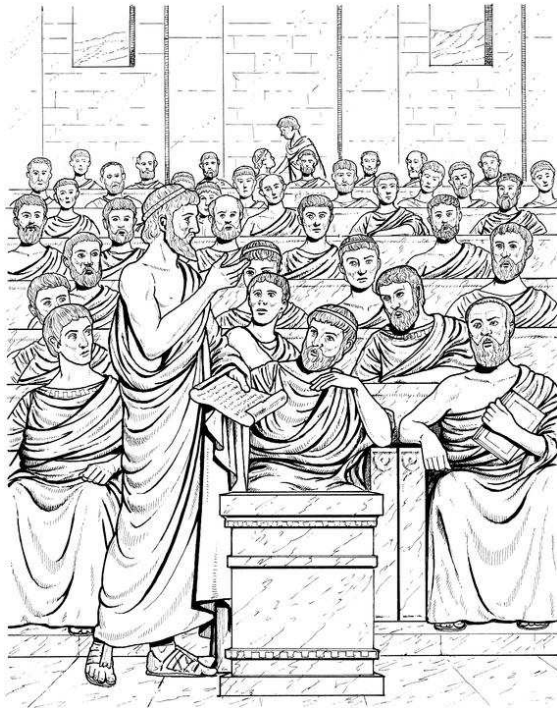
Rumors continually abound that shortly before his death, Hesidos finished one or even both of the incomplete scrolls VI and VII, and that they were somehow smuggled out of the city of Minea before its fall. There are widely-varying accounts of what the contents of these scrolls were, and many false scrolls of Hesidos have appeared down the centuries: but none have the power and grandeur (and therefore impart the Wisdom points) of the authentic scrolls, as any Seriphan Lyrist who has viewed them will testify. Most scholars believe that these works, even if ever completed, have long since been irretrievably lost. Of course, the Maze Master may know different...

Reading (and, for a Seriphan Lyrist, appreciating) the *Unfinished Works of Hesidos* takes about a week per scroll. A given library, tomb or treasure room on Seriphos (or, more rarely, at a former Seriphan colony) may contain 1d6 scrolls, in numbered order (thus, a roll of 4 means scrolls I to IV). A roll of 6 means that all five genuine scrolls are in the cache, together with a forged scroll purporting to be a copy of the lost scroll VI.

MAZE MASTER'S LORE

THE LANGUAGES OF MYTHIKA

A Study in Linguistics by **Anagnosis of Thena**, translated by **Andrew Pearce**



A linguistics symposium at the University of Thena

Four Great Families

Although there are about twenty human languages that are spoken in the known regions of Mythika today, it is quite clear that some of them have a stronger resemblance to Minean than others. Indeed, scholars have recognized for some time that nearly all human languages can be classified as members of one or other of four great language families. The illustrious **Leander of Sphaeros**, perhaps the greatest authority on the languages of Mythika of the past century, published his definitive work (*On the Tongues of Men*) on the subject forty years ago, and his findings have not been seriously challenged since.

Leander showed that these four language families could be directly related to the ancient Minean myth of the Sons of Deucalion. According to this myth, all humans living in Mythika today can trace their ancestry back to the four tribes that were led by the four sons of Deucalion, in the aftermath of the devastating flood brought upon Mythika by Zeus as punishment for the sins of humanity. These four sons were Proteus, Hyperboreus, Phaeton and

Charybdion.² Leander demonstrated, through his advanced techniques of linguistic analysis, that the tale of Deucalion is essentially true, and that all humans today speak a language that is descended from the original languages of these four ancestral tribes. These, in turn, were descended from the ancestral tongue common to all men before the Great Flood – to which Leander gave the hypothetical name '**Deucalian**'.

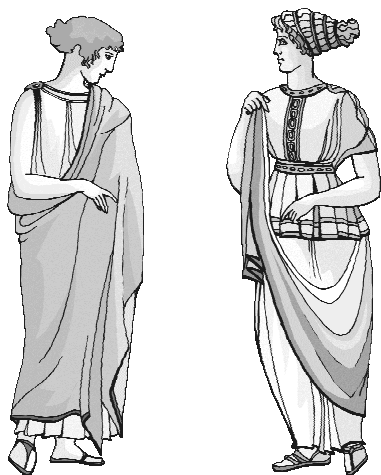
The Proteusian Family

The most important of these four families – at least to Mineans – is the Proteusian Family. The ancestral language (**Ancient Proteusian**) was spoken by Proteus' descendants on the island of Proteus for an unknown number of centuries following the Flood. This language eventually evolved into **Classical Proteusian** – the language of the court of the Bull King, and one of the very first written languages. A number of current languages are descended from the now extinct Classical Proteusian, including Minean, Tritonian, Umbrian and Modern Proteusian.

Over the last century, **Minean** has come to be spoken as a *lingua franca* by most educated people throughout Mythika, but it is the native language of the Land of the Three Cities, Seriphos and the Minean-inhabited islands of the Middle Sea. A number of different dialects are recognized, but the variation between them is not so great as to cause serious difficulty in understanding.

As well as Classical Proteusian, two other extinct tongues are known from this language family. The first is the **Acheiran** language – the tongue that was originally used by the people of Acheiros in the Age of Myth, and the following Age of Magic. The second is **Typhonian** (also sometimes known as **High Acheiran**) – the elite language of the Autarchs of Typhon during the second and third centuries of the Age of Magic. Although largely based upon ordinary Acheiran (which continued to be spoken by the common people) Typhonian also borrowed liberally from other languages with which the Autarchs came into contact – especially those of other dark civilizations, such as Atlantean, Gorgothon and Stygian. The Typhonian language became extinct following the abrupt end of the Autarch ascendancy in the Days of Wrath.

² See *Minotaur* N°10, p. 98 for the full tale of Deucalion's Flood.



Tritonian is the language of the Sea Princes of Tritonis. It is descended from Classical Proteusian via Acheiran, which it rapidly replaced in the first century of the Age of Heroes. The Tritonian vocabulary has also been enriched by Merian – the common tongue of Mermaids, Tritons and many other sea folk. Not surprisingly, Tritonian is marked by a particularly rich vocabulary of words with relation to the sea.

Umbrian clearly belongs with other languages of the Proteusian family, but it is impossible to say for certain to which it is most closely related. The best guess (following Leander) is that it originated as an offshoot of Acheiran either in the last century of the Age of Magic or the first century of the Age of Heroes. However, not all agree with Leander on this point. Rather like the history of the Umbrian people themselves, the origins of the Umbrian language are far from clear.

The final modern-day member of the Proteusian language family is **Modern Proteusian**. This rather debased tongue, the speech of the remnant towns and villages on the western coast of Proteus, is far removed from the noble language of Classical Proteusian. Although even the existence of Modern Proteusian was barely-acknowledged in Leander's time, the recent arrival of Mineans on the Proteusian shore, together with the founding of the Heraklian colony of Coristea, has enabled us to learn so much more about this rather humble relation of the Minean tongue.

The Hyperborean Family

The ancestral language of northern humans (**Ancient Hyperborean**) was spoken by the descendants of Hyperboreus, the second son of Deucalion. Given that the peoples of the far north have never developed writing, little is known for certain about how this language family developed. However, it seems that compared with the other language families the Hyperborean language has changed surprisingly little. Only one modern language is descended from this ancestral tongue, **Borean**, the language both of the Hyperborean Barbarians and the fierce Amazons.

At least four Borean dialects have been distinguished by Leander: **Cimbrian**, **Galleian** and **Thulean** to the west of the Typhon Sea, and **Amazonian** to the east. The three western dialects are clearly more closely related to one another than they are to Amazonian.³ Amazonian is largely a descendant of the long-extinct dialect of **Scarmathian**. Its vocabulary is idiosyncratic, lacking many common Borean words pertaining to the male gender. In the proud words of Dido of Amazonia, *'We have liberated our Mother Tongue from the influence of many masculine words and concepts, just like our ancestresses liberated themselves from the tyranny of men.'*

The Phaetonian Family

The third major family of languages is the Phaetonian family, named after the third son of Deucalion, the ancestor of the peoples of the Desert Kingdom and the Land of the Sun. At a fairly early point – long before the invention of writing – **Ancient Phaetonian** had evolved into two separate languages that Leander called **Proto-Khetian** and **Proto-Oromedonian**.

By the time that writing was invented (about 700 BP), Proto-Khetian had itself split into two languages, which were separate from one another not in geographical but rather in social terms: **High Khemi**, the language of the Khetian elite; and **Low Khemi**, the common languages of the already teeming masses of the Khet valley. As well as the true High Khemi (the so-called '**Language of the Gods**') that has remained the largely unchanged tongue of the nobles, priests and scribes of the Desert Kingdom for over a thousand years, there is an unusual and little-known dialect of High Khemi that is spoken only by the mysterious tribesmen of the **Deep Desert**.

Low Khemi is also commonly divided into two dialects: **Delta Khemi**, which is spoken in the four northern *nomes* of the Khet Delta; and **River Khemi**, which is spoken in the rest of the Desert Kingdom. River Khemi is the more conservative of the two dialects, having changed little over the course of the Three Ages: whereas Delta Khemi, spoken in that part of the Desert Kingdom that is most open to outside influence, has evolved rather more markedly.

At roughly the same time as the Proto-Khetian language diversified, so Proto-Oromedonian had evolved into three distinct languages: **Edonite**, spoken by the inhabitants of the coastal plain of the Land of the Sun, and along the lowermost stretch of the River Oromedon; **Hazarian**, spoken along the midmost stretch of the river, as far as the Phaeton Hills; and **Oromedonian**, spoken in the northernmost part of the river valley, as far as the foothills of the Thanatari Mountains.

³ The Thulean dialect is further characterized by a number of loan-words taken from the largely-forgotten language of the Giant-Kings, the Children of Ymir.



As the name would suggest, the Oremedon language was thought by Leander to be least changed from its Proto-Oromedonian roots, whilst the Edonite language was believed to be the most evolved of the three (most notably as a result of contact with the Proteusians in the last days of their greatness under the Bull King).

Two other tongues are usually included within the Phaetonian language family. The first of these is **Midian**, a descendant of Edonite spoken by the Kandarian adventurers who settled in Midia in the first century of the Age of Magic. Despite its affinity with Edonite, Midian has also been influenced by several other languages, particularly Khemi (both Low and High) and Minean. Perhaps as much as a third of the Midian word corpus has its origins from one of these languages.

The last member of the Phaetonian language family is the now-extinct **Gorgothon** tongue. Gorgothon was an off-shoot of Hazarian which was spoken in the Age of Magic within the sorcerous realm of Gorgoth, adjacent to Oromedon in the Thanatari foothills. With the downfall of Gorgoth at the end of the Age of Magic, Gorgothon quickly became a forgotten language.

The Charybdian Family

The last of the major language families identified by Leander was the Charybdian family. The hypothetical ancestral family within this group was labeled by the great historian of language as **Proto-Charybdian**. Leander believed that all the major human languages spoken in Charybdia today were descended from this ancestral tongue. These included the language of the Kari tribesmen, **Charybdian**; the tongue of the proud barbarians of the Opar Mountains, **Oparian**; the language of the Blacks Amazons of Charybdia, **Negaran**; and **Indwa**, the speech of the people of the Indwa Lakes. Leander was a little less certain about the place of **Babangan**, the language of the Babangan pygmies; but this too, he eventually concluded, was probably related in some way to the other human languages of Charybdia.

The various members of the Charybdian language family have been far less extensively studied than those of the other three families: partly because the lack of written forms, and partly because of the inaccessibility of much of Charybdia, still regarded by most Mineans as a dark continent. Indeed, only Charybdian itself has been closely studied – in particular by the renowned explorer-come-scholar Appolyonatos of Midia.

According to Appolyonatos, there are at least nine different dialects of Charybdian, probably more. Appolyonatos has confirmed several of Leander's more speculative conclusions about the Charybdian language family: such as the fact that the ceremonial language of **High Keshani** is related to and probably descended from Charybdian; and that the **Spirit Tongue**, the tongue of Animists, the Jengu and many Charybdian spirits, is essentially a non-human language that is only partly-related to the Charybdian and High Keshite tongues⁴. However, Appolyonatos is less convinced that Babangan is closely related to Charybdian, and is inclined to put it into a separate category altogether alongside the tongues of other 'lesser tribes' of Charybdia, most notably Indwa.

Language Perplexities

Although Leander's scheme is widely accepted today, and certainly gives a good explanation for the relationships between most of the human tongues of Mythika, several languages remain hard to classify.

As already mentioned, Babangan is one. Another is **Akamen** – the language of the little-known people living to the east of the Land of the Sun.⁵ Leander was the first to suggest that Akamen was unrelated to the tongues of the Phaetonian family, but that it had certain affinities with both the Hyperborean and the Proteusian families. Little further study has been done since, and this remains perhaps the most contentious aspect of Leander's classification.

Leander was also the first (or first Minean, at any rate) to conduct extensive research into the **Sybarian** language, which he concluded was a human language of uncertain decent from Deucalian, heavily influenced (in terms of both structure and vocabulary) by the speech of **Atlantis**.

Stygian, the ancient language of the Stygian Empire, as well as the 'native tongue' of the Underworld, is a harsh, guttural language that has no known relationship with any other human tongue. Few have found it profitable to learn this dark language of forbidden lore.

⁴ The Charybdians themselves, by contrast, believe the Spirit Tongue to be the ancestral tongue of all human languages spoken in Charybdia.

⁵ Little-known to the Minean world, that is. Anagnosis, in common with virtually all his contemporaries, knows little of the Akamen, and certainly does not grasp that there are vast territories stretching far off into the east that are under Akamen rule – and in which a further assortment of languages are spoken.

Finally, it has long been acknowledged that the **Anakite** language is at least partially related to Edonite. However, the Anakites are very secretive about their native tongue, rarely speaking it in front of others, and even more rarely allowing outsiders to learn it. As a result, it is impossible to say how much Anakite has been influenced by the language of Kandaria.

A Note on Non-Human Languages

There are four main non-human languages that are widely-spoken in Mythika. These are **Aerian**, the native language of Icarians, Hawkmen and other aerial Folks; **Gaian**, the native language of Nymphs (except Nereids), Centaurs and other Folks tied to nature; **Merian**, the common tongue of Mermaids, Tritons, Nereids and other speaking sea Folk; and **Subterranean**, the native language of Derros, Obsidians and other underground Folk. There are also a number of non-human languages that are spoken by a single Folk, such as **Anakite**, the language of the giant warriors of the Edonite coast; **Atlantean**, the ancient tongue of Atlantis; **Mammuk**, the language of the fabled Mammutep; and **Titanian**, the ancient (and almost forgotten) language of the Titanians.

Humans find it difficult to learn most non-human languages, not least because they often incorporate sounds or concepts that are hard for humans to imitate, e.g. the shrill cries and clicks that form an element of Aerian, the gentle burbling and tonal changes that are typical of Merian, or the highly-complex and nuanced language structure of Atlantean.

Which non-human beings actually have the gift of speech? Most **Folk** are able to speak to some degree – though some (e.g. Boarmen, Degenerate Men and Ogres) have a decidedly limited capacity for speech. Only the most intelligent **Monsters** (such as Dragons, Olympian Eagles and Sphinx) and some **Magical Beasts** are able to speak and, unlike Folk, they do not have languages of their own, but speak one or more human tongues.

Spirits vary greatly in their capacity to speak – and the more intelligent ones are able not just to comprehend but also to communicate in other tongues. In Charybdia, at least, many of them understand the so-called **Spirit Tongue**.

Animates, however, rarely possess the power of speech, unless specifically designed by their creator to exercise this capacity (the great exception is the Tragic Floating Head, which seems to have its own unique language, one that remains utterly unfathomable).

Finally, **Beasts** *never* talk – although some remarkable individuals seem capable of understanding human speech.



Yes, we know we've already used this illustration a couple of issues ago, but you've got admit it's spot on!

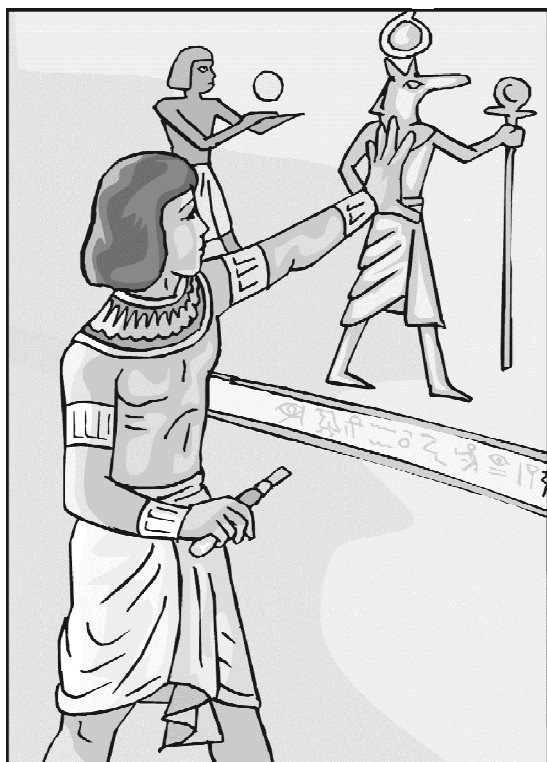
The Written Word

No-one knows who first invented writing, or when it first appeared. According to some tales, Prometheus himself first taught his children to write, as he also gifted them with architecture, astronomy, mathematics, navigation and other useful arts. However, there is no evidence for writing any earlier than about 700 BP. Then, remarkably, it would appear that writing techniques appeared more or less simultaneously in the three places that are regarded as the cradles of human civilization: the Desert Kingdom, Hazar and Proteus. All three civilizations made use of markedly different systems, and there is no evidence that any one of them directly influenced another.

Desert Kingdom Hieroglyphs

The **High Khemi script** makes use of a series of symbols known as **hieroglyphs** (literally 'priest-carvings' in Minean). In form, hieroglyphs resemble stylized drawings.

The complexity of the script is caused by the fact that different symbols have different functions. Some symbols stand for consonants, or groups of consonants; others function as *determinatives* – i.e. as clues to the class and function of the word – and not as sound-markers at all. And a few particularly important symbols actually stand for entire words. Most vowels are left unmarked, making pronunciation difficult for anyone not well-versed in the spoken language. Somewhat confusingly, High Khemi can be read (or written) from left to right, from right to left, or even from top to bottom (never bottom to top). The correct direction is indicated by the facing of the characters.



Royal names can readily be identified in any Khetim text because of the common practice of placing them inside an oval-shaped ring known as a *shenu* ring (an ancient symbol of eternity).

In all, there are something like 700 hieroglyphs in the High Khemi script that are in common use – and a properly-trained scribe is expected to be familiar with them all. The script itself has changed very little over the course of more than a thousand years – a skilled scribe shouldn't have any more difficulty reading a High Khemi document of the First Age than a contemporary one.

Low Khemi – the language of the common people – is not, and never has been, a written language.

Hazarian Cuneiform

Hazarian cuneiform (meaning 'wedge-shaped') looks radically different from hieroglyphs. Whereas hieroglyphs are typically written on papyrus, cuneiform is written with a stylus on clay tablets which are then allowed to dry in the sun. Cuneiform writing systems are always read from left to right.

The earliest form of Hazarian cuneiform was written using a script of similar complexity to hieroglyphs, consisting of over 600 different signs – a mixture of sixty or so signs for consonants or groups of consonants, and a much larger group of signs for numerals, determinatives and individual words. This script was later used in writing the Gorgothon language during the Age of Magic.

The **Edonite cuneiform** script was a direct adaptation (and simplification) of the Hazarian Script, and was used from the foundation of

Kandaria (533 BP) until the first century BP. Edonite Cuneiform used about 450 different signs – a significant reduction on the Hazarian script, but still sufficient to restrict literacy to a relatively small elite.

Whereas the High Khemi script has changed little since its invention, the Hazarian script has simplified considerably with the passage of time. Currently only about 150 (less than a quarter) of the original Hazarian characters are still commonly used. However, as in the Desert Kingdom, writing largely remains the prerogative of the noble, priestly and scribal classes.

Proteusian Linear A

The ancient **Proteusian script** is different again, both from hieroglyphs and cuneiform. Generally known as **Linear A**, the Proteusian script was used from about 700 BP until 500 BP to write Classical Proteusian on Proteus (and perhaps for another 50 years longer in Kandaria to write Edonite, where it co-existed for a time alongside the Edonite cuneiform script).

It is believed that Linear A was a **syllabary** of some sort (unfortunately, we cannot be sure, as it has thus far defied all attempts to decipher it). A syllabary is a linguistic notation in which each character represents a different syllable (such as *a*, *ba*, *be*, *bi*, *bo*, *bu*, *ca*, *ce*, *ci*, *co*, *cu*, etc.). Linear A was made up of about 120 different characters, but they bear little resemblance to those found in other scripts. Our knowledge of Linear A is so limited that we do not even know, for certain, whether it was read left to right, or right to left.

The Alphabet Revolution

The first **Minean script** is often referred to as **Linear B**. It is also known as the **Cadmean alphabet** (after its supposed originator Cadmos) – even though it was not a true alphabet, but, like Linear A, a syllabary. Linear B consisted of almost 100 different characters, was read (or written) from left to right, and was used throughout the Minean world from roughly 500 BP until 100 BP.

The next great step forward was the development of a consonant-only writing system. This innovation came during the first century BP, amongst the Edonites of Kandaria. This new writing system reduced the hundreds of characters of previous scripts down to twenty or so letters. Although not a true alphabet (there were still no symbols for vowels), it was a massive improvement on what had gone before, and was far easier to learn than Desert Kingdom hieroglyphs, Hazarian cuneiform or the Linear B syllabary of the early Mineans.

For the first time in human history, literacy was no longer the sole preserve of nobles, priests and scribes. The **Edonite alphabet** remains in use in Kandaria and the rest of Edon seven centuries later. It is read (or written) from right to left.

The Edonite alphabet spread both to the Minean world and to Midia in the first century of the Age of Magic. In both places the reading (and writing) order was changed from left to right. The final step in this incremental 'Alphabet Revolution' was the development of a true alphabet (i.e. one with both consonant and vowel characters). This was accomplished in the early second century of the Age of Magic when the Minean script (**Linear C**) added characters for the vowels. The Minean alphabet has remained unchanged ever since. In the first century of the Age of Heroes, Minean vowel characters were also added to the Midian alphabet.

Other Writing Scripts

The ancient Acheirans (during the Age of Myth) appear to have used the Minean Linear B script, adapted to their own language. Later, during the Age of Magic, Acheiran was instead written using the Edonite alphabet.

The **Typhonian script** was invented in the second century of the Age of Magic, using its own set of unique characters. At first it was used by the Autarchs to write their Typhonian language carefully and secretly – but as their power grew, they used it more openly: displaying it, for example, on the impressive monuments that they built to celebrate their reign. Like Minean it was fully-alphabetic, but it also included a large number of mystical sigils, the meanings of which are not fully understood today. Typhonian was read from right to left.

The **Tritonian script**, like that used for the Acheiran language, was initially simply an adoption of the Edonite alphabet. By the end of the first century of the Age of Heroes, it had added vowel signs, turning it into a true alphabet. However, these vowel signs are completely unlike the Minean (and Midian) ones. Many new consonant characters were also added at the same time, and some of the older consonants dropped out of use, resulting in a very different look to Minean. Tritonian is read from right to left.

The **Umbrian script** looks something like a cross between the Tritonian and Minean scripts. Umbrian makes use of a rather confusing writing style known as **boustrophedon** (literally 'ox-turning', after the manner of an ox ploughing a field) – a style that alternates right-to-left lines and left-to-right lines. It has only been in use for about one hundred years and fifty years or so – one of the reasons why the origins of the Umbrians are so mysterious is that we have no written records from any earlier period of their history. Umbrian documents (like those written in cuneiform in the Land of the Sun) generally consist of sun-dried clay tablets, which are carefully stored in baskets on the shelves of royal archives.

The **Atlantean script** uses flowing, rounding characters that look quite unlike those of any other script. It is a fully-alphabetic script (read from left to right) which is also used by the Sybarians. One interesting feature of the Atlantean script is that it has an intricate and logical system of punctuation, quite unlike that of any other writing system.

Finally, the **Stygian script** uses a harsh, angular script. First attested in the second century of the Age of Magic, it is still rarely-learned by those who are not native speakers. It is understood to be a syllabary script – though completely unrelated to the Minean syllabaries Linear A and Linear B. Some of the characters are clearly adapted from High Khemi hieroglyphs. The Stygian script, uniquely, is written from bottom to top.

Starting Languages

The following lists are intended to clarify what starting languages are available to various character classes and races. Note that each script is treated as a 'language slot' in its own right.

Amazons: Borean (Amazonian dialect) & Minean.

Centaurs: Gaian & Minean.

Charybdis – Babangans: Charybdian & Babangan.
Black Amazons: Charybdian & Negaran. **Keshite Nobles:** Charybdian, High Keshani & one extra language (chosen from Babangan, Indwa, Minean, Negaran or Oparian). **Magicians:** Charybdian & Spirit Tongue. Griots also speak High Keshani and Sorcerers speak a third language of their choice (usually another Charybdian language, Minean or a non-human tongue). **Oparians:** Charybdian & Oparian. **Others:** Charybdian & one extra language (Babangan, Indwa, Minean, Negaran or Oparian).

Delphins: Merian, Dolphin & Minean.

Hyperborean Barbarians: Borean (choose Cimbrian, Galleian or Thulean dialect) & Minean.

Khettim – Nobles & Magicians: High Khemi, Low Khemi, High Khemi Script & one extra language (chosen from Edonite, Midian or Minean). **Others:** Low Khemi & one extra language (Edonite, High Khemi, Midian or Minean).

Land of the Sun: Akamen & three extra languages (chosen from Edonite, Edonite Script, Hazarian, Hazarian Script, Low Khemi, Midian, Minean, Oromedonian or Tritonian).

Mammutepts: Mammuk & Charybdian.

Midians: Midian, Minean, Midian/Minean Script & one extra language (chosen from Charybdian, Edonite, Low Khemi or Tritonian).

Mineans – Nobles & Magicians: Minean, Minean Script & any two extra languages (may include a script). **Others:** Minean & Minean Script. Players may specify a particular native dialect if they wish.

Nymphs – Naiads & Nereids: Merian & Minean.
Other Nymphs: Gaian & Minean.

Tritons: Merian & Dolphin.

Tritonians – Sea Princes & Magicians: Tritonian, Tritonian Script, Minean and one extra language (chosen from Edonite, Midian or Minean Script). **Others:** Tritonian, Tritonian Script & Minean.

Umbrians: Umbrian, Umbrian Script & Minean.

Uroks: Urok, Gaian & one extra language.

Zebrans: Charybdian & Zeban.



Imaginary Languages 101 for Maze Masters

1. Know your players!

Some players have no interest in languages whatsoever. They only speak English (or whatever their native language happens to be). They get restless if you pepper your NPC dialogues with even the most well-known Greek words – like *agora*, *trireme* or *polis*. It might be best for their happiness (and your sanity) if you assume that most characters (including NPCs) speak Minean (or Charybdian if your campaign is set in the jungle south, or Akamen if it is in the far east, etc.) and just leave it at that.

Alternatively, your players may include professors of Egyptology, students of ancient history, gifted polyglots, or enthusiasts for fantasy/sci-fi languages like Quenya and Klingon...and as a result they may enjoy any opportunity to dabble in a little 'pseudo-linguistics'. In which case, read on...

2. 'What *did* he just say?'

In Mythika, not everyone speaks Minean (well, unless you *really* want it that way...see paragraph 1 above). So every time your players have an encounter with a new character, or a new monster, think to yourself: 'What language is the NPC speaking? Does any player in the party know this language? Does the NPC understand what the players are saying themselves?'

Of course, you don't want to be **constantly** checking what language your PCs (or your NPCs) are speaking – that would quickly become tedious. But when it's a first encounter, *and/or* when it's a critical encounter (where incomprehension could easily lead to disaster – '*Are you sure he said the guard wouldn't come back in the next hour?*'), then the Maze Master shouldn't just assume that everyone's speaking the same lingo.

Remember, incidentally, that speaking a language is not the same as writing it or comprehending it. Some creatures may understand a language, even if they can't speak it. Many individuals will be able to speak a language without being able to read or write it. Levels of understanding vary too – picking up a smattering of Edonite on a trade visit is not the same as having made an extensive study of the language over many years!

3. 'I *think* he just said...'

Think how our use of our native language works in the real world. There are always new words with unfamiliar meanings. We may struggle to understand those with a particularly thick regional accent. Or we may speak in a way that betrays the parochialism of our own upbringing. Now think how much harder it is to cope with all these nuances when using a foreign language.

Now the Maze Master isn't going to make a big deal of this very often. But, just occasionally, a small matter such as how you pronounce a particular word can make a critical difference (see Judges 12.4-6 in the Old Testament for an excellent example of this principle in action). In M&M, characters with the Scholar talent should always be assumed to be more competent with their own (and to a lesser extent, with other learnt) languages – increasing one's familiarity with obscure dialects, archaic language and (in the case of written language) ancient texts.

4. Back to school...

Just how does one learn a new language? To answer this question, we need to go beyond the guidelines given in the *Maze Masters Guide* (p. 10).

First, let's assume that you need a teacher (who could, of course, be a fellow player character). If no-one is willing or able to teach you the language, then you can't learn it (the Anakites, for example, are notoriously reluctant to teach outsiders their native tongue – this undoubtedly applies to other languages as well). Most teaching can take place in an informal way, even while one is still in the midst of adventuring ('*Now then, Pythaganes, let me explain how the Umbarian aorist works while we're sat round this camp-fire with nothing better to do*'). Formal teaching (e.g., by spending some time at the feet of a renowned scholar at the Akademia) is more time-consuming, but should be rewarded by allowing the student to learn at a faster rate.

Secondly, it can be assumed that not all languages are equally easy to learn.

It is suggested that languages that are at a single remove from one's native speech on the **Language Table** given on previous page can be treated as **easy** to learn (e.g., a Hazarian choosing to learn Edonite; an Oparian learning Charybdian; a Sybarian learning Atlantean).

Languages that are at two removes from one's native tongue can be treated as **moderately difficult** to learn (e.g., a Midian character learning Oromedonian; a Minean learning Tritonian; a Negaran learning High Keshani).

Languages that are at three or more removes, that are connected by a broken line, or are non-human, are treated as **hard** to learn (e.g., a Borean learning Charybdian; a Minean learning Sybarian; an Umbrian learning Aerian).

Any **easy** language should take half the recommended time to get to each competency level (as given in the *Maze Masters Guide*). A **hard** language should take twice the recommended time to reach each new competency level.

Mythikan	Real-world cognate
Akamen	Old Persian
Atlantean	No known cognate
Borean	Celtic languages (with some Nordic elements for Thuleans)
Charybdian & associated tongues	Sub-Saharan African languages
Edonite	Phoenician
Hazarian	Sumerian & Akkadian (Babylonian dialect)
Khemi (Low & High)	Ancient Egyptian
Midian	Punic (North African Phoenician)
Minean	Classical Greek (of course!)
Oromedonian	Akkadian (Assyrian dialect)
Proteusian	Minoan
Stygian	No known cognate
Sybarian	No known cognate
Tritonian	Archaic Greek
Umbrian	Archaic Greek

Each new script is treated as moderately difficult to learn (except High Khemi, which is treated as hard to learn, and also requires the Scholar talent). A dead language can be learnt (and taught) only if it has a written script that is well understood (which excludes Classical Proteusian) - and Leander's various hypothetical languages cannot be learnt or taught by anyone (they may not actually have existed, after all).

5. What's in a name?

Most names have meanings – be they names of people, gods, places, mythic items, or other objects. Using an exotic name from time to time (whether it be invented by a Maze Master, or based upon a real-world language) may help increase the 'atmosphere' of your game session.

Some of the *Mythika Gazetteer* articles (e.g. those on the Desert Kingdom, Hyperborea, Midia, the Land of the East and Charybdia in *Minotaur* N°5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 respectively) make extensive use of names, which are directly drawn from or inspired by appropriate real-world languages. The following list shows what the real world cognates are for the principal human Mythikan languages.

6. Pretty pictures...

Presenting your players with a piece of paper covered in exotic-looking characters (hieroglyphs, cuneiform letters, or something even more

mysterious) is another good way of enhancing your game's background. Such characters can, of course, be hand-drawn, but there are plenty of exotic fonts on the internet that are freely downloadable. The 'look' is the important thing here – there is simply no need for an exact translation or transliteration into genuine ancient characters.

7. Sounds like...?

No-one knows how most ancient languages in the 'real world' were pronounced - and your players probably don't care what Minean or Umbrian sound like. Neither should you. Just saying that a particular NPC 'has a strong Argosean accent' will do the trick – no need to try to conjure up just what that would sound like!

8. Just whose world it is, anyway?

Okay, perhaps you **do** have a professor in Egyptology in your gaming group. If so, don't let him tell you that your painstaking-prepared hieroglyph text doesn't make sense. Just tell him it doesn't have to – because it's in Khetim, not ancient Egyptian! **You**, the Maze Master, are the final arbiter of how the languages actually work in your game. By all means ask a player for help if their knowledge will actually assist you in your planning – but don't let them tell you that your end result is all wrong!

Andrew Pearce (2012)

Each issue, **Griffin Archives** unearths an old Griffin magazine article from the last century

ARCHAEOLOGISTS

A New Optional Specialist Character Class, by **Igor A. Rivendell**

Archaeologists in M&M

During the last few years, a new type of adventurer has appeared in the imaginary world of Mythika: Archaeologists! Armed with only their wits, intellect and resourcefulness (not to mention a healthy dose of luck), these seekers of lost knowledge explore ancient ruins, mysterious islands and other perilous locales in search of forgotten lore (rather than glory or wealth) – be it in the form of trinkets, texts or treasure (which includes, of course, mythic items).

Most Archaeologists come from the city of Thena or the island of Seriphos, the cradle of Minean civilization – but even in these centers of learning where the quest for knowledge is highly regarded, Archaeologists tend to be viewed with a mix of suspicion, contempt and derision, from either side of the adventuring fence: while most respectable (i.e. sedentary) scholars, including philosophers, tend to view Archaeologists as deluded cranks or dubious treasure-hunters, most “real” adventurers (including Thieves) consider ‘diggers’ (a derogatory term for Archaeologists) as foolhardy, eccentric dilettantes who should never have left the safety of their library or academy; those professional adventurers who have accepted such “amateurs” in their ranks, however, have often been impressed by their persistence, ingenuity and treasure-hunting talents.

In order to recognize themselves (and proudly display their affiliation to their enlightened fraternity), most Archaeologists have adopted a wide-brimmed hat as a symbol of their vocation⁶ – a practice which was quickly ridiculed by their detractors; in many cities of Mythika, the distinctive wide-brimmed hat is now known as “a Fool’s Hat”.

Archaeologists are a Specialist class: whereas Thieves, Hunters and Mariners can be respectively defined as subterfuge, wilderness and marine specialists, the Archaeologist fills the niche of the intellectual specialist – not a bookworm but a daredevil of knowledge, a seeker of lost wonders in the same vein as the heroic Indiana Jones.

⁶ **2012 Note:** It seems our friend Igor A. Rivendell was a bit obsessed with Indiana Jones, back in the 80s (and that's not over, yet: just check the *Weapon of Choice* section). And in case you were wondering, Lara Croft wasn't even born, back then...



ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Primary Attributes: Wits and Luck.

Gender: Although most Archaeologists are male, there is no gender restriction for this class.

Basic Hits = 10

Discernment: While they do not have the magic-negating rationality of Philosophers, Archaeologists are trained to use their mind as efficiently and resourcefully as possible, which allows them to add their Wits bonus to all their Mystic Fortitude rolls – except against Divine Prodigies.

Exploration: Archaeologists have a special Exploration bonus, equal to the sum of their Wits and Luck mods. This bonus is added to all the character's detection rolls made when exploring ruins, tombs, labyrinths, caverns and similar locales, as well as to all his climbing rolls. Archaeologists can also use their Exploration bonus to disarm indoor traps, like Thieves (see *M&M Companion* for more details) but receive no special stealth bonus.

Treasure Appreciation: Archaeologists are always able to appraise the rough monetary value of any non-magical treasure they find; they also add their level to their D10 roll when trying to identify mythic items, just like magicians (see *Maze Masters Guide*, p. 49).

Weapon of Choice: Any non-battle weapon, such as the dagger, the whip⁷ (see below) or the staff.

⁷ **2012 Note:** See? What did I tell you?



A heroic Archaeologist (complete with the distinctive wide-brimmed hat) organizing his next expedition

Level Benefits: Each level beyond the first gives an Archaeologist +2 Hits, +1 to Luck and +2 to Wits, Skill, or Will (player's choice).

Possessions: All Archaeologists start the game with a dagger, a staff or whip and a personal wealth of 3D6 x 10 silver pieces.

Patron Deities: Most Archaeologists are followers of Athena, goddess of wisdom and learning, but some of them favor Hephaestus, as the maker of many lost wonders of times past.

Languages: All Archaeologists are master linguists; they start with the Minean common tongue, plus *three* extra languages. In addition, Archaeologists only pay one language slot for learning to speak, read and write languages which use a non-Minean writing system (see *Maze Masters Guide*, p. 10). Thus, an Archaeologist could start the game with complete fluency and literacy in Minean, High Khemi, Atlantean and Tritonian, an impossible feat for any other character class.

Background Talents: All Archaeologists have the Scholar talent, plus a second talent chosen between Armorer, Healer, Mountaineer, Orator and Sailor.⁸

⁸ **2012 Note:** This list should be updated and expanded to include several new talents published in the pages of the *Minotaur*, such as *Desert Scout* and *Tomb Robber* talents (see issue 5) or even *Pathfinder* (see issue 10). The *Tomb Robber* talent, which is normally restricted to *Khetim Thieves*, would be a particularly apt choice for a treasure-hunting, tomb-delving Archaeologist.

Whips in M&M

For some unfathomable reason⁹, whips have become the distinctive trademark weapon of many Archaeologists.

In M&M, a whip can be used as a melee weapon; it only inflicts 1d3 damage but ignores all armor, shield and other protective bonuses to the target's Defense Class.

Characters with a Skill of 13+ can also use a whip to disarm an opponent (using the rules given in the *M&M Companion*) or to entangle a target's legs and yank him to the ground: if the attack roll succeeds, the target takes no damage but falls down (as if affected by a Bashing attack), unless he makes a Danger Evasion roll (vs. a target number 15); this trick cannot be used against creatures of Large (or Gigantic) Size or with more than two legs.

A whip has an Encumbrance value of 0.

Reputation Effect: Sadly, Archaeologists are not as respected as, say, warriors or magicians, and, like Thieves and most other Specialists, do not enjoy any form of Reputation bonus.

Advancement: Like all Specialists, Archaeologists rise in levels by accumulating Experience points. They gain as many Experience points as magicians gain Wisdom points for Exploring the Unknown, as well as 50 Experience points every time they successfully use their Exploration ability in an important situation. Maze Masters may also hand them 50, 100 or 200 Experience points for unearthing lost knowledge and making major archaeological finds – and as much as 500 points for recovering a Unique Artifact.



Ruins – the surest way to attract an Archaeologist

⁹ **2012 Note:** You mean, 'other than your strange Indiana Jones / whip fixation'? In the end of the 1980s, Igor A. Rivendell's Indiana Jones obsession led him to self-publish the *Daring Retro Adventure Theatre (DRAT) RPG*, a spectacular commercial failure, which is now regarded as a venerable piece of gaming archaeology in itself.

MYTHIC HISTORY

(Part Two of Three)

by *Anagnosis of Thena*, translated (and annotated) by **Andrew Pearce**

In the first part of this mega-article (see last issue), we delved into the first three books of the works of Homeros, Mythika's storyteller supreme, which covered the early deeds of the Gods, the coming of Men and the various feuds and conflicts of the Olympians. In this second installment, we explore the fourth, fifth and sixth books, which cover the first kingdoms of men, the tales of the old Minean city of Cadmea and the chronicles of the fallen kingdom of Thessalia...

Book the Fourth: The First Kingdoms

The First Great Kingdoms of Mankind

Now the villages of Proteus were united under the rule of the Bull King, who was the first to sacrifice a bull to the mighty Gods. As a reward for his piety, the Gods granted to the Bull King – whose true name none now know – the gifts of wisdom and long life. And the Proteusians began to build ships, and explore the Middle Sea, and settled on many islands, and along the Edonite coast. And the Bull King built his great palace in the centre of the island of Proteus.¹⁰ And in those days Adjet the Red first united the Khettim. Now Adjet gained mystic knowledge from a Sphinx he vanquished, and fought against many beast lords of the Khet valley, and utterly defeated the Ubasti, driving them from the Khet Delta to the western oases.

And the people of Hazar also began living in cities. Urek, the oldest Hazarian city, was founded by Enmerkar the Fisherman. Kesh, the chief rival to Urek, was built by Melemkesh the Shepherd soon afterwards.¹¹ And for a time the ascendancy amongst the Hazarian cities lay with Kesh: but then Bilgamesh the great-grandson of Enmerkar, hero of the *Epic of Bilgamesh*, became king of Urek, and during his reign Urek became once more the pre-eminent Hazarian city.¹²

¹⁰ The traditional date that is often given for the founding of the Kingdom of the Bull King is 753 BP (Before Prometheos). This is usually regarded as the earliest recorded date in human history. The legends of the Bull King, and the origin of the Minean cities, are the only parts of Book Four of the *Annals* that draw upon the earlier works of Homeros: for most of the other material found in this portion of the *Annals*, Demosthenes is believed to have drawn upon traditions he picked up in Kandaria.

¹¹ The traditional dates for the foundations of Urek and Kish are 690 BP and 675 BP respectively.

¹² The traditional dates given for the reign of Bilgamesh are 610 to 570 BP.

The Epic of Bilgamesh



A well-known scene from the Epic of Bilgamesh

The *Epic of Bilgamesh*, written during the first century of the Age of Magic in the city of Ishtar, is an anonymous work that tells of the many adventures of Bilgamesh, accompanied by his friend Enkidu (the eponymous father of the Wild Men of the East), and their victory over the giant Humbaba.

The Epic also tells that Bilgamesh earned the hostility of the Hazarian Goddess Ishtar (almost certainly an avatar of the Minean Goddess Aphrodite) by spurning her wanton advances – the first mortal man to do so. In revenge, Ishtar sent the 'Bull of Heaven' (a member of the Gorgotaur race, perhaps?) to fight against Bilgamesh. Following Enkidu's death – a punishment from the Gods – Bilgamesh goes on a quest in search of wisdom, and eventually meets with the long-lived Etnapesh, his heroic ancestor from the days of the Deluge (perhaps to be equated with Deucalion, although the Mineans do not believe Deucalion to have been especially long-lived). Etnapesh cannot restore Enkidu to life, however, and teaches Bilgamesh that he must accept the will of the Gods. Bilgamesh returns to Urek and takes up the reins of kingship once again, proving to be a wise and just ruler. It is said that none witnessed his death, and the Hazarians came to believe that he had been taken up into the heavens.

Damuzir the Despicable

Now a few years after the disappearance of Bilgamesh, Damuzir the Despicable founded the Hazarian city of Urim. Damuzir spent ten years preparing a strong army, and then began a terrible war of conquest against the other Hazarian cities. One after another, they fell to Damuzir. Monstrous was his reign, and great was the suffering of the people. Then the Hazarians cried out to the Gods for deliverance: but a great famine came upon them. Then the wrath of the people was kindled, and they rose up against Damuzir, and overthrew him. Thus fell the First Hazarian Empire to fire and sword, and for many years the Hazarian lands knew only lawlessness and bloodshed.¹³

The Founding of Kandaria

Many different tales are told of the foundation of Kandaria.¹⁴ One holds that it was built by Proteusian colonists, bold adventurers from the land of the Bull King. Another tells that it was founded by refugees from the Hazarian cities, fleeing the tyranny of Damuzir the Despicable. Yet another account claims that it was built by Damuzir himself. But from the beginning, most of its people belonged to the Edonite race.

Now all tales agree that the first ruler of Kandaria was named Belus, and whether or not he was Hazarian or Proteusian himself, all agree that he married a Proteusian princess, a daughter of the Bull King. The son of Belus, Pygmalion, is said to have fallen in love with the Goddess Aphrodite¹⁵ and, because she would not lie with him, made an ivory image of her and laid it in his bed, praying to her for pity. Entering into this image, Aphrodite brought it to life as Galatea, who bore him a son Paphos, and a daughter Arachne.

The Fall of the Bull King

Now although he had lived a long life, three times beyond the span of even the longest-lived of mortal men, a time came when the Bull King of Proteus finally felt the weariness of old age begin to take hold upon his flesh. In fear, he sent emissaries and adventurers to every corner of the world, to search for a way to gain immortality, but none was found. For ten years, the Bull King's trepidation grew as he felt the increasing decay of his flesh. Then, on a dark moonless night, Hekateria the Hag approached the King, and spoke to him about the power of Chaos: far greater and immeasurably older, she claimed, than that of the Gods. Hekateria tricked the Bull King into unleashing the power of Chaos by slaying his twelve sons with a cursed axe.



The monstrous Bull King of Proteus

Instead of granting himself immortality, the Bull King brought death and destruction down upon his kingdom. Most of his subjects were transformed into foul beasts, as was the king himself as he became the Minotaur Lord.

Remnants of Proteusian civilization survived on the western coastlands of Proteus, across several islands of the Middle Sea and along the Edonite coast, especially in Kandaria, where Pygmalion had now succeeded his father as king.¹⁶

Minaeus and his Sons

Although the Bull King had slaughtered his twelve sons, and most of his nine daughters were likewise caught up in the downfall of his kingdom, two escaped from the ruination of Proteus, the very eldest and the youngest. The eldest daughter, Eudore, married Belus, first lord of Kandaria, whilst the youngest, Halimede – against her father's wishes – eloped with a cow-herd named Minaeus.

This Minaeus was a pious devotee of Aphrodite, and with her aid escaped the wrath of the Bull King by fleeing with his bride overseas, where he founded a settlement named Minea on the island of Seriphos.¹⁷ In later years, after the downfall of the Bull King, many refugees from Proteus, both noblemen and commoners, settled on Seriphos, strengthening Minaeus' fledgling realm. And Halimede bore Minaeus seven sons: Sarpedon, Cadmos, Eucratis, Phaistos, Heraphilos, Thessales and lastly Ganymedes, his favorite.

¹³ The traditional date given for the foundation of Urim is 565 BP, whilst the date usually given for the fall of the First Hazarian Empire is 520 BP.

¹⁴ The traditional date for the foundation of Kandaria is usually given as 533 BP.

¹⁵ A adds 'whom the Kandarians call Ashtarte.'

¹⁶ The traditional date given for the fall of the Kingdom of the Bull King is 499 BP.

¹⁷ The traditional date for the foundation of the city of Minea is usually given as 510 BP.



King Sarpedon of Seriphos

Now Ganymedes was a youth of exceeding beauty, and was chosen by the Gods to be Zeus' cup-bearer. But though he was assured that his son would become immortal, Minaeus refused to allow him to travel to Olympus, desiring to keep him forever by his side. But one day Zeus disguised himself in the feathers of an eagle and abducted Ganymedes. Golden bowl in hand, smiling Ganymedes dispenses bright ambrosia still to the Lord of Olympus, but his father Minaeus died soon after his abduction of a broken heart.

And following the death of Minaeus, his remaining sons quarreled over the succession. Now Sarpedon, being the eldest, received the acclaim of most of those who were of noble birth, and was supported by his brother Phaistos. But Eucratis and Heraphilos, together with most of the common people, favored rather the second son of Minaeus, Cadmos. Only prudent Thessales refused to take sides, and departed with his followers before any blood was shed. After seven years of conflict, the followers of Sarpedon prevailed against the supporters of Cadmos. Then Cadmos, Eucratis and Heraphilos departed Seriphos, and each founded a city on the mainland shore opposite Minea, the cities of Cadmea, Thuria and Heraphile. In time, this became known as the Land of the Three Cities.¹⁸

Sarpedon was crowned king of Seriphos and ruled from his father's city of Minea: but he rewarded his brother Phaistos with lands on the south coast of Seriphos. There Phaistos lived in the city that thereafter bore his name, in the shadow of Mount Phaesta, the mountain which some believe is home to the forges of Hephaestus. Finally, Thessales traveled further than any of the mortal sons of Minaeus, and after much wandering, built his city on the western shore of the Typhon Sea. He named it Olyntheos: but its later citizens named it Thessalia,

¹⁸ The date of the so-called Minean Diaspora, the year in which the original Three Cities were founded by Cadmos, Eucratis and Heraphilos, is traditional given as 464 BP.

in honor of its founder.¹⁹ For all their independence of spirit, the people of these cities remembered their heritage, and they all called themselves Mineans, in honor of the forefather of their race.

The Changing Land of the Three Cities

The term **Land of the Three Cities** is an ancient one, dating back to the First Age: but the exact identity of the Three Cities has changed over the years.

The earliest Minean cities in this land were Cadmea, Heraphile and Thuria, of which Thuria was the most warlike, whilst Cadmea had, reputedly, the strongest defenses, and the greatest riches. As a rule, Thuria tended to avoid fighting Cadmea, and preferred to bully the weakest of the three cities, Heraphile. However, with the ascendancy of Minea under King Midas and his successors, the Three Cities acknowledged, however reluctantly, the primacy of Minea, and participated in the great Thessalian War under Minea's leadership. Only with the collapse of the Minean Empire following the first great eruption of Mount Phaesta did the Three Cities re-assert their independence, only to overwhelmed soon afterwards by an invasion of barbarians from Hyperborea in the final century of the First Age.

In the first century of the Second Age, the cities of Cadmea, Heraphile and Thuria all re-emerged, though with less strength and confidence than before. By the early second century, they were once again paying a degree of homage to the kings of Minea, although of a rather looser kind than before.

However, by the end of that century, Minea had fallen beneath the shadow of the Autarchs of Typhon and their allies, the kings of Phaistos. In the third century, one by one, the Three Cities themselves succumbed to ruin and ash before the onslaught of the Autarchs. The survivors were enslaved or driven into the foothills of the Helicon Mountains, where heroes and remnant nobles carried on the struggle against the Autarchs and their hordes, with little hope of success. However, the intervention of the Gods changed all that, as the Autarchs themselves fell during the apocalyptic Days of Wrath.

At the beginning of the Third Age, the Minean survivors built the Three Cities anew – although only one (Thena) was on the site of the one of the original settlements, Thuria. The survivors of Heraphile – who had learnt far more warlike ways to survive – built a new city, Heraklia, for themselves: whilst the remnants of the Cadmeans flourished with the establishment of the city of Argos. Thus was the Land of the Three Cities reborn.

¹⁹ The traditional date for the founding of Olyntheos is 469 BP.

Now although the Olympian Gods were worshipped throughout the Minean world, each city adopted a different patron. For Thuria this was Zeus, whilst for Heraphile, it was Hera: and on account of this, there was great rivalry between these two cities from the beginning. In Cadmea the patron was Poseidon, and for many years the ship-captains of Cadmea were accounted the most daring mariners of the Middle Sea. On the island of Seriphos, two of the Gods were given the greater honor, Aphrodite and Hephaestus: but whereas the Goddess of love was especially held dear in Minea (close to the Cove of Shells where first she came ashore), in Phaistos the worship of Hephaestus took precedence (in the shadow of his sacred mountain). In Olyntheos alone did no God exercise particular patronage, for the wise and pious Thessales venerated all twelve Olympians with an equal regard: and his people at first followed his example, until the days of Orpheus.

Ishtar and Amurapi

Now a caravan trader named Sabuel founded the city of Ishtar the Beautiful, last and greatest of the major Hazarian cities.²⁰ Most famous of Ishtar's early kings was the grandson of Sabuel, Amurapi the Lawgiver.²¹ Although best known as the writer of the *Code of Amurapi*, he was also a great warrior who soon united the Hazarian cities once again, thereby creating the Second Hazarian Empire.

The Second Hazarian Empire, though far more just than the First, proved to be almost as short-lived. Soon after Amurapi's death, his son Samsiluna had to fight off several revolts from amongst the other Hazarian cities. Then twenty years after the death of Amurapi, Ishtar was brutally sacked by Oromedon tribesmen from the north, as were most of the other settlements of Hazar. Although the Oremedonians soon retreated to the hills of their bleak homeland with their spoils, Ishtar and her sister cities did not recover for many centuries, until the Second Age of Man had dawned.²²

The Code of Amurapi

The oldest surviving of Mythikan law-codes is that of Amurapi, dating from around 400 BP. Several copies survive from the First Age, in whole or part, engraved upon human-sized stone stele and various clay tablets. In total, there are 282 laws. The *Code of Amurapi* remains the basis for the administration of justice in the Land of the Sun even today. Its severe but even-handed approach had a marked effect on the developing legal traditions of other lands, such as the Desert Kingdom and Midia. However, there is little evidence of similar influence within lands further west, such as the Three Cities, Tritonis or Umbria.

²⁰ The traditional date given for Ishtar's founding is 460 BP.

²¹ Amurapi is traditionally said to have reigned in Ishtar from 403 to 368 BP.

²² The sack of Ishtar and the fall of the Second Hazarian Empire is traditionally given as 348 BP.



A monstrous Daughter of Arachne

Arachne and the Anakite Ascendancy

Now in the days of Pygmalion, the city of Kandaria first became renowned for its purple dye. And Arachne, the king's daughter, was so skilled in the art of weaving that no-one could compete with her. But in her pride, she undertook to weave a tapestry containing illustrations of the Gods and their many love affairs with one another, and with mortals: and most of all those of Aphrodite. Then Aphrodite appeared before Arachne, and searched the tapestry closely: believing herself mocked by the princess' work, she tore it up in a cold, vengeful rage. The terrified Arachne tried to flee, hanging herself from a rafter; Aphrodite responded by turning her into a giant spider, the first of her kind.

Now after a long and prosperous reign,²³ Pygmalion was succeeded by his son, Paphos. And whereas the Edonite people of Kandaria had loved the open-hearted and generous Pygmalion, they greatly disliked his self-centered son Paphos. And after a reign of only seven years, the people rose up against the despised Paphos and their Proteusian masters. In so doing they had the support of the fierce Anakite tribesmen living along the Edonite coast. Alas, no sooner had the Edonites dispensed with one set of foreign rulers than they found themselves subjected to another, as their Anakite allies became overlords of Kandaria in their turn. For the next two centuries the Edonites suffered far more under the Anakite yoke than they ever had under the Proteusians.²⁴

The Founding of the Amazon Queendom

Now Hyperboreus had four sons, each of which was father to one of the tribes of the far north: the Galleans, the Cimbrians, the Thuleans and the Scarmathians. And the Amazon nation was founded when Antianera, third daughter of the tyrannical Gargaros of Scarmathia, led a bloody revolt against her father and her brothers, and was proclaimed first Queen of Amazonia.²⁵

²³ Traditionally, Pygmalion ruled from 501 to 458 BP.

²⁴ The overthrow of Paphos and the beginning of the Anakite ascendancy in Kandaria is traditionally dated to 451 BP.

²⁵ This brief passage, with parallel in Homeros, contains one of Demosthenes' very few mentions of the Amazonian



Poor Pentheos, a few minutes before his untimely end

Book the Fifth: Tales of Cadmea²⁶

The Tale of Cadmos and the Hydra

It is said that when Cadmos arrived in the Land of the Three Cities, he was guided in a dream by Poseidon to a secluded bay that was overlooked by a rocky promontory. Upon this promontory was the lair of a fierce seven-headed Hydra.

This Hydra killed all but a handful of Cadmos' men, but not before they had cut off six of the monster's heads. Cadmos himself crushed the Hydra's remaining head with a rock. No sooner had he offered Poseidon the requisite sacrifice than the God appeared, praising him for his courage and piety. And Cadmos built the city of Cadmea upon the site of his victory.

The Tale of Pentheos

The second king of Cadmea was Cadmos' elder son Pentheos. Now during his reign Dionysus visited the Three Cities for the first time with his exuberant entourage. At Cadmea he invited the women to join his revels on Mount Cithaeron. Pentheos disliked Dionysus' dissolute appearance, and attempted to arrest Dionysus and his Maenads: but, inflamed by wine and religious ecstasy, the Maenads tore Pentheos limb from limb. His mother Agave, under the influence of Dionysus, led the riot, and it was she who wrenched off his head. Pentheos was succeeded by his infant son Polydorus.

The Tale of Teiresias

Queendom or the Hyperborean tribes. See the *Minotaur N°3 'Amazons Gazetteer'* for further details of the founding of Amazonia. Interestingly, neither Demosthenes nor Homeros make any mention of the Hyperborean legends of the Giant Kings (see the *Minotaur N°6 'Hyperborea Gazetteer'* for details). It's also worth noting that neither of them make any mention at all of Sybaris (a virtually unknown land in the First Age), or perhaps more surprisingly, of Sicania – the land of Centaurs (see the *Minotaur N°9 'Centaurs Gazetteer'* for details).

²⁶ The last three books of the *Annals of Mythika* mainly deal with the royal lines of Cadmea, Thessalia, and finally Minea. Little is recorded of the early annals of Thuria, Heraphile or Phaistos, except in passing, presumably because these records were lost in the Dark Days, the final century of the Age of Myth, following the first great eruption of Mount Phaesta and the Hyperborean invasion.

The second son of Cadmos was Teiresias. Now one day Teiresias surprised the Goddess Athena at her bath. And modest Athena laid her hands over the eyes of Teiresias and blinded him, but by way of compensation gave him inward sight, the knowledge of the language of prophetic birds, and a life extended far beyond that of lesser mortals. He became the most famous oracles of all time, and after many long years of wandering, settled at Telfhos, becoming the first oracle of that place.²⁷

The Cadmean Alphabet

Although not mentioned by Demosthenes, Cadmos was also the reputed inventor of the so-called **Cadmean Alphabet** – the earliest script used by the Minean people. Supposedly devised by Cadmos in his youth before he left Minea, the Cadmean alphabet was widely used in Seriphos, and all the cities of the Minean Diaspora. Although often referred to as an alphabet, in was, in truth, a **syllabary** (i.e. a linguistic notation in which each character represents a different syllable, such as *a, ba, be, bi, bo, bu, ca, ce, ci, co, cu*, etc.). The Cadmean alphabet (also known as **Linear B** by scholars) consisted of almost 100 different characters, and was used throughout the Minean world from roughly 500 BP until 100 BP.

When the Mineans recovered the art of writing in the mid first century of the Second Age, they made use of the Edonite script then in common use in Kandaria (though by the time of Homeros in the early second century they had further refined the Edonite script of 20 or so consonants by adding characters for the vowels). Thus the modern Minean alphabet (**Linear C**) of the past five centuries was finally developed.

Incidentally, the term **Linear A** is usually applied to the script of the Proteusians, in use from about 700 BP until 500 BP on Proteus (and perhaps another 50 years longer in Kandaria). This was probably a syllabary of some sort, somewhat akin to Linear B, but with a completely different set of characters – and, unfortunately, it has thus far defied all attempts to decipher it.

Another tale of Teiresias tells that on one occasion he was traveling upon Mount Thornax, the sacred mountain of the Goddess Hera, when he happened upon two serpents in the act of coupling. When both attacked him, he struck at them with his staff, killing the female. This incurred the wrath of Hera, who immediately turned him into a woman.

As a woman, Teiresias became a priestess of Hera, married, and bore a daughter, Mante, who also possessed the gift of prophecy. After seven years, he happened across two serpents coupling at the same spot as before. This time he regained his manhood by killing the male serpent.

²⁷ **A** adds 'though some say that Mante, daughter of Teiresias, was the first oracle at Telfhos'.

The Tale of Niobe

Niobe, a sister of King Lycus the Proud of Heraphile, married Amphion, the eldest of the three sons of Polydorus, and the fourth king of Cadmea. Now Niobe had borne Amphion seven sons and seven daughters, of whom she was so inordinately proud that, one day, she disparaged Leto herself for having only two children: Apollo and Artemis.

Now wise Mante, the prophetic daughter of Teiresias, overheard this rash remark, and advised the Cadmean women to placate Leto and her children at once with a sweet-smelling sacrifice. But Niobe appeared, and interrupted the sacrifice, demanding to know why Leto and her 'mannish daughter and womanish son' should be preferred to Niobe and her children.

Then Leto sent Apollo and Artemis, armed with bows, to punish Niobe's presumption. Apollo found the boys hunting on Mount Cithaeron and shot them down one by one. Artemis found the girls spinning in the palace and, with a quiverful of arrows, dispatched them all. Finally, for good measure, Apollo killed Niobe's husband King Amphion.

For nine days and nine nights Niobe bewailed her dead, before fleeing back to her home Heraphile where Zeus, moved by pity, turned her into a statue that for many generations thereafter could be seen weeping copiously in the months of Apollon and Artemiseon. In Cadmea, all men mourned for Amphion, who had been a wise and gracious king, and for his lost children: but none mourned for Niobe, lest it be her equally proud brother Lycus. And Labdacus, brother to Amphion, succeeded him as the fifth king of Cadmea.

The Tragedy of Oedipous

Now Labdacus, after a long and peaceful reign, was succeeded by his son, the intemperate Laius, as sixth king of Cadmea.

Now the wife of Laius was Iocaste, who was also of the line of Cadmea, being the daughter of Diocles, the youngest of the three sons of Polydorus. And having been married for several years without children, Laius and Iocaste consulted the oracle of Telphos about their childlessness. The oracle prophesied that if Iocaste should have a son, the son would kill his father and marry her.

Soon afterwards, Iocaste did indeed bear a son: but in an attempt to prevent the fulfillment of prophecy, Laius had the infant's ankles pinned together so that he could not crawl away, and gave the boy to a servant to abandon on Mount Cithaeron. However, the servant took pity on the young child, and gave him instead to a passing shepherd, who eventually brought him to the home of his master, the childless King Polybus of Heraphile. Polybus and his wife Merope adopted the child as their own, naming him Oedipous because of his swollen feet, caused by the dreadful injuries inflicted upon him by Laius.

When he came to manhood, Oedipous was taunted by a rival that he did not resemble in the least his supposed parents. Deeply troubled, Oedipous traveled to the oracle of Telphos for guidance, and there was told the dire prophecy that he would kill his father and marry his mother.

Since he loved Polybus and Merope, he decided at once not to return to Heraphile. But whilst he stood pondering what best to do, a chariot came by bearing King Laius of Cadmea. In his haste, Laius shouted at the young man standing in the middle of the road to move aside: but Oedipous, lost in thought, ignored the command. Then Laius, angry, ordered his charioteer to drive on. One of the wheels bruised Oedipous' foot, and filled with rage, he killed both Laius and his servant.

Now Laius had been traveling to the oracle to ask how he might rid Cadmea of the Sphinx that had lately plagued the city. The Sphinx asked every Cadmean that passed near her lair this riddle: *'What being, with only one voice, has sometimes two feet, sometimes three, sometimes four, and is weakest when it has most?'* The unfortunate travelers (who could not answer her riddle) were throttled and devoured there and then.

Oedipous, approaching Cadmea fresh from the murder of Laius, guessed the answer instantly. 'Man,' he replied, 'for he crawls on all fours as an infant, stands firmly on his feet in his youth, and leans upon a staff in his old age.'

The Sphinx, outwitted, departed the city, and the grateful Cadmeans, having received news of the mysterious death of Laius, declared the young stranger their new king (angering Creon, the brother of Iocaste, who had hoped for himself to succeed the childless Laius). As a reward, the Cadmeans offered Oedipous the hand of Queen Iocaste in marriage. For many years, the people of Cadmea knew peace and prosperity, and Iocaste bore Oedipous three children, a daughter, Antigone, and then two sons, the twins Polyneices and Eteocles: but in the thirteenth year of Oedipous' reign, a plague descended upon Cadmea.



- OK, so stop me if you've heard this one before...



A truly tragic revelation : King Oedipous discovers the truth about his heritage

The oracle of Telphos, when consulted once more, replied: 'Expel the murderer of Laius!' Oedipous, not knowing whom he had met on the road thirteen years before, pronounced a curse on Laius' murderer and sentenced him to exile. Soon after, blind Teiresias, most renowned seer in Mythika, demanded an audience with Oedipous, and accused him of the foul murder of his father.

At first, none would believe Teiresias, but his words were soon confirmed by a letter from Merope at Herophile. She wrote that the sudden death of King Polybus allowed her to reveal the circumstances of Oedipous' adoption: and this she did in damning detail. Iocaste then hanged herself for grief and shame, whilst Oedipous blinded himself rather than look ever again on his three children, the fruit of his incestuous union.²⁸

Now as Polyneices and Eteocles were judged too young to rule, the regency of Cadmea was taken by Creon, the brother of Iocaste: and Creon's first act was to expel Oedipous from the city.

For many years, accompanied by his faithful daughter Antigone, and hounded by the Furies, blind Oedipous traveled the Minean lands, and was shunned wherever he went for his unwitting crimes. At last, in old age, he received the hospitality and pity of King Thersites of Thuria, who soon after provided him with an honorable resting-place in the royal burial grounds of Thuria, lamenting by Antigone's side.²⁹

²⁸ The traditional date usually given for the Downfall of Oedipous is 298 BP.

²⁹ The traditional date usually given for the death of Oedipous in 277 BP and the Battle of the Five against Cadmea is held to have taken place the following year.

The Five against Cadmea

Now after twelve years of harsh rule at the hands of Creon, the people of Cadmea demanded that the sons of Oedipous, now full grown, should take up the reins of kingship. But Creon, being exceedingly artful, asked which of the two sons of Oedipous should rule over the city, as they were twins: 'For how can two rule at the same time?' he said.

And Eteocles and Polyneices agreed that they should rule in turn, each governing the city for a year. They drew lots to see who should have the first term: and Eteocles, though the younger twin, won the first lot. Then Polyneices departed the city, committing it to the charge of his brother.

Now Creon, desiring still to claim the throne, made himself chief counselor to Eteocles, and spoke honeyed words into his ear, praising him in his exercise of kingship, and pointing to flaws in the character of his brother: and he questioned whether there was truly need for Eteocles to relinquish the throne to his brother at the end of the year. And Eteocles listened to Creon, and accepted his counsel. Therefore, when Polyneices returned to Cadmea, he found the city gates barred against him, and Eteocles refusing to surrender the throne.

Now Polyneices refused to accept this unjust outcome, and vowed vengeance against his brother. Thereafter he spent nine years wandering the Minean world, serving in the courts of many kings, and receiving pledges in return that they would aid him to regain his throne. At last, Polyneices and four other champions – Adrastus of Minea, Capaneos of Thuria, Hippomedon of Herophile and Tydeus of Phaistos – and their armies marched on Cadmea.

Now the Cadmeans, outnumbered by their foes, were defeated in the opening skirmish and withdrew into the city. And each of the five champions took up their station, with their company of men, outside one of the five gates of Cadmea. Then Eteocles consulted Teiresias the seer, who prophesied that the Cadmeans would only be victorious if a prince of the royal house offered himself as a sacrifice to Ares: whereupon Menoeceus the younger son of Creon threw himself from the city walls. Then Capaneos³⁰ set a scaling-ladder against the wall, and began to mount it, whereupon Zeus struck him dead with a thunderbolt. At this, the Cadmeans took courage, made a furious sally, and killed all the remaining champions, save Polyneices himself.

Polyneices, to save further slaughter, offered to decide the succession to the throne by single combat with Eteocles. Eteocles accepted the challenge and, in the course of a bitter struggle, each mortally wounded the other. Creon, their uncle, took command of the Cadmean army and routed the dismayed allies of Polyneices.

The End of the Line of Cadmos

Now Teiresias appeared before Creon, and prophesied that should he show wisdom, piety and mercy in the hour of victory, then the royal line of Cadmos would prosper once more, and Cadmea rise to unparalleled greatness in the Land of Three Cities, and never again be so gravely threatened as it had been by monster, plague and brotherly rivalry in these most recent years. But if not, then the line of Cadmos would be extinguished within a year, and lesser men would rule in Cadmea thereafter.

Mythic Plays

Since the great Minean dramatist Thespis first developed the stage-play some ninety years ago, hundreds of different productions have been performed in the great Dionysian Theatre of Thena. Nearly all dramatists specialize in writing *tragedies* or *comedies* (Thespis himself was unique in being equally adept at both). Whereas comedies generally use fanciful imaginings or contemporary events for their inspiration, tragedies almost always draw upon the Mythic tales of the past – particularly those of the First Age.

Particularly famous tragedies, based on tales from the Age of Myth, include *The Tragedy of Pentheus* (Thespis' earliest known play); *Blind Oedipous*, *The Sons of Oedipous* and *Haemon and Antigone* (often together known as the *Cadmean Trilogy*); *Orpheus in the Underworld* by Thespis' great rival Prismus; *Niobe's Children*, *The Doom of Sesephus* and *The Fall of the House of Midas* by Eurides; and *The Bull King* and *Helene's Revenge* by Sophilos, perhaps the most well-regarded of recent dramatists. Whilst most are performed just once, these and a few other particularly popular dramas have been re-staged on many occasions.

But Creon paid no heed to the words of Teiresias: and in both pride and vengeance ordered that the bodies of his dead enemies not be buried, but be left lying where they had fallen as carrion for the birds. Even Polyneices was ordered left to this fate, whilst Eteocles received an honorable funeral. And Creon ordered that anyone defying this decree would forfeit his or her own life.

Now just before the battle Antigone, daughter of Oedipous, had returned to the city and, in vain, had sought to broker peace between her warring brothers. Learning of her uncle Creon's decree, she disobeyed his orders by secretly building a pyre and laying Polyneices' corpse upon it.

Looking out of the palace window, Creon noticed a distant glow which seemed to proceed from a burning pyre and, going to investigate, surprised Antigone in her act of disobedience. He summoned his son Haemon, to whom Antigone had secretly become affianced, and ordered him to bury her alive. Haemon pleaded for Antigone, but Creon remained obdurate, whereupon Haemon killed both Antigone and himself.

Creon, both his sons now dead and his pride utterly broke, ruled Cadmea for but a single year: and with his death an end was made to the House of Cadmos. And, as Teiresias had prophesied, lesser kings ruled in their stead.³¹

Book the Sixth: Tales of Thessalia

The Children of Thessaless

Now Thessaless, first king of Olyntheos, had two sons. His firstborn son was Acteos the Hunter. Acteos was the most skillful and determined huntsman of his day, traveling far and wide in search of his quarry: but he was also proud and lustful.

On one occasion, after a long hunt through the Great Hyperborean Forest, he stood leaning on a rock overlooking the River Rhena when he happened to see Artemis bathing in a stream not far off, and stayed to watch. Lest he should afterwards dare boast to his companions that she had displayed herself naked in his presence, she changed him into a stag, and he was pursued by his own hounds. Some tales tell that he was torn apart by them, but others say that he escaped and that from his children came the race of Acteos.

The younger son of Thessaless was pious Agreos, and in the fullness of time he succeeded to his father's throne. And Agreos had two sons by the Muse Calliope: Linus, who in due course succeeded him as third king of Olyntheos (and in whose day the city was renamed Thessalia), and Orpheus.

³⁰ A has 'Tydeus' instead of 'Capaneos'.

³¹ A adds 'for it is said Teiresias, himself of that honourable line, now surrendered his life to Hades – the longest lived, and the very last, of the House of Cadmos.'



Orpheus and his beloved Eurydice in the Underworld

The Tale of Orpheus

Now Orpheus was the most famous Lyrist who ever lived. Apollo presented him with a lyre, and the Muses taught him its use, so that he not only enchanted wild beasts, but made the trees and rocks move from their places to follow the sound of his music.

Now Orpheus married Eurydice, a lady of noble birth and sweet demeanor. And one day whilst out walking in the wilds, Eurydice met Aristaeus, an adventurous prince from Thuria, who tried to force himself upon her. She trod upon a serpent as she fled and died of its bite, but Orpheus, having first slain Aristaeus, boldly descended into the underworld, hoping to fetch her back.

Along the way he charmed the ferryman Charon and the three-headed hound Cerberus, and so soothed the savage heart of Hades that he won leave to restore Eurydice to the upper world. Hades made but a single condition: Orpheus might not look behind him until she was safely back under the light of the sun. Eurydice followed Orpheus up through the dark passage, guided by the sounds of his lyre, and it was only when he reached the sunlight again that he turned to see whether she was still behind him and so lost her for ever.

Now one day wild Dionysus came to Thessalia, but Orpheus neglected to honor him, for Orpheus taught other sacred mysteries and proclaimed that Apollo was the greatest of all Gods, and many of the people of Thessalia followed his teaching. In anger, Dionysus set his Maenads upon him, and they tore Orpheus limb from limb.

His head they threw into the sea, but it floated away, still singing. From time to time the head of Orpheus has reappeared, and many quests have been undertaken in search of it and the deep wisdom that it might impart.

The Tale of Asclepius

The fourth king of Thessalia, the son of Linus, was Phlegis. His daughter was Corona.

Now Apollo became her lover, and she gave birth to his son, whom she named Asclepius.³² Asclepius learned the art of healing from his father and became so skilled in surgery and the use of healing herbs that he is revered as the founder of medicine. Indeed, such was his skill in preventing death that Hades complained to Zeus that his rightful subjects were being stolen from him. Therefore, Zeus killed Asclepius with his thunderbolt.

Later, however, Zeus repented of his actions, and restored Asclepius to life and gave him a place amongst the Gods. Some also hold that Zeus set Asclepius' image amongst the stars.

The Tale of Melampus

Now Phlegis, the fourth king of Thessalia, was succeeded by his son Melampus. Now Melampus could understand the language of birds, his ears having been licked clean by a grateful brood of young serpents; he had rescued them from death at the hands of his attendants and piously buried their parents' dead bodies.

Like his nephew Asclepius he was a skilled healer, and Apollo taught him the arts of divination from the entrails of sacrificial victims. Melampus was succeeded by his elder son Periander.

The Tale of Mopsos and Calcheos

Now the younger son of Melampus was Calcheos, like his father a renowned seer: it is said that he was the first oracle of Pagaea. And Calcheos' fame grew, so that many traveled from across the Minean world to hear his predictions. But it had been prophesied that Calcheos would die when he met a wiser seer than himself.

Now one day, a ship arrived from Cadmea, bearing a man named Mopsos. This man was the son of Mante, the daughter of Teiresias himself: and Calcheos came down to meet him. Now there was a wild fig-tree growing nearby, and Calcheos, wishing to outwit Mopsos, challenged him by saying: 'Can you tell me, wise Mopsos, exactly how many figs will be harvested from that tree?' Mopsos answered straightaway: 'Certainly – five thousand and one figs.' Calcheos laughed scornfully, but when the tree was stripped, Mopsos' insight was proved correct – even to the last fig.

³² T only adds 'Some say Corona bore him on Mount Tithion, now famous for the medicinal virtue of its plants.'

Mopsos in his turn challenged Calcheos, pointing to a pregnant pig nearby: 'How many piglets, would you say, does that sow carry? And how many of them are of each sex? And when will they be born?' 'Eight piglets, all male, to be born after nine more days,' Calcheos answered, hoping that his visitor would be gone before his guess could be disproved. 'I am of a different opinion,' answered Mopsos dryly. 'My estimate is three piglets, only one of them male: and the time of their birth will be midday tomorrow.' Mopsos was right once more, and Calcheos, thus shamed, died of a broken heart.³³

The Tale of Arion

Now Prince Arion of Thessalia was a master of the lyre. One day his father Periander, the sixth king of Thessalia, gave him permission to visit the island of Seriphos, where he had been invited to compete in a musical festival. Arion won the prize, and his admirers showered on him so many rich gifts that these excited the greed of the mariners engaged to bring him back to Thessalia. So the captain of the ship informed Arion of their intent to kill him, and to take his riches for themselves.

But Arion beseeched the captain to allow him one last request. To this the captain readily agreed, and so Arion, dressed in his finest robe, mounted on the ship's prow, invoked the Gods with impassioned strains and then leapt overboard. The ship sailed on, but Arion's song had attracted a school of music-loving dolphins, one of whom took Arion on her back. That evening he overtook the ship and eventually reached Thessalia several days ahead of it. Periander was overjoyed at Arion's return.



(Editor: now we know who the dolphin-riding guy was!)

³³ The strange tale of Mopsos and Calcheos is found in T and H, but not in A. It may owe its origins to the long-standing rivalry between the ancient oracles of Telphos and Pagaea.

Now when the ship docked, Periander sent for the captain and crew, and asked of them, with feigned anxiety, for news of Arion. 'He has been delayed in Seriphos,' replied the captain, 'by the lavish hospitality of the people of that island.' Then Periander confronted the ship's company with Arion, and unable to deny their guilt, the captain and his men were executed on the spot. Arion remained a firm friend of dolphins thereafter, even when he had succeeded Periander as king.³⁴ Following his death, Apollo set the image of Arion playing his lyre astride his dolphin rescuer amongst the stars.

The Epic of Perseus

The elder son of Arion was Acrisios, the eighth king of Thessalia. Now Acrisios had no sons, but a daughter, Danae. And when he asked the oracle of Telphos how to procure a male heir, he was told: 'You will have no sons, and the birth of your grandson will lead to your death.' To forestall this fate, Acrisios imprisoned Danae in a dungeon with brazen doors, guarded by savage dogs, but despite these precautions, Zeus came upon her through the barred window of her cell in a shower of gold, and she bore him a son named Perseus. When Acrisios learned of Danae's condition, he was filled with wrath. Nevertheless, he allowed Danae to give birth to her child, lest it be a girl. But upon seeing the child, he locked her and the infant in a wooden chest, which he cast into the sea. Then Zeus, in his divine anger, killed Acrisios with a thunderbolt, thus fulfilling the prophecy, and his brother Cleander succeeded him as the ninth king of Thessalia.

Now the chest was eventually washed towards the island of Seriphos, where a fisherman named Dictys netted it, hauled it ashore, broke it open and found Perseus alive, though Danae had died, suckling her son to the end. And Dictys, being himself childless, raised Perseus as his own son. But when Perseus reached manhood, Dictys told him how he had come to find him, and Perseus began to travel the world, seeking after his origins and desiring to avenge his mother of her death.

After many years of wandering, Perseus drew nigh unto the city of Kandaria. Then Zeus visited him and revealed himself as the father of Perseus, and gave him three gifts: a sword, a shield, and the loan of Pegasus, father of the flying horses.

Then Zeus told him that he wished Perseus to aid Andromeda, Princess of Kandaria. Now Cassiopeia, Queen of Kandaria, had angered Aphrodite by comparing the beauty of her daughter to that of the Goddess. Therefore Aphrodite had prevailed upon Poseidon to release one of his sea-monsters against Kandaria, and unless Andromeda was offered up at the end of thirty days as a virgin sacrifice to the monster, then the creature would utterly destroy the city.

³⁴ A adds 'and some tales tell that upon his rescuer he sired the first of the Delphin race.'



- Hello ladies! My name is Perseos. You wouldn't happen to be the three Grey Sisters, by any chance?

Then Cepheos, King of Kandaria, offered his daughter's hand in marriage to any man who could devise a way to defeat the sea-creature, and save Kandaria. But none of the people of Kandaria dared face the wrath of Aphrodite or Poseidon, not even Cepheos' cousin Agenor, to whom Andromeda had recently become betrothed.³⁵ But Perseos, newly arrived at the court of Cepheos, accepted the challenge.

Now Zeus directed Perseos to seek the counsel of the three Grey Sisters, the Stygian Witches, who had but a single eye among the three of them. From them Perseos learnt that the only certain way to defeat the sea-creature was to force it to gaze upon the face of Medusa the Gorgon. (Now Medusa had once been a priestess of Athena at Acheiros, but she incurred the wrath of the Goddess when she and Poseidon lay together in Athena's temple. In revenge, Athena transformed Medusa's beautiful hair to serpents, and made her face so terrible to behold that the mere sight of it would turn any onlooker to stone).

And creeping up behind the Grey Sisters, Perseos snatched the eye, as it was being passed from one sister to another, and would not return it until he had been told where the Gorgon lived.

³⁵ Curiously, in the Edonite king list there is no mention of either Cepheos or Cassiopeia. However, there are references to Agenobel I, the first native Edonite ruler following the overthrow of the Anakite monarchs of Kandaria, who traditionally ruled in Kandaria from 240 to 215 BP. This Agenobel could *perhaps* be equated with the Prince Agenor mentioned in the Epic of Perseos.

Then Perseos flew upon Pegasus to the Helicon Mountains, where he found the lair of Medusa, filled with statues of men and wild beasts petrified by the Gorgon. He fixed his eyes on the reflection of the Gorgon in his shield and cut off Medusa's head with a single stroke of his sword. Then, hurriedly thrusting the head in a bag, he set forth for Kandaria. But in his haste he spilled some of the blood from Medusa's head upon the ground, and from this blood sprung afterwards the race of Gorgons that have continued as a scourge upon the earth ever since.

And Perseos returned to Kandaria on the thirtieth day, on the very day that Andromeda was chained to the sea-cliff as a sacrifice to the monster.³⁶ Even as Perseos approached on Pegasus, the monster rose from the deep and drew nigh unto the princess, but Perseos dived down from above and held up the Gorgon's head before the gaze of the creature, which instantly was turned to stone. Thus was Andromeda rescued, and his part now fully played, Pegasus returned to Zeus, his master.

Now Cepheos and Cassiopeia grudgingly welcomed Perseos as their son-in-law and, on Andromeda's insistence, the wedding took place at once, but the festivities were rudely interrupted when Prince Agenor entered at the head of an armed party, claiming Andromeda for himself. He had doubtless been summoned by Cassiopeia, since she and Cepheos at once broke faith with Perseos, pleading that the promise of Andromeda's hand had been forced from them by unforeseen circumstances and that Agenor's claim was the prior one. Cassiopeia then called for Perseos' death. In the ensuing fight, Perseos struck down many of his opponents, but being greatly outnumbered, drew forth the Gorgon's head once more and turned the remaining soldiers – including Agenor himself³⁷ – to stone. Of the final fate of Cepheos and Cassiopeia, no tale tells.

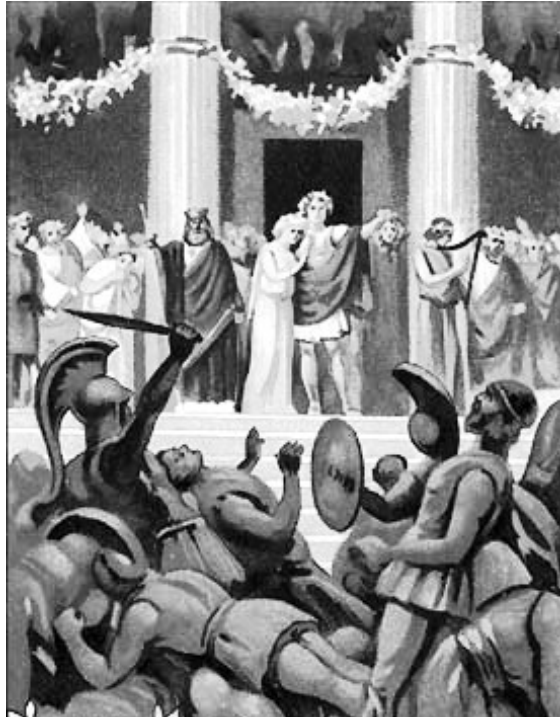
Perseos then fled Kandaria with his new bride and came to the city of Acheiros, which was then besieged by a vastly superior army from Thuria led by King Aeolis, the father of Sesephus.

Now the city of Acheiros had been founded about two centuries earlier by a warrior named Acheiro the One-handed, who according to some tales claimed to be a descendant of the Bull King.³⁸ But the Acheirans had no king in the days of the Thurian invasion, for the line of Acheiro had died out, and they were governed instead by a council of elders, and being unable to agree a sensible strategy amongst themselves, the Acheirans had suffered several humiliating defeats on the battlefield.

³⁶ H adds 'It is said that the chains of Andromeda remain attached to the cliff face to the present day.'

³⁷ T omits the phrase 'including Agenor himself.'

³⁸ H omits the phrase 'who according to some tales claimed to be a descendant of the Bull King.' The traditional date generally given for the foundation of Acheiros is 448 BP.



The triumphal return and wedding of Perseus

Now when Perseus was brought, with Andromeda, into his camp, Aeolis assumed that he was a spy and questioned him roughly, threatening to harm Andromeda if Perseus made no satisfactory answer, and filled with wrath at the treatment of his beloved, Perseus brought forth the head of Medusa a third and final time, striking down Aeolis and his commanders. Then the Thurians withdrew in dismay, and Seseplus succeeded his father as king, and the Acheirans threw open their gates and welcomed Perseus as their savior. They made Perseus their king, and Andromeda their queen, and the head of Medusa was finally buried, in the city where once she had been priestess, beneath the market-place that afterwards became known as the Gorgonora.

Now when Perseus had reigned for seven years, and ordered everything well in Acheiros, he sailed for Thessalia, to discover for himself whether the murderer of his mother, his grandfather Acrisios, was still alive. And he took with him the very chest in which his mother Danae had once been imprisoned.

Now Cleander the brother of Acrisios had died and had been succeeded as king by his son Euryges. And learning that Acrisios was dead, Perseus demanded that Euryges fill the chest with gold, by way of compensation – inadequate though it be – for the death of his mother. But Euryges spurned Perseus' request and, doubtless having heard of Perseus' history, replied, 'You have no Gorgon head with you now, cousin, to enforce your arrogant will.' Then Perseus would have struck Euryges, but those who were with him held him back.

'Your children will rue the day when you withheld a small shower of gold: gold for blood, fair payment for a crime committed against a kinsman,' cried Perseus. 'One day, a descendant of Danae, unjustly slain, will return to Thessalia. When that day comes, this city will pay for your present discourtesy with far more gold, and far more blood, to the ruination of you all.' Now Perseus was the great-grandfather of Helene, in whose cause the Thessalian War was fought a hundred years later, and so it was that Perseus foretold the doom of his mother's city.

Then Perseus returned to Acheiros, and reigned there in justice and peace for thirty-three more years. After his death his son Megapenthes,³⁹ and then his grandson Tyrandeos, succeeded him.

The Last Kings of Thessalia

Now Euryges, the tenth king of Thessalia, was succeeded by his son Ilus, and Ilus was followed by his son, Podarces, twelfth and last king of Olyntheos or Thessalia.⁴⁰ Now Podarces was a great warrior, and fought many wars on the borders of Thessalia, and even battled with the Amazons and the Barbarians of the North, with considerable success, and as the wealth of Thessalia grew, so did Podarces build the walls of the city ever higher. And Podarces was a devotee of Ares, God of war, and in this respect differed from all of his forebears since the days of Orpheus, who had embraced rather the worship first and foremost of Apollo.

At first the people of the city regarded Podarces' promotion of the cult of Ares with some disfavor, thinking it unwise for the city to turn away from the Sun God under which it had prospered for so long, but as Podarces proved victorious again and again on the battlefield, so more of the people were persuaded, like their king, to devote themselves to Ares. Apollo was angered by the capriciousness of the people and turned away from them when their hour of need came; whereas Ares, as the people of Thessalia later learnt to their bitter cost, delights in all warfare and cares little for the outcome.

Now Podarces had five sons, but his favorite was Hectis, who most resembled him in appearance and character. Podarces sent Hectis on many overseas expeditions, to learn more of the ways of Thessalia's neighbors: for after many centuries of isolation, Podarces desired that Thessalia should receive greater recognition within the world. Most of all, Podarces resented the ambitions of Antagoras of Seriphos, and his claim to speak as paramount lord of the Minean people, for was not the line of Thessalia every bit as pure and noble in its descent from Minaeus, father of all Minean kings? So it was that Podarces ordered Hectis to travel to Acheiros to take part in the Hellenic Games, little knowing that it would lead to the downfall of his kingdom...

³⁹ The traditional dates given for the reign of Perseus in Acheiros are 240 to 200 BP.

⁴⁰ The date traditionally given for the beginning of Podarces' reign is 169 BP.

HOUSE OF THE ARTIFICER

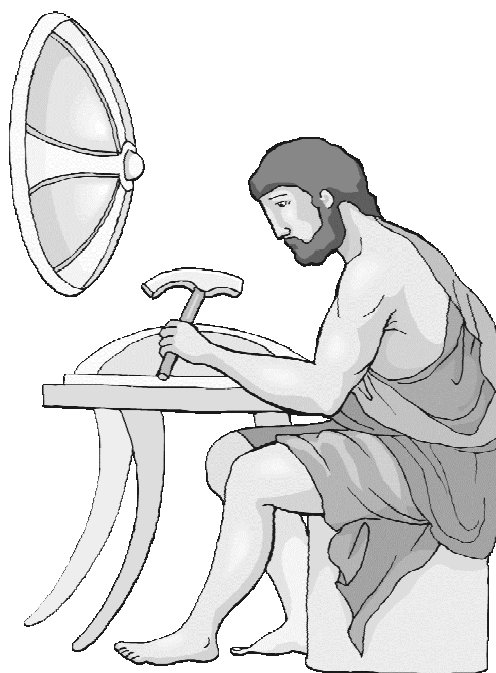
An Animated Adventure full of Automated Antagonists, by Marcus Bone

Note for the Maze Master

This scenario was written as a challenging tale set in the world of *Mazes & Minotaurs*. It was designed for level 2-3 adventurers and can take more than one game session to complete.

The adventure should unfold in three parts; Set-up (as described below), Travel (as the character sail to Oxeia and make their way to Kalos' home) and Exploration (where they investigate the artificer's fantastical abode).

To ensure that the Maze Master is fully prepared for the adventure, it is important to note that the majority of the challenges and combats in the story are with Kalos' various mechanical creations, the artificer having prepared his home against any intruders with a series of traps and ruses that are aimed at ensuring he remains undisturbed (therefore, a Thief is most definitely an appropriate party member). These, combined with Kalos' many 'failed' or abandoned experiments make the House of the Artificer a very unsafe place to be.



Kalos at work, before he became the Mad Artificer

The Story of Kalos

More than 300 years have passed since the Age of Magic was brought to a crashing end when the last of the great magic-wielding Autarchs rose up in vain against Mount Olympus.

Although the actual truth surrounding these events is now lost to all but legend, the lessons of those dark days, when the fate of mankind was held in the balance, still remain paramount – the gods have little patience for those who look to rise above their station. The maintenance of this 'law' is vital to ensure that the destruction, devastation and death that signalled the end of the Age of Magic is never repeated. Yet for all of the stories, fables and legends that state otherwise, there are those who still look to revive the ways of the Autarchs, recalling a time when a mere mortal could hold in their hand the power of the gods. One such man is Kalos.

Once a citizen of Thena, Kalos was renowned for his skill in crafting and construction, and called many of the city's leading nobles his friends and patrons. But all was not well for the master artificer, and while his creations were indeed wondrous and mighty, they paled into insignificance when compared to the pure grace, beauty and functionality of the gifts of the gods.

Driven by a jealousy that could never be quenched, Kalos began to look for ways in which his artefacts could match those offered in the name of the kingdom's deities. After many years of searching, Kalos located an ancient text purportedly said to have come from the library of one of the most powerful Wizard-Engineers of the Age of Magic. Within this manuscript, Kalos found the answers he had longed for: a power to turn his mechanical Automatons into living, breathing beings!

Unfortunately for the artificer, King Theseos, the ruler of Thena, discovered his ill intentions and was able to detain him before he could truly start his experiments. When Kalos plead to be allowed to continue his studies Theseos forbade him forthrightly, stating that the path to such knowledge would only but bring the fury of Olympus down on Thena (and perhaps all of Mythika).

Furthermore, as a punishment for his audacity in challenging the gods, Theseos decreed that Kalos should be exiled for one year and one month to the island of Oxeia (a small Thenian colony in the Middle Sea). While such punishment was little more than a slap on the hand, Theseos hoped that such a period on a remote island, removed from his tools and workshop, would curtail the craftsman's futile attempts to match the power of the gods.

As Kalos departed, the King ordered that he should, upon his return, present himself to the throne and relay what contemplations he had received during his exile. But Kalos has never returned to Theseos' court...

It is now a full month since the artificer's expected arrival back in Thena and Theseos is concerned. Worse still, none of the messengers he has sent to fetch the craftsman have returned, and rumors circulate that Kalos has once more turn to his dark studies...

Starting the Adventure

The adventure opens with the characters awaiting an audience with King Theseos in the Royal Palace.

For some, this is a relatively new and exciting experience, while for others it is just another day of meeting senators, attending communities and generally being stonewalled from actually petitioning the King. Each of the characters has a specific reason to be in the court on this particular day, and it is suggested that the Maze Master and players decide beforehand why their characters wish to see King Theseos.

As the day winds on and tempers get short, the characters are eventually approached by Senator Ovios, who, in his 'prim yet bustling' manner, escorts the characters into a side chamber.

In the Name of the King

Here the Senator explains that King Theseos has a favour to ask of them, and as a reward for its successful completion will grant them the pleasure of his presence. If the characters accept (and given the circumstance it is likely that they will), Ovios will outline the nature of the task:

The King wishes a small party of competent individuals to travel, in his name, to the House of Kalos on the Isle of Oxeia. Here they are to detain Kalos and return him (and any of the three previous messengers) to the court. If Kalos is dead (the only legitimate reason he has for not returning), the group is to retrieve and present his body to the King.

The characters will be taken to Oxeia on the next high tide (dawn the following morning) and will be issued with the king's token (see below), ensuring that all citizens will do or provide whatever they require from them (within reason of course).

Ovios will answer any questions he is able to, either by summarizing what was written in the background section of this adventure or some of what can be gleaned from the rumours table below (see *Rumors of Kalos* below). It should be pointed out to suspicious players that Ovios' offer is a legitimate one, and King Theseos is indeed concerned at what has happened to one of his favorite craftsmen.



Senator Ovios of Thena

Gifts & Tokens

Once the group is ready to proceed, Ovios will ensure one of the characters (a priest in the first instance) receives a Healing potion (see p. 41 of the *Maze Master Guide*) as a gesture of good will. If the Senator is questioned as to the need for such a gift, he will simply state that as three good messengers have not returned from Kalos' home, he personally expects foul play. As such, if his fears are founded, the potion might be of some assistance!

In addition to this, the group will get a King's Token. This small banner, identifies the group as official representatives of the King of Thena, and as such they may ask for assistance from any of the King's subjects. In general, this should allow the character's to avoid any issues on the journey to Oxeia and will enable characters to acquire any minor items they might feel they need for the task. However, it does have its limits, and the Maze Master should use common sense in this regard.

The Truth of the Matter...

As Ovios and the characters will likely presume, much has happened to Kalos in the 14 months that have passed since his exile began.

A master craftsman in every sense of the word, Kalos was his work, and in the act of removing him from his foundry, King Theseos unleashed an evil and vindictive mind-set within the artificer that few knew existed.

Feeling slighted and angry at his king, Kalos vowed to continue his research, regardless of any doom that he might bring on mankind. In his now obsessed might, his creations deserved life!

Once on Oxeia, the artificer purchased a grand villa on a secluded cliff top overlooking the Middle Sea, and began to plan his revenge. With the help of some mercenaries (enticed with liberal amounts of gold), he soon had a well-equipped workshop installed in his home, and it wasn't long before he was able to resume his experiments (having committed the most important parts of the Autarch's text to memory).

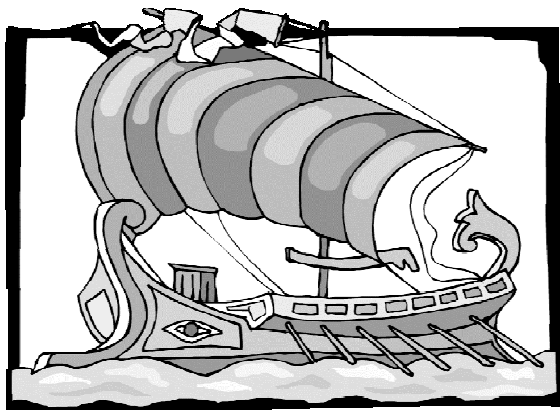
In the past year, Kalos has turned his home into a fortress of animatronic wonders. This he has done in the hope of bringing life to his fantastic creations, but each time has failed to capture the final spark needed to create true life. As a result, these aborted experiments litter the artificer's home, left both as examples of his failure and, of more concern, as deadly traps for any unexpected guests.

To make matters worse, Kalos' continued obsessions and failures have driven him mad, to the point where his creative genius is now used to design and build machines with the sole purpose of exacting his revenge on the man responsible for his 'downfall' – King Theseos.

Travelling To Oxeia

Before leaving Thena, the party has an evening and a night to prepare for their quest. While some may wish to drink to their good luck, or make worship to their chosen deity, there is still much an inquisitive character might learn of Kalos or Oxeia (see the *Rumors of Kalos*).

The voyage to Oxeia is aboard Captain Khemta's *Athena's Fortune*, a merchant ship well-travelled amongst the myriad of small islands that litter the Middle Sea. Khemta himself is a solid, reliable man with a reputation for getting things done. He has also been called upon to undertake delicate tasks for the King in the past, and this makes him and his crew well suited to the duty of ensuring safe passage for the characters.



Rumors of Kalos

Adventurers who wish to learn more about their quarry can discover some or all of the following rumors. This information can be made available in pretty much any location the Maze Master sees fit (i.e., in Thena, on the *Athena's Fortune* or even on Oxeia itself).

- Kalos was a well-respected craftsman, renowned for his skill with bronze and stone. It is said that his works had a life-like brilliance to them (**True**).

- Rumors abound that Kalos had offended King Theseos in some grave matter, not simply due to his 'interest' in the works of the Autarchs (**False**).

- Although banned from working his craft while in exile, Kalos has been secretly acquiring equipment and material via his agents (**True**).

- Kalos has never been seen on Oxeia, and it is likely that he was never there in the first place (**False**).

- Kalos is dead, his body was found floating in the sea not more than a week previous (**False**, *this was the body of one of the King's messengers*).

- The villa in which Kalos now resides was once the summer home of the Argosean governor who ruled over Oxeia (**True**).

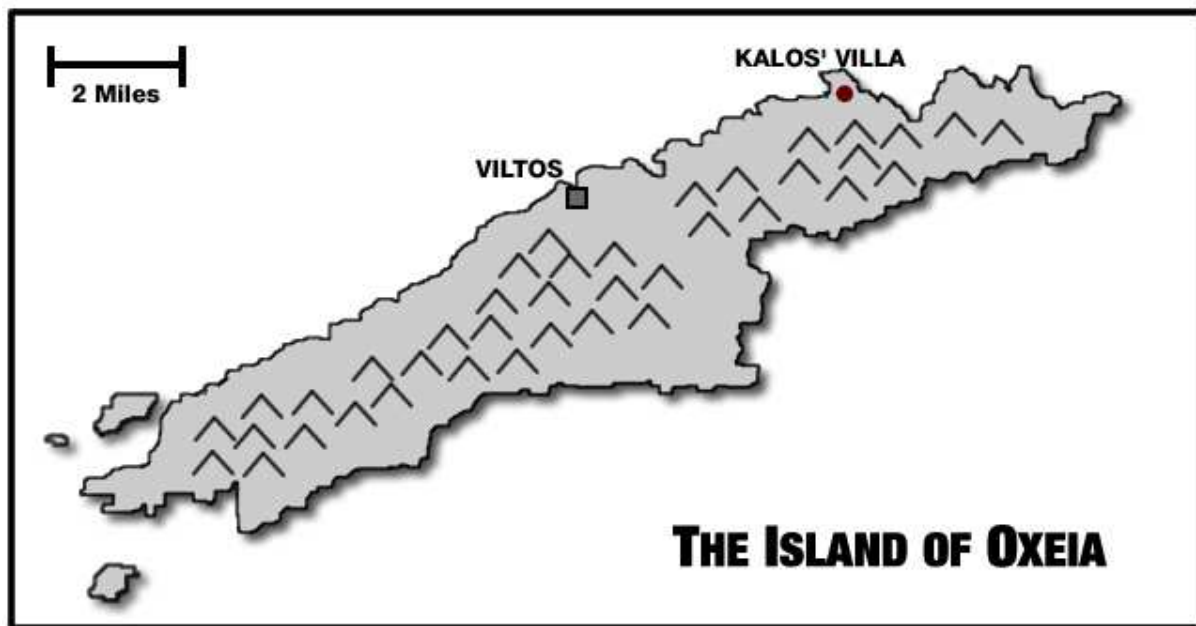
- While Kalos was never seen in Viltos, he was said to have employed a group of mercenaries or pirates to be his agents both on Oxeia and abroad (**True**).

- When Kalos set up in the old villa, he took many, many months of supplies and stores with him. When combined with the villa's natural resources they could last him years (**True**, *although the amounts taken are an exaggeration*).

- Kalos wasn't exiled alone, a number of his servants and assistants were banished to Oxeia with him (**True**).

- Fishermen in Viltos tell of a huge crane that has been built on the cliff near Kalos' villa. This has been seen unloading goods from various unsavoury looking ships. (**True**, *this was the only way that Kalos could get the goods and supplies he needed to the Villa*).

Feel free to invent other (false) rumors!



The Island of Oxeia

The following information can be found out from just about anyone in Thena, or on the island of Oxeia itself. It should be used as a primer for the characters and, while it adds little to the actual adventure, it provides some interesting local color.

One of Thena's smallest protectorates' in the Middle Sea, Oxeia has a land mass of no more than 25 square miles. Located a week's hard sail to the west of the capital (beyond Seriphos), it would normally have been ignored by any of the great powers - that is, unless it holds a resource which is of interest. And this is the case with Oxeia, where its quarries produce a high quality of stone (widely known as 'Oxeia Stone') that is both hardened to the elements yet easy to work with hammer and chisel.

Population

The total population of Oxeia is just over 250, with about a quarter of those living in the island's largest village - Viltos. While the majority of the male population of Oxeia relies on the sea for a livelihood, many work the quarries located on southern side of the island.

The entire population of the Oxeia is of Minean descent, with no sign of any non-human race having ever settled on the island. Rumours abound, however, that evil things still lurk under the bedrock or stalk the sea-sides at night.

Geography

A long, thin island, Oxeia is about 10 miles in length, yet only 2 and a half in width. The island is divided by a large range of low mountains, the largest of which reaches some fifteen hundred feet, and most agriculture is restricted to narrow bands of relatively fertile land around its edges.

Until more recent times, the northern coast of the island has been the most developed, but the discovery of the Oxeia Stone along the southern coast has seen a slow but steady transformation of the island's entire landscape.

History

It is said that the first Mineans' came to Oxeia in the years after the fall of the Age of Magic. Desperate to escape the devastation wrought by the gods on the Autarchs and their followers, these first refugees sailed deep into the Middle Sea in the hopes of finding a land that was free of despots and brigands. Two such vessels landed on Oxeia, and it is from these handfuls of initial settlers that most of the island's residents can trace their heritage.

In more recent times, during their war with Herkalios, Oxeia was claimed by the aggressive Argosean kingdom. At the declaration of peace, the governance of the island was offered to Seriphos, although they politely declined. The isle was handed over to Thena, which in turn has heralded an age of unknown prosperity for those on the island (who, while still poor in terms of the assets and resources compared to the mainlanders, find themselves much wealthier than their ancestors).

Resources

Oxeia is home to many rich fishing grounds, but it is the deposits of Oxeia Stone that ensures it is able to trade for the goods and services that cannot be grown or made on the island. While the northern coast boasts one large Oxeia Stone quarry, the majority of the stone comes from the quarries on the southern coast. Although it might seem logical to ship the very same from a port in the south, its exposure to the Middle Sea, the cliffs and rocky terrain makes it necessary to drag each and every block over the low mountains to Viltos for removal.

Arrival at Viltos

The capital of Oxeia, Viltos, is really little more than a fishing village of some 75 families. While the increase in trade rising from the Oxeia Stone has seen the arrival of more traders from the mainland, it is rare to see more than one merchant ship in port at any one time. As such, apart from the myriad of fishing vessels that ply the shallow harbor, the *Athena's Fortune* is the only large boat to make dock during the period the characters are on the island.

While Viltos may be bigger than the small villages some of the characters may have grown up in, beyond its single inn and the relatively new hall of merchants, there is little to see or do in the town. In fact, the entire town seems to rotate around two simple facts, fishing and stone working. However, if one can get past such things, the town itself is quaint and charming place, with the all of its buildings constructed in the stone that makes the island famous.

Once docked, Captain Khemta will bid the party good luck, and direct them to the merchant's hall, where they should be able to learn of Kalos' location. He also states that he has been instructed to wait a full week for their return, failing which he will return to Thena with news of their failure.

The Merchant Hall

This large hall is where the traders and merchants come to negotiate the price of the stone that has been brought from the island quarries. Beyond this, it is also used as the island's capital building and houses the few officials needed to run the island. Here the characters can be informed that Kalos does indeed live on the island, and that his villa can be found on the cliff tops at its most western point.

Temples

As can be expected of a community relying on the sea to survive, the people of Oxeia worship Poseidon. While many small shrines exist on the island, the only temple dedicated to the god is in Viltos. The local "priest" (who is actually just an Acolyte, without access to Divine Prodigies) is friendly and accommodating but will not accompany them to Kalos' villa under any circumstance.

Rumors of the Messengers

If the party asks about the previous messengers who supposedly came through Viltos, they will be told that all three of them spent some time in the village. Further questioning will reveal that only one of them has been seen since – and he was found dead floating in the ocean (about half way between Viltos and Kalos' villa). The poor soul's body was badly decomposed and the cause of death was undeterminable. (If the characters inquire, the body was committed back to the sea in full and proper ceremony not long after being discovered.)

Inquiries

If the characters reveal the King's Banner, they are welcomed as representatives of the island's ruler and given what few luxuries the village has to offer. Regardless, beyond the gossip about Kalos (again see *Rumors of Kalos* above) there is only so much for the group to see or explore in Viltos.

Most standard items can be purchased in the village in one of the few shops that line the waterfront or directly from the Merchant Hall. However, the luxuries that most respectable Thenian citizens take for granted are simply not available on Oxeia.

The Villa of Kalos

Once the party does decide to leave the town, they can make their way the 5 miles west to Kalos' home. While there is no road to follow, a trail leading along the coast has been made by the simple passing of many feet over the years.

The villa itself is perched on top of a 300 foot cliff overlooking the northern vista of the Middle Sea and commands an impressive view of most of Oxeia. Indeed, it soon seems obvious as to why Kalos chose such a spot to live out his exile, as from this vantage most of the northern half of the island is laid out like a life-sized map in front of the viewer.

Kalos' home is a large villa, surrounded by a low, sturdy wall (about 5 feet in most places), and has been built a lot more recently than they might have expected; its architecture has more in common with that of Argos than the local styles seen in Viltos. Although obviously built to stand the test of time, the villa has seen better days, as the grounds and outbuildings have not been maintained; scrubby grass grows long amongst the paving stones, and the bronze adornments, usually polished to a fine shine, are a dull brown.

Exploring the Villa

The villa is made up of a single large building – the main house – and several standalone or semidetached structures. All of these buildings are constructed of Oxeia Stone, although one or two are obviously no longer used.

Once the characters enter the enclosed grounds of the villa, they immediately get the feeling that *something is wrong*. Maybe it's the uneasy quietness surrounding the building or its general disheveled appearance? Whatever the cause, the characters will instinctively know that something untoward has taking place here.

While more specifics about the various buildings and rooms with the complex are noted below, in general, the main building has been bordered up and secured to intruders. Windows, which would normally be open to the warm Middle Sea air are sealed in most rooms (making alternate forms of light essential) and the grand sun lights in the roof

are fastened shut with more metal than it is likely any character has ever seen.

The Outbuildings

In the villa's heyday, each of the outbuildings would have been its own focal point away from the main building. Now, however, they have all seen better days, battered by the winter storms and ill repaired.

The Stables

Where once a dozen or more braying mules might have been found (the rocky and uneven terrain of the island making any other forms of transport impossible), there is now nothing but a stone shell of the stables. In more recent times, the stables housed the mercenaries Kalos had employed, and anyone entering the building can see the obvious signs of their presence; long extinguished camp fires and refuse scattered about.

Searching around, the characters can find four packs hidden amongst the rubble, although these unfortunately contain only spare clothes, old cuts of meats or cheese and a few dozen copper pieces.

As the characters will likely determine later, it was these mercenaries who were responsible for assisting Kalos in setting up his workshop here in the villa. Having themselves recently returned from an assignment, they believed, due to the lack of response from Kalos, that their master had finally killed himself undertaking one of his insane experiments. Buoyed by this thought and the potential riches lying in the villa, they hid away their packs and attempted their ultimately fatal attempt at entering the house (the results of which will be seen later in the adventure).

The Kitchen

As with most homes in Mythica, the kitchen of the villa is located near the back of the villa. While it shows signs of constant use over the years, there is little of consequence to be found here or in the various storage cupboards nearby. In fact, one could come to the conclusion, given the lack of food and supplies in the kitchen, that the house was indeed abandoned.

The Laundry

Another building that seems to have had its fair share of use over the years, the laundry is a large building constructed with a stone floor (to ensure the fire pit and large bronze washing tub remain upright). Within the Laundry, the characters will make an unexpected discovery – the body of an ill-dressed man. It is obvious that he has been in a fight, exhibiting numerous cuts and abrasions, and his pale skin attests to the fact that he expired from a loss of blood. This man is one of Kalos' former agents, who, with his fellows, recently attempted to raid the main house, an act that ended when the

artificer's Automaton (see below) attacked them. Unfortunately for this young man, while he escaped the machine man, he only made it to the Laundry before collapsing (and dying shortly afterwards).

The Path to the Spring

With the villa located at the top of a cliff, ensuring a supply of water was always going to be of concern. As such, a path has been made over time to a small, but constant, spring to the south. Situated down a gentle incline, the round trip journey takes about 15 minutes.

The Shrine to Poseidon

Located on a plinth, this statue is a relic from when the Argoseans ruled Oxeia. Keenly maintained, even after Kalos' arrival (as while most Thenian's do not directly worship the sea god, very few of them are willing to risk his wrath), the six-foot marble statue depicts mighty Poseidon atop a half dozen gliding dolphins. Those worshippers of Poseidon who take the time to venerate their deity at this location receive a warming sense of being blessed by the Sea God for the next 24 hours (but will receive no particular benefits in game terms).

The Grand Crane

Although this isn't marked on the map, Kalos' Grand Crane is to the north of the villa, situated on the top of the cliff. A marvelous piece of technology, Kalos used the crane to hoist up various supplies from ship below. Now no longer needed, the crane stands unused and derelict under the hot sun.

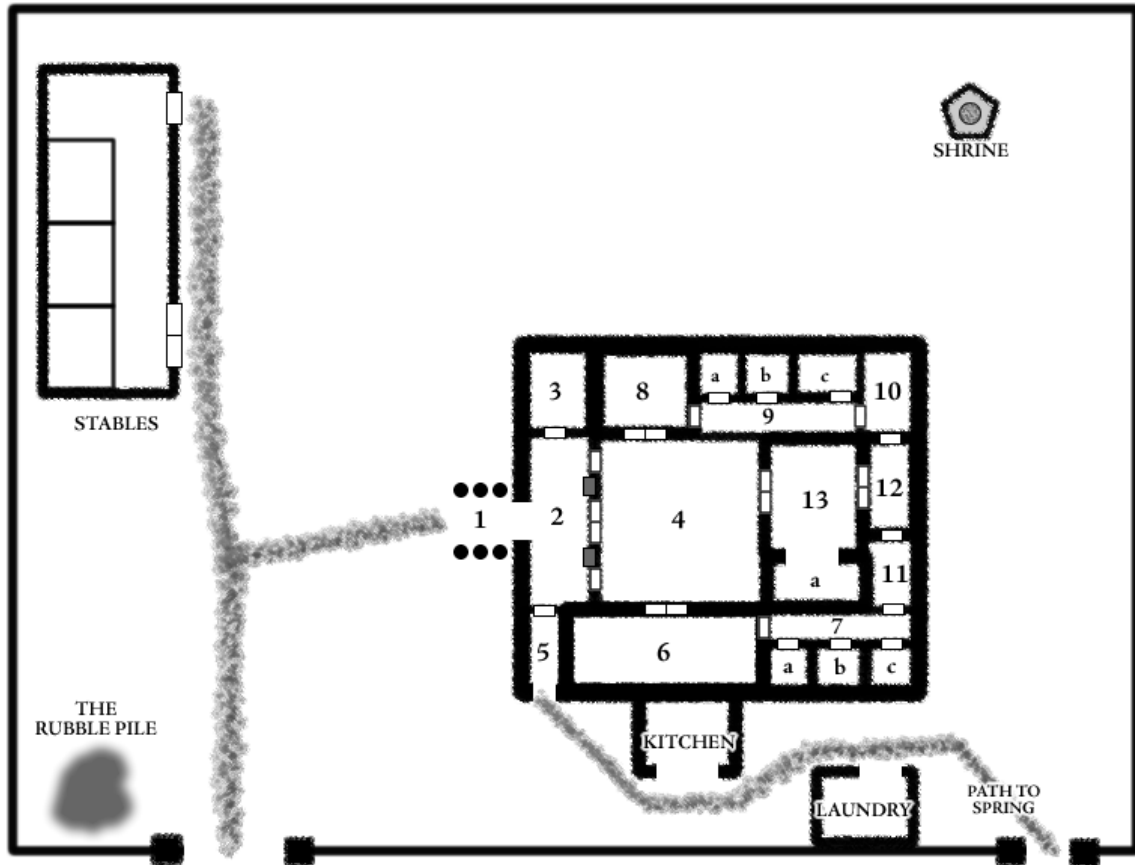
The Rubble Pile

This is a large pile of rock and stone that measures some 20 feet in diameter. Although the characters will not be aware of the fact, this rubble pile is the remains from Kalos' workshop floor – which he has excavated to make more room for his experiments.

The Main Building

As the characters explore the main villa, they will discover that all is not well within. While much of the villa is in disrepair, there is much evidence that something terrible has occurred here recently – with a number of dead bodies to be found in various locations. These are in fact further signs of Kalos' increasing madness, and are the result of his many experiments and the various traps he has set.

Amongst these are Kalos's few servants, as well as the agents he used to acquire the material (as mentioned under the Stables entry above). Upon the arrival of the Theseos' first messenger, Kalos 'tested' his experiments, the result, at least in his opinion, a total success – if you call the deaths of all of one's servants a success.



KALOS' VILLA

As is noted in the entry for the Western Hall (see 4 below) Kalos will become aware of the characters arrival at the villa when they try and enter the villa proper. While he might be concerned at their arrival (especially if they state their purpose) he feels safe in the belief that his 'defence' will stop any intruders from making his inner sanctum – his workshop. Currently ensconced in the very same, he awaits the arrival of King Theseos himself.

Some clues that might be further discovered by the characters include:

- As Kalos has closed up all the windows to the main villa with large blocks of stone, the only real entrance to the house is through either the Portico or Servant's Entrance. Furthermore as the villa would regularly be lit by these very same windows or skylights, the interior of the house is dark and dingy. As a result, all Danger Evasion target numbers in the villa (that rely on sight anyway) may be higher than one might expect.

- A number of the doors in the main building seem to be able to be unlocked without any outside aid. Any character thinking to examine the locking mechanism on one of these doors will see that complex sets of mechanical gears have been set into the door jambs. The workings of these are beyond most adventurers.

Kalos' home is full of traps and devices created specifically to ensure the great artificer is left to work undisturbed (see p. 34 of the *M&M Companion* for more details on detecting and evading traps).

1. Portico

The characters' likely entrance to the main house is through the portico (although they could avoid this location by entering via the servant's entrance).

As the characters enter, read the following:

While this portico is much simpler than many you've previously passed under, the six mighty marble columns holding aloft a thick block of Oxeia Stone, make it an impressive sight. Obviously the main entrance to the house, beyond the last set of columns, an archway can be seen leading through into a large hall.

Looking about, the characters will quickly detect that a fight has occurred here in the past. Although when this battle took place is indeterminable, dried blood and weapon marks can be seen all along the marble columns and floor. This damage is the result of the fairly one-sided struggle between Kalos' former agents and his guardian Automaton (see 3. *Guard Chamber* below).

2. Entrance Hall

A grand, impressive hall, this is where traditionally the house servants (and occasionally their masters) would greet invited guests. Under Kalos' gaze however, this place of welcome has been twisted to his dark sense of humor.

As the characters enter, read the following:

It is immediately obvious that someone has gone to great lengths to alter this hall. Instead of the traditional open and light space where hosts would welcome their guests (and perhaps ensure they were of no threat to the household), it has been closed up by the sealing of the great windows to the west.

Looking around the room, you notice that, instead of a single doorway leading into the houses' interior, three doors (one double, the other two single) now sit in the eastern wall. Most disturbingly, between these are two large stone sculptures of faces – one an old man, the other young.

As soon as any single character approaches any of the internal doors or calls out, both the sculptures 'awaken' with the sound of grinding gears; their eyes open and begin to speak in unison – one with an old man's voice, the other with a young man's:

Who wishes to speak to the great Kalos? State your Master and your purpose or be gone!

What happens next depends on the characters and their responses.

- If the characters state that they are here to see Kalos, naming Theseos as their master, then immediately the statues eyes flash red and the voices say '*Intruders of the false king! Kill them!*' and the door to the Guard Chamber unlocks with an audible click. Moments later the Automaton (see 3. Guard Chamber below) will open the same door and attack the party. Note that after the Automaton is defeated, the doors into room 4 remain locked and the trap (see below) remains activated.

- If the characters state they wish to see Kalos, but do not name the king, the voices call out '*Only the worthy may be granted an audience with the master. Defeat our champion and you shall be allowed to proceed.*' The door to the Guard Chamber unlocks with an audible click. Moments later the Automaton (see 3. Guard Chamber below) will open the same door and attack the party. Once the Automaton is defeated the faces once again rumble into life, this time speaking the simple phrase '*You are worthy*'; the set of double-doors into room 4 audibly unlock and the trap is deactivated.

- If the characters do not reply, or attempt any other action, after about 20 seconds the same effects as noted when naming Theseos (as above) will occur.

The Steaming Breath Trap

This trap is designed to injure the intruders and act as a warning to Kalos to their presence. When activated, the two sculptures breathe out super-heated steam (piped from Kalos workshop) on anyone near the doors.

Effect: Direct Damage (treat as a Fire Trap). Does 2d6 damage to any character in Room 3 not succeeding a Danger Evasion roll.

Concealment Rating: 20

Danger Rating: 20

Notes: This trap is Self-Reloading, but it takes 10 combat rounds for the steam pressure to reach a point it can activate again. (This is an audible sound – a high pitched whistling – that will alert the characters to the danger).

3. Guard Chamber

In the past this chamber would have housed the villa's armory and household guards. However, under Kalos' perverse state of mind, even this simple function has been warped. This chamber now holds one of Kalos' creations, the **Scorpionoid**, a large scorpion-shaped Automaton constructed out of stone (and with a working venom sac).

Within this simple square room are the bodies of three of Kalos' agents, the Automaton having dragged them here after killing them. They are all long dead and carry nothing more than their hand weapons and simple clothing.

Nothing else of interest remains in this room. However, characters who examine the room closely will notice that something is oddly distracting about the chamber; those who succeed at a detection roll vs. a target number of 20 (Thieves add their Thievery bonus to this roll) will detect that the eastern wall (dividing it from the Northern Hall) has been rebuilt to sit a foot and a half further into the room (as identified by the spacing from the door to the wall). This construction has been prepared by Kalos for a spike trap he has yet to complete in the next room.

It is likely that the characters will encounter the Automaton at some point prior to attempting to access this room, and until such time, the only door into this chamber is locked. Once the Automaton is defeated, the door remains permanently unlocked.

The stats for Kalos' Scorpionoid can be found at the end of this scenario, along with those of Kalos' other unique Animates.

4. Common Room

This hall is the 'common area' within the villa and would have been used for various activities in the past. Now it is a dark and dingy room, with the high curved sunlight covered over with thick metal bars.

As you get accustomed to the gloom, you see that you are in the villa's common room, once used for receptions, entertaining and numerous other day to day occasions.

Unfortunately it has seen better days, with the once ornate fountain now green with algae and the wide array of plants and vines that used to grow with vitality from the beds of dirt around it, little more than brown and black stains on the floor and walls.

Looking closely at the scene, your eyes are drawn to a crumpled figure lying near the fountain.

This corpse is one of King Theseos' messengers, who was trapped in this room by the enchanting sounds of one of Kalos' experiments – three Singing Keledones (see *Creature Compendium*, p. 104). Rooted to the spot by the animates' voices, the poor fellow quickly became victim to the other threat in the room, the Constrictor.

The Keledones are perched high in the enclosed room, roosting in an open metal cage. When the door from the Entrance Hall is opened, the Keledones awaken from their inanimate slumber and after a few minutes (roll 1D6) start to sing their hypnotic tunes.

This music also awakens the Constrictor, a snake construct patiently waiting in the sickly green water in the fountain. See the end of the scenario (p. 56) for the stats of the Constrictor.

After defeating the Keledones and the Constrictor the characters are free to leave by any of the doorways in the room. However, they will find that the largest set, those on the eastern wall are no longer doors, rather two large stone blocks have been placed in the gap instead.

If they listen carefully at these, the characters will hear sounds of steam and clash of metal on metal in the room beyond.

5. Servant's Entrance

This darkened corridor is the servant's entrance to the main house. Unused for many days now, it ends at a simple door leading to the Entrance Hall (Room 3). Many common household items are stored in this entrance way, including gardening tools, outdoor clothing and buckets.

Perhaps of most interest to the characters, however, are the oil lamps that are lined up against the outside wall. These can be filled from the oil barrel situated nearby and used to illuminate the dark villa once the party is inside.

6. Southern Hall

The second largest room in the house, this hall was traditionally used as a dining room or informal parlour; today it is little more than a junkyard. Again, like many of the other outwards facing rooms in the villa, its large and open windows have been blocked in, making the chamber unnaturally dark.

Upon entering this room you immediately think that you've stumbled upon some sort of barracks or guardroom, until you realise that all the figures in the room stand too still.

Looking closer it seems as if some sort of army of animates, in various states of repair has been abandoned here.

With thoughts of revenge and retribution on his mind, Kalos initially started to create an army of Iron Warriors with which to invade Thena. While he made some head way on in this mad plan, he soon realised that such a strategy was pure folly. Abandoning the animations in this room, he soon forgot about them, focusing instead on 'bigger and better' plans. Very few of these Iron Warriors are in working condition (one per two players). Nevertheless, those that are able will attempt to stop the characters leaving the room (perhaps springing to life when least expected).

After defeating the Iron Warriors there is little to be found in the rest of the room, apart from the odd piece of armor or weapon. See the *Creature Compendium* (p. 64) for the stats of Iron Warriors.

7. Servants Chambers

Before their untimely deaths, Kalos had a number of servants (all of whom arrived with him from Thena) at the villa. Most were tasked with the menial jobs that ensured the house was maintained in the manner in which their master was accustomed (as cooks, cleaners and other domestics), while a few acted as assistants and helpers in his experiments.

It is immediately obvious that some sort of calamity has occurred here. The hallway is a mess, with bodies (obviously servants) strewn about, broken in doors and even large chunks of the interior walls smashed up.

The corridor leading from the Southern Hall was the scene of a deadly fight between the servants and one of Kalos' more recent experiments.

7a. Room: This was the male servants' quarters and where the last surviving servants holed up. Again, the room is a mess and what was obviously a make-shift barricade of beds almost broken in two. Nothing of interest beyond two dead servants, clothes and the odd personal item can be found in this room. On closer examination, it is obvious that the dead men have been mangled and crushed as if by some sort of mechanical device, but there is are no clues as to what specifically.

7b. Room: The female servants' quarters is much less disturbed than the rest of the chambers. Here one of Kalos' assistants lies dead on a bed. Like those in the male servants' quarters the victim has been crushed to death.

7c. Major-domo's Room: The head of the household, Kalos' Major-domo, Trayos, was one of the artificer's finest servants. Who better then to use in one of his mad experiments? This room is as spartan and bare as the others; however, in one corner a dead man lies splayed on the floor. Even in the gloom it is obvious that this poor soul has had his arms of flesh and blood replaced by half a dozen (three each side) mechanical limbs.

In preparation for his final experiment into the powers of mechanics and magic, Kalos decided to test his theories on Trayos. While successful, the alteration drove the poor Major-domo mad, and in this state he attacked and killed his friends and colleagues. Only afterwards, in a moment of clarity did he realise what he had done and, taking a dose of poison, return to his room to die. While Trayos is long dead, the limbs still have the power to act, and will attack anyone who gets within range.

See p. 56 for the stats for Trayos the Many-Limbed.

8. Study & Library

This room was once Kalos' private study and library. Since going mad, however, the artificer came to the conclusion that he already knew everything that anyone needed to know about magic and mechanics. So this room is empty of any of the tomes, journals or notes that the more academically minded amongst the party might find interesting. Instead, Kalos has turned the Library into a shire to his own narcissism and paranoia.

Like the other rooms with outward facing perspectives, the windows in the Library have been sealed with stone slabs (which is a bit of a shame as this room – and the others facing north – have a lovely view over the Middle Sea).

This room must have once been a grand study or library, judging by the large and impressive bookcases that line the walls. Unfortunately, none of these books remain, with each and every bookcase now lying bare. In fact, the only things of interest in the room are a dozen marble pedestals that form a circle in the middle of the room. Upon each of these stands a carved head, which eerily turn in unison to face you.

These sculpted heads have been crafted in the likeness of Kalos himself, though none of the characters will likely be aware of this fact. Part trap, part elaborate homage to his own warped genius, these heads speak to the party, attempting to confuse them with multiple questions and irrational comments, while a single head (imbued with Sorcerous powers) attempts to Compel (as per the Sorcerous ability of the same name) one of the adventurers to attack their friends.

The Compelling Head

This trap is designed to confuse and perplex any intruders. With multiple heads (TWELVE of them, actually) babbling at the characters, the Compelling head uses its power to try and force one of the party to attack their friends.

If it has no one else dominated, it will use its Compelling power (see p. 40 of the *Players Manual*) on one of the party (with a Psychic Gift of 4 and Mystic Strength of 16). As usual, the victim may attempt a Mystic Fortitude saving throw to resist being affected by the power.

If a party member is dominated, the Head will order them to attack their closest ally. As such an action is likely against their nature, the victim may attempt a Mystic Fortitude saving throw to resist this order.

The Compelling Head may attempt to use this power once per round, but cannot use it on more than one victim at a time.

Defense Class: 0 (no attack roll required – but see below)

Hits: 4

Although magical in nature the heads are physically weak. All attacks on any head in the room automatically hit. However, identifying which is the Compelling Head (amongst all the simply babbling ones) isn't so easy. Each round, each character is entitled to a special Mystic Fortitude roll against a variable target number equal to 10 + the number of active heads (22 for 12 heads, 21 for 11 heads and so on). If this roll is successful, the character correctly identifies the Compelling Head.

9. Hall to the Guest Chambers

The corridor leads to the three guest chambers and onwards towards the rear of the villa. Although the players might be expecting otherwise, this passage is free of deadly traps and crazed animates out to kill them.

9a. Room: This room is laid out with a bed, table and an empty washbasin. The room looks as if it has never been occupied (and even if thoroughly searched nothing of interest can be found).

9b. Room: Much like its twin above, this room looks as if it hasn't been used or lived in at all. Once more it is empty.

9c. Room: Although it has a simple layout similar to the other two Guest chambers, this room holds the grizzly sight of a long dead, and slightly petrified, body. Although the characters will not know it, this is one of Kalos' own servants, whose death is the result of one of the artificer's grandiose revenge plans.

Theseos' Gift

In his madness, Kalos conceived to send King Theseos a 'gift', as a sign of his shame at his action and as a form of recompense.

Of course this gift was to be a trap, one which would kill the king. However, like so many of the artificer's ideas, he soon abandoned it as more 'enlightened' solutions came to mind. Now sitting in an ornate box on the shelf of the room, Theseos' Gift is destined to never be delivered.

Description: A beautiful, jewel-encrusted bracelet, designed to clasp around one's wrist or ankle. If worn (i.e., the clasp closed around a character's limb) then the magic within is activated, sending shocking bolts of lightning through the victim's body.

Damage: When activated, the bracelet does 1d3pts of damage each turn until it is destroyed.

Destroying the Bracelet: Theseos' Gift can be destroyed by a Feat of Strength (see *Players Manual*, p. 44 – note this can't be attempted by the wearer as two hands are required) or by doing 20 points of damage to the item (only the wearer and one other can attack it each turn). The bracelet is automatically hit each attack. Ingenious players might think of other plans of disabling the bracelet; Maze Masters should deal with these on a case by case basis.

10. Observatory

Even before Kalos arrived on the island, the previous Argosean governor held an interest in the stars. As such, this rich and influential man imported to Oxeia a large orrery (mechanical device that illustrates the relative positions and motions of the planets and moons) in which to indulge his hobby.

Although the governor is long gone, his expensive device remains, and who better to improve it than the world-famous Kalos!

Although as dark as any other room in the villa, you cannot be but impressed by the large Orrery that dominates the room. Showing the relative positions of distant planets, the Moon and Sun as they circle above, it must have taken weeks, if not months, to set-up in such a precise manner.

While few of you have had the pleasure of seeing such a device up close, you are pretty certain that it shouldn't be buzzing as it is...

Yet another elaborate plan the artificer had devised to claim his revenge, the massive Orrery is home to a hand-crafted group of mechanical Bee-folk (replicas of the real thing). As with many of Kalos' plans, the madman only realised the impracticality of it after he almost completed its transformation into a 'hive' for his miniature soldiers. (Obviously such a

device was too large to ship to Thena, let alone set up in such a way as not to reveal the trap, that and such a revenge was never going to be personal enough for Kalos' tastes.)

As it is, the Mechanical Bee-Folk (two per character in the party) have laid dormant for a very long time, growing – in their own strange way – ever more agitated by their captivity. With the arrival of the party, they have at last an opportunity to vent some of their frustrations.

See p. 56 for the Mechanical Bee-Folk's stats.

11. The Statuary Workshop

This is where Kalos and his assistants designed and sculpted the various animated stone creatures that the characters have encountered in the villa.

It is obvious that this room was once where a great artisan worked. Full of 'raw' and partially worked marble and Oxeia Stone, here is where Kalos crafted many of his deadly traps and guardians.

Seemingly abandoned, you shiver as you see fragments of unfinished work eerily similar to those you've already faced in the villa!

Although this seems like a perfect place for an ambush, the Statuary Workshop is free of threats. Nevertheless a good Maze Master should always keep his players on their toes by suggesting that maybe something lurks in the piles of masonry.

12. The Rear Portico

Where there was once a grand rear portico to the villa, Kalos has continued his practice of walling his home in with stone. Furthermore, as the last room before his private chambers, he has ensured that a suitably deadly surprise has been set to deter even the most vigorous of 'guests'.

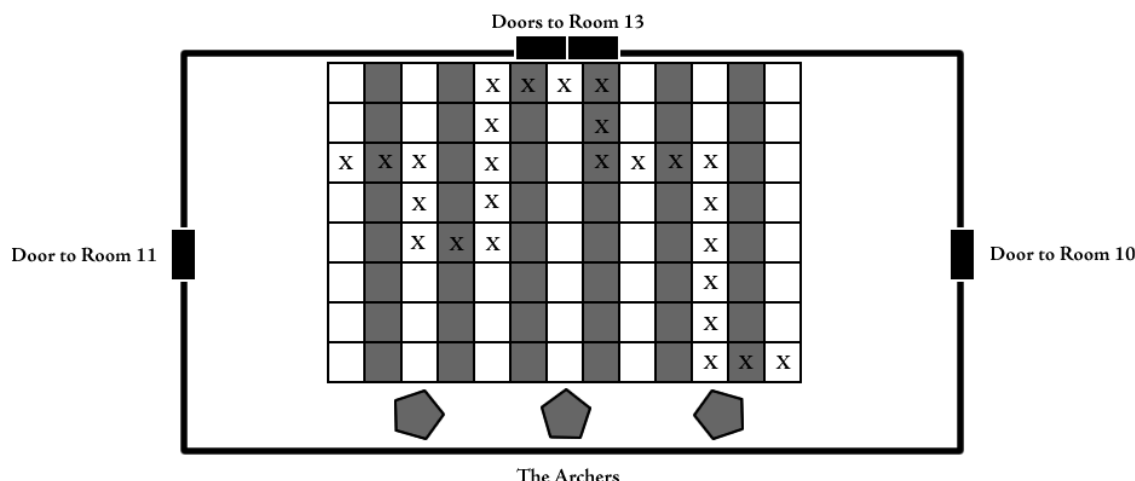
The first thing that strikes you about this room is the striped pattern on the floor and the three dead-looking statues of archers lining the far wall. It is most obviously a trap, but the question remains: just what sort is it?

Undeterred, you know you must be closing in on your quarry, as on the Western wall two large double doors barely hold back the sounds of steam, gears and clanking metal...

While the more astute amongst the group might believe they have a theory of how this trap is set to work, they may be surprised to find it relatively simple. Through the tiles, a simple route to all three doors has been created by Kalos, in a combination that he has memorized.

Anyone standing on one of the 'trapped' squares will find themselves shot at by the Mechanical Archers (see *Creature Compendium*, p. 74). Each Archer is armed with a quiver of 12 arrows; once they have shot all their arrows, they cease to function.

Layout of Room 12



The Patterned Floor

Description: Crafted in grey and white stone, the striped pattern floor blocks the way to the characters' destination. Only by travelling on the marked route will the characters be able to reach the doors to Room 13.

Finding the Right Route: This elaborate 'game' works like any other trap; although detection rolls are needed for each two squares the character moves.

Effect: If a character steps on a wrong square, the three archers turn and shoot. Treat this as you would any missile attack (see below for details on the Mechanical Archers).

Concealment Rating: 15

Danger Rating: 15

Destroying the Archers: The Archers have been 'ordered' to protect the doorway to the Artificer's workshop but are not stuck on their stands. If attacked directly in melee, they will try to retreat (since they have no Melee attack).

You have no idea of anyone could work in such an environment, let alone survive and yet, shrouded by the smoke, you hear someone relentlessly working steel...

With the desire for revenge growing greater every day, Kalos, long mad and paranoid, became dismayed at the thought of King Theseos thwarting his numerous and varied traps and assassins. With the appointed date of his summons back to Thena drawing ever closer, the artificer struck upon the only solution his decayed mind could contemplate: turning himself into the supreme weapon, shaped in the manner of a Minotaur, Theseos' only true fear.

To this end, Kalos has been slowly, but surely, augmenting his natural body and taking on the visage of a Mechanical Nightmare Minotaur – a **Kalos-otaur**! Alerted to the characters' presence in his home, Kalos has been putting the finishing touches on his new body and, now ready, charges into battle with the intruders.

The stats for the monstrous Kalos-otaur can be found at the end of the scenario (p. 57).

If the Kalos-otaur is "killed", Kalos will still be alive (and trapped) inside his mechanical body but will lapse into a crazed daze and will offer the characters no more resistance for the remainder of the adventure.

Once the Kalos-otaur has been defeated, the group can look around the Workshop. Dominated by an immense furnace/oven, worktable and generator (a mechanical contraption that runs on the heat produced by the fire is beyond the understanding of all but the wisest scholars), the room is a complete mess. Tools, scrap iron and discarded clay are piled everywhere, while signs of Kalos' own self-mutilation can also be seen. While nothing much of real interest can be found in this room, the Storeroom holds a number of remarkable items.

13. The Artificer's Room

At last, the confrontation with Kalos looms. Whatever the characters were thinking they might encounter in this final room, little could they expect what they do find in the workshop of the artificer!

Expecting the doors to be locked or even trapped, you are surprised to find they open easily. Beyond, however, is a vision of Hades, with thick black smoke billowing from the room's massive forge, as a wave of intense heat sears exposed hair and clothing; even your armour begins to radiate with heat.

13a. Workshop Storeroom

This small antechamber is where Kalos has stored his more successful experiments and offers the party a number of interesting rewards for the danger they have put themselves through in capturing the master craftsman.

While there are many fantastical and wondrous creations in this room, many of them can only be controlled by Kalos, secrets he is likely in no condition to give up. Below are described a few of the more interesting and accessible items in the Storeroom (Maze Masters are welcome to add additional items as they see fit).

Kalos' Devices

Disk Thrower

This device is worn on a character's wrist and can, with a simple twist of the arm, discharge a whirling metal disk. Designed specifically to be used in melee combat, the Disk Thrower can be fired either during the Missile phase (with a maximum range of 10') or during the Melee phase against a target which has already been *engaged* in melee. In all cases, the attack roll is resolved as a Missile attack. The device can only carry 12, specifically-designed disks (and will be fully loaded when found in Kalos' storeroom). The Thrower has a range of 10' and does 1D3 damage on a successful hit. (Enc 2)

Mechanical Tools

These precision tools seem to be imbued with some extraordinary magic, as they enable the most unskilled of craftsmen to work like masters. In game terms, these tools grant the equivalent of the Armorer talent. (Enc 1)

Bow Sight

With numerous lenses encased in a finely crafted bronze tube, the Bow Sight enables archers to negate any effects of shooting at long range or at night. A fragile device, the Sight will be broken and unusable if either it or the bow it is attached to is damaged. (Enc 0)

Extending Spear

This small 10 inch shaft holds more than first meets the eye. With the flick of a small hidden button, the shaft extends to become a full sized spear. At a second press the spear retracts, making it an excellent weapon to carry hidden on one's person. (Enc = 0 / 2 when extended).

Return to Thena

Once the characters have defeated Kalos in his altered form, they should have little trouble in finding their way back outside the villa. Of course, some of Kalos' minions or traps may still be in place, and these are equally as dangerous whether the master craftsman is alive or dead.

The trip back to Viltos and the awaiting *Athena's Fortune* should be simple enough, unless the sun has set for the evening. Travelling along the rough-hewn track between the villa and Oxeia's capital can be dangerous without sure footing; Maze Masters should decide whether anything untoward does occur.

The *Athena's Fortune* will sail when the characters say so, and Captain Khemta will ensure that, if required, Kalos is restrained and looked after on the long journey back to Thena.

Rewards

Upon their return to Thena, the characters will be met on the docks by Senator Ovios (who has been told of the ship's return), who will immediately want to see Kalos (either in person or his corpse). Once satisfied, he leads the party up the Akropolis (the hill upon which the Royal Palace sits) and will say that King Theseos has been informed that they have apprehended the Artificer.

For some characters, the reward of being granted audience of the King should be reward enough. However, for other characters completing this story, a more substantial reward is obviously required:

Warriors & Hunters: Each warrior in the party will receive an additional 100 Glory from the stories and tales told of their adventures. Hunters also receive this Glory (as Experience).

Magicians: Each magician will gain 200 Wisdom from the discoveries they have made and the wonders of Kalos' art they have witnessed.

Thieves: Each thief will gain a variable amount of Experience based on his adventures inside Kalos' manor. For every trap he found or disarmed he receives 25 Experience. Additionally, for every item the character (or the group) retrieved from Kalos' Storeroom the thief receives a bonus of 25 Experience per item (to a maximum of 100).

Of probably more importance to the characters is the fact that their success in this task will have earmarked them as reliable champions, and as such can expect further duties in the name of Theseos and the city-state of Thena.

Kalos' Unique Animates

Scorpionoid

Taxonomy: Animate

Description: Built in the image of a giant scorpion, Kalos' Automaton is the guardian and protector of the villa. Quick and deadly, it uses the specially-formulated paralyzing poison in its stinger to whittle down the number of opponents it faces. When defeated, the Automaton crumbles into rocks and dust, and can never be rebuilt.

Size: Large

Ferocity: Dangerous

Cunning: Average

Mystique: Weird

Movement: 120'

Initiative: 16

Melee Attack: +6

Damage: 2d6 (pincers)

Defense Class: 17

Hits Total: 30

Detection / Evasion: 0/+4

Mystic Fortitude: +2

Special Abilities: Lightning Fast, Mindless, Natural Armor, Poison (sting, paralysis), Supernatural Vigor, Wallcrawling.

Awards: Glory 150, Wisdom 20.

Constrictor

Taxonomy: Animate

Description: Kalos' silent assassin, it uses the distraction of the Keledones to grapple and strangle the mesmerized victims. Built of flexible metal, it looks like a combination of an overgrown grass snake and insanely animated whip.

Size: Medium

Ferocity: Aggressive

Cunning: Alert

Mystique: Weird

Movement: 60' (slither)

Initiative: 14

Melee Attack: +3

Damage: 1d6 (fangs)

Defense Class: 15

Hits Total: 8

Detection/Evasion: +2/+4

Mystic Fortitude: +2

Special Abilities: Mindless, Crushing Damage (1d6 – constricting), Uncanny Agility

Awards: Glory 50, Wisdom 10.

Trayos, the Many-Limbed

Taxonomy: Folk/Animate

Description: In all other respects a normal male human, Trayos has had his arms replaced with six (three on each side) flaying limbs.

Size: Medium

Ferocity: Dangerous

Cunning: Average

Mystique: Weird

Movement: 0*

Initiative: 12

Melee Attack: +4 (up to 3 attacks per round with its extra arms).

Damage: 1d6 (sharp metallic limbs)

Defense Class: 13

Hits Total: 16

Detection/Evasion: +0/+0

Mystic Fortitude: +2

Special Abilities: Extra Arms x2 (see *Creature Comp.*, p. 115), Mindless, Supernatural Vigor.

Awards: Glory 65, Wisdom 20.

* With Trayos dead, the limbs cannot move, but they will attack anything that closes within range.

Mechanical Bee-Folk

Taxonomy: Animate

Description: Kalo's replication of the real Bee-Folk, these aggressive mechanical flying machines look like clockwork winged humanoids. Their gears whirl in time with their tiny silver wings, producing a buzzing that somehow conveys their irritated and aggressive nature.

Size: Tiny

Ferocity: Aggressive

Cunning: Alert

Mystique: Weird

Movement: 40' (combat), 160' (full movement)

Initiative: 18

Melee Attack: +3

Damage: 1pt (miniature spear)

Defense Class: 15

Hits Total: 2

Detection/Evasion: +2/+10

Mystic Fortitude: +2

Special Abilities: Lightning Fast, Magic Resistance, Mindless, Uncanny Agility, Winged.

Awards: Glory 6, Wisdom 30

Kalos-otaur

Taxonomy: Special Animate

Description: With twin horns of polished silver and his limbs replaced by mechanical wonders, the artificer is now more machine than man – the mad Artificer's last great experiment!

Size: Large

Ferocity: Deadly

Cunning: Crafty

Mystique: Eldritch

Movement: 90'

Initiative: 16

Melee Attack: +8

Damage: 2d6 (metal fists and silver horns)

Defense Class: 20

Hits Total: 30

Detection/Evasion: +6/+6

Mystic Fortitude: +8

Special Abilities: Charge into Battle (Initiative 20, Melee +12), Crushing Damage (bear hug), Grapple (Might = 20), Natural Armor, Magic Resistance, Supernatural Vigor.

Awards: Glory 200, Wisdom 30.

In Memoriam **Ray Harryhausen** (1920-2013)

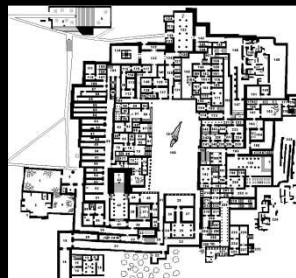
This issue of the Minotaur is dedicated to the memory of Ray Harryhausen, Master of the Monsters and FX Wizard.

In the name of Calibos and Medusa, in the name of the Argonauts and the Children of the Hydra, we salute you!



TOMB OF THE BULL KING

A mega-module for *Mazes & Minotaurs*



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Dear Minotaur



Dear Editor,

Exactly *HOW LONG* do you intend to wait before publishing the next issue of the MINOTAUR? And I thought this zine was supposed to be Quarterly!

Are you guys lost in Tartarus or something?

Steven Hanson, New York (NY)

Dear Steven,

Well, here it is – and the next one should probably (hopefully) be around before a full year has passed (and no, we do not intend do change our name to the Minotaur Annual, as you suggested in one of the eighteen other letters you've sent us since issue 10). As for the Quarterly, you surely noticed that we got rid of it a loooooong time ago.

By the way, Tartarus is quite nice at this time of the year. You should definitely consider a visit.

A TWIST IN THE MAZE

A Regular M&M Column by **Luke G. Reynard**

BRING ON THE SATYRS!

OR: Turning our Horned & Hoofed Friends into Player-Character Material



- At last! We can be player-characters!

The Great Satyr Debate

For years now, there have been demands in the M&M community for an official and fully playable Satyr character class. After all, if you can play a Centaur, a Nymph, a Triton (see *Triremes & Tritons*) or even a Golden Minotaur (*Minotaur N°7*, p. 44), why shouldn't you be allowed to play a member of the Satyr race? Most Maze Masters I've spoken with about this issue seem to agree that Legendary Games Studio never considered "the Satyr option" because of the particular, err, proclivities of Satyrs, which would make them "unfit" and "inappropriate" as player-characters – an opinion which (perhaps not surprisingly) Olivier Legrand clearly dismissed as "a very common misconception" in a recent conversation (*Editor's Note: Here I suppose you are referring to your latest campaign of telephonic harassment*), before clarifying the matter further:

"Despite what some people seem to believe, the fact that Satyrs were not considered as "player-character material" has nothing to do with propriety or decency. It's tied to the way the M&M game system works. In M&M, nonhuman player-character types are treated as classes: Centaurs are clearly warriors, Nymphs are defined as a specific class of magicians... but Satyrs simply wouldn't fit in this class format: they are neither warriors nor magicians and it would definitely feel odd to categorize them as a "specialist class", like Thieves or Hunters. Specialist classes, with their Experience points and special Hunting or Thievery bonuses, are all about mastery of a particular area of expertise – and what would be the specialty of Satyrs, anyway?"

Well, it's probably wiser to leave that last question unanswered and concentrate on the rationale of Legrand's justification. As a matter of fact (and as surprising as it may seem), I tend to agree with his main argument: Satyrs as defined in M&M simply do not have what it takes to become a warrior, a magician or even a specialist. Simply put, they are not (or do not seem to be) "hero material", which tends to disqualify them as player-characters. It is this issue, more than any other, which makes the definition of a Satyr class (or even its very existence) a complicated proposition.

But the "Satyr question" also extends to the very background of the game. The possibility to play Centaurs and Nymphs has a strong justification in terms of setting: in the imaginary history of Mythika, Centaurs and Nymphs fought alongside the human free nations against the Autarchs during the darkest hours of the Age of Magic, thereby earning their well-deserved niche as possible player-characters in the Age of Heroes.

While a similar rationale can easily be inferred for Tritons or even Golden Minotaurs, it seems highly dubious that Satyrs could also make their own claim to this special "hero status"... unless, of course, we add a new (and purely optional) episode to the current history of Mythika, one that would allow us to introduce Satyr player-characters in M&M without upsetting the Cosmic Game Balance, the Official Orthodoxy of Mythika or even Olivier Legrand.

So, without further ado, *A Twist in the Maze* is proud to present...



Come with me to explore the Mysteries...

The Mysteries of Pan

Over the last few years, a new cult has grown among the Satyr folk of Mythika – that of the Mysteries of Pan. As its name implies, this mystery cult is devoted to the elusive and enigmatic deity known as Pan, who is said to be the son of Dionysos and some unidentified Dryad⁴¹. According to his worshippers, Pan was sired during the Age of Myth and actually played a prominent role during the struggles of the Gods against the Titans – but his crucial part in these episodes was deliberately erased from mythic history by the Olympians themselves, who were jealous of (or embarrassed by?) the divine Satyr's exploits.

The details of Pan's great deeds and cunning tricks are recorded in the *Panead*, a lengthy and often quite confusing piece of oral poetry known to many Satyrs. According to the *Panead*, Pan also had the dubious privilege of being the only deity who actually died sometime during the late Age of Myth, but the causes and circumstances of this death remain shrouded in mystery – a mystery which eventually gave birth to the Mysteries of Pan.

The Aegipans

The Satyr "priests" of the Mysteries of Pan call themselves Aegipans and actually display genuine magical powers, which they call the Gifts of Pan. Even weirder still, those Aegipans have begun to travel alongside adventurers, joining them in their glorious quests and heroic expeditions (or perhaps it is just a good excuse to hang around those pretty adventurous Nymphs).

⁴¹ There seems to be quite a bit of confusion, in Greek myth, on the topic of Pan's actual lineage; according to some tales, he was not the son of Dionysus but of Hermes or Zeus – but we won't delve into such complexities here – this is *A Twist in the Maze*, NOT the *Almanac of Mythika*.

AEGIPAN SATYR

Primary Attributes: Wits and Luck

Gender: All Satyrs are male (duh!).

Basic Hits: 8

Fleet-Hoofed: Satyrs have a basic movement rate of 80' (instead of the usual 60') and add +4 to their Initiative, Defense Class (unless taken by surprise) and Danger Evasion (except for detection and stealth rolls – damn hooves!).

Damn Healthy: A Satyr's supernatural vigor makes him completely immune to poison and very resistant to the effects of alcohol⁴².

Gifts of Pan: Aegipans practice their own brand of magic, which appears to be a weird mix of other powers and is far less versatile than other, fully-fledged realms of magic since it only includes three powers, instead of the usual six (see below for a detailed description). Their magical talent is known as Wild Inspiration.

Wild Inspiration = Wits mod + Luck mod

Mystic Strength = 12 + Wild Inspiration

Starting Power = 4 + Wits mod

Level Benefits: Each level beyond the first gives a Satyr +2 Hits, +4 Power points, +1 to Luck and +2 to any other attribute of their choice (yes, even Might or Grace!).

Background Talents: All Aegipans must possess the Musician talent, plus a second talent chosen among Actor, Beastmaster, Healer, Woodsman and Wrestler.

Possessions: A musical instrument.

Patron Deity: Pan, of course.

Reputation: An Aegipan's *Panic Renown* does not allow him to strike fear in anyone but does allow him to add his reputation bonus when dealing with Nymphs, other Satyrs and followers of Dionysus; because of their various odious personal habits, however, Satyrs suffer a -4 penalty to their Personal Charisma with pretty much everybody else.

Advancement: Aegipans advance by collecting Wisdom points, like any other type of magician.

In game terms, the Aegipans' mystical powers and willingness to seek Wisdom give them the potential to become "player-character material", on par with Centaurs and Nymphs. These wandering, mystic Satyrs also claim to follow a divine agenda based on some obscure prophecies from the Age of Myth.

⁴² If you are using the Drinking rules from *Vikings & Valkyries*, all Satyrs should be given the Drinker talent, in addition to their other background talents.



A level 1 Aegipan practicing his flute

This agenda has three major goals:

- 1) Fight and eventually uproot the corrupting influence of the bestial Calibans (see *Creature Compendium*, p. 97) among the Satyr folk.
- 2) Prepare the Great Return of Pan, which (according to their dubious prophecies) will end the current Age of Heroes and herald the Age of Pan (also known as "the New Age").
- 3) In the meantime, enjoy the pleasures of life as fully as possible (especially with Nymphs).

Whether there is any form of sacred truth behind the prophecies and teachings of the Mysteries of Pan is left to each Maze Master's discretion.

Gifts of Pan

As mentioned above, the Aegipans' own brand of magic only includes three powers – a limitation which is largely counterbalanced by the benefits of the Satyr's other special abilities. Perhaps the vacant slots will be filled with new powers once the Return of Pan becomes a reality (see below).

Magnitude 1: Shadow of Pan

This power works exactly as a Sorcerer's power of Confusion, except that the Satyr's Wild Inspiration is used instead of the Sorcerer's Psychic Gift.

Magnitude 2: Tune of Liberation

This power works exactly as a Lyrists' Song of Freedom, except that the Aegipan does not need to sing and that the instrument used can be a harp, lyre, flute or panpipe (depending on the Aegipan's musical preferences). The Satyr's Wild Inspiration is used instead of the Lyrists' Orphic Voice.

Magnitude 3: Tune of Fascination

This power has exactly the same effects as a Lyrists' Song of Soothing, except that the Aegipan does not need to sing and that the instrument used can be a harp, lyre, flute or panpipe). The Satyr's Wild Inspiration is used instead of Orphic Voice.

A Couple of Bonus Options

Pan(dora)'s Box

The Aegipans' atypical magic may also allow them to twist the properties of two mythic items found in the *Maze Masters Guide* (p. 46). If an Aegipan uses a *Flute of the Shepherd* to play his *Tune of Fascination*, his Mystic Strength will be increased by 5 for the duration of the Tune, making its effects far harder to resist. An Aegipan using the *Pipes of Chaos* in conjunction with his *Confusion* power will benefit from a similar bonus.

The Awakening

Maze Masters who wish to play the Return of Pan as a serious, predestined event of divine importance (as opposed to a complete load of goat***) may use the following option, known as the Awakening, to herald and eventually bring about the comeback of Pan in their campaign – and make the Aegipan player-character in the group the very harbinger of this theophany. So far, no Aegipan has made it past level 3. As soon as one of them reaches level 4, each new level will give him a new Gift of corresponding Magnitude. When the Aegipan finally reaches level 6, he will gain the supreme Gift of Divine Intervention; the first successful use of this power will cause the much anticipated Return of Pan (consequences being left to the discretion of the Maze Master). Here are the three optional Gifts of the Awakening of Pan:

Magnitude 4: Tune of Vigor

This power has exactly the same effects as a Lyrists' Song of Comfort, with the same adjustments as for the Tunes of Liberation and Fascination.

Magnitude 5: Tune of Fury

This power has exactly the same effects as a Lyrists' Song of Wrath, with the same adjustments as for the Tunes of Liberation and Fascination.

Magnitude 6: Divine Intervention

This power works exactly as the Divine Prodigy of the same name – and its first successful use will actually cause the Return of Pan in the living world!



- At last! Level 6! The Return of Pan is upon us!

The Megara of Demeter

A mini-adventure for low-level M&M characters, by **Darren Peech**

"...as I have stated in my previous work on comparative religion, the Olympians are the dominant powers of the world. What other deities can intervene so fully in the lives of humans? What other deities produce divine agents to act on their behalf? However, more importantly, who are these foreign deities?"

Most scholars assume they are but the Olympians in a foreign guise. To counter, why would Minean gods manifest in such alien forms? The Umbrians and Amazons share our Minean gods. Surely, the Olympians would not wish to be falsely worshipped. It is because of this that I posit that these alien gods are not Olympians. They are powers that are constrained by our Olympian Pantheon, yet not fully controlled by them. Though the Olympians may be the strongest of the great powers, let us not forget they are not the oldest. Any Minean can spout the abridged cosmogony, yet it is the deep cosmogony that is often overlooked. It is here where the old and elder gods are placed. Though we bask in the light of the High Olympians, shadows still exist in the daylight. "

Ariston of Argos – "Foreign Powers"

This mini-adventure can take place anywhere in the Minean lands; it can serve as a quick way to introduce new players to the world of *Mazes & Minotaurs* or as the first part of a series of scenarios focusing on the hidden agendas of the Dark Gods.

A Dark Plot

The powers of darkness have hatched an insidious plan. Instead of striking out at the more powerful of the Olympians they have decided to focus on the goddess Demeter. Various random raids on her temples and her most vital agricultural sites keep her full attention away from any single threat as she and her divine agents respond across the land.

The goal is to slowly influence the farming communities of the Minean world. If you control their food, you can control them. The Megara at Therros is the first of these experiments. The Goddess' head priestess at the Megara at Therros has passed away, and the young priestess Iona has been chosen as her replacement. As Demeter's divine agents are busy elsewhere, the characters are called upon to escort her to the Megara. However, certain powers have plans for Iona...

Starting the Adventure

As the characters are camping for the night, there is a strong gust of wind and a sudden flash of blinding light. In the middle of the camp, though it is night, there is a rainbow that seems to fall from the heavens. At its base is the vision of a beautiful woman who seems to face each individual character no matter their position around the fire. Her divine nature is obvious and the party knows that it is Iris the female messenger of the gods.

Her unearthly voice speaks, *"I am Iris, a messenger of the gods, and I come bearing word from my lady Demeter. The Megara at Therros has lost its high priestess as she has passed away. The goddess' agents are preoccupied elsewhere at the moment, so you will go in their stead. Travel first to Skios to escort her new priestess Iona to Therros."*

There is then another flash of light and the rainbow recedes into the sky.

The characters know that Skios is town about an easy day's walk from their present location and that Therros is about three days march further.

The Long Game of the Old Gods

The Older Gods have learned from their mistakes. As hubris was their downfall, so too shall it be for the Olympians who have been the dominant power in the world for two ages, and who believe they are secure upon Olympus. The Dark Gods' new strategy is now to subtly take power from the Olympians, by small, barely noticeable victories.

Mykale and Zara, the two main villains of this story, belong to a long line of Cybele worshippers, who have been part of one of her plots since she was defeated so long ago. There once was a time when humans and nature were not as severed as they are now; Cybele was a great fertility goddess, then, and her followers wielded great power. Zara is from her priesthood, while Mykale descends from Proteus, either a mortal lover of the goddess or her semi-divine son, depending on sources. Either way Proteus was gifted with the power to change form, a power which has been passed on to some of his descendants. For over two ages of the world, the Daughters of Cybele and the Children of Proteus have waited, and now forgotten shadows reach out from the past.



The Hooded Sentinel

As the party heads towards Skios, the sky seems to darken, the wind grows, and the temperature drops noticeably. Then standing in the middle of the road there is a tall, robed and hooded figure bearing a black spear. (*Spear of Conquest*) It is backed by a number of skeletons equal to the number of members in the party.

An eerie unearthly voice speaks from the hood's shadow, *"I give you warning. Do not continue in this vain quest. There are powers at work here beyond your ken."*

The **Hooded Horror** (see *Creature Compendium*, p. 57, don't forget its *Spear of Conquest* gives it a +1 Melee bonus) will not attack unless the characters attempt to bypass him. If they seek to avoid the Hooded Horror and take another path it will appear again and make the same statement.

Stopping at Skios

After defeating the Hooded Horror, the characters then make their way to Skios. It is a medium sized town famous for its gymnasium which produces a high number of athletes and is equally famous for its rubbing oils and decorative *strigils* (a small curved blade used for scraping the skin at the bath and in the gymnasium). Indeed the gymnasium of Skios is given the prime honor and is built on a hilltop such as a larger city would use for an acropolis. At its foot is the agora, and the road leading to it is lined with shops, restaurants, and parlors.

The temple the characters seek is in a quiet area at the edge of town. As they approach they see a well-cared for, yet unadorned building. Outside acolytes are tending the grounds. When one of them sees the party she steps forth. She is a middle aged woman, a little on the fleshy side, with graying hair. She smiles and speaks, *"I am Althea, the head acolyte of this temple. We have had word of your coming. Please follow me to meet your charge."*

She leads the characters inside the temple where a statue of the goddess Demeter stands on a high pedestal. She leads them to a small chamber where a young woman sits cross legged before a table with three candles. She is tying a piece of cloth over her eyes, but the characters can see before she completes the task, that where her eyes should be are empty sockets.

The young blind woman speaks, *"Althea, you have brought our friends. I am Iona and you must be..."* (Here she looks at each character, names them and their place of origin, and adds a bit of information about their place of origin.) *Please rest here at the temple tonight and early tomorrow we will depart early for Therros. I sense danger on the road ahead. I fear someone has betrayed the goddess."*

That night the characters have strange dreams. They see vast fields of crops guarded by a large army and people waiting to be given food. They see the goddess Demeter bound and shedding tears.

When the adventurers awaken they begin their march to Therros.

See the appendix of the adventure for Iona's stats.

A Treacherous Pair

A few hours before the characters reach Therros, they see a small swampy area nearby and a little farther ahead they see two teenagers with what appear to be walking staves on the road approaching in their direction. When they see the party, they wave and run in their direction.

When they near the party, it is clear they are siblings. The tallest is a fair haired boy and he bows slightly and speaks, *"I am Helios and this is my sister Selene,"* he indicates toward his dark haired sibling and continues, *"We have been sent by the temple to escort you on your way"*.

The two siblings are actually *elementalist assassins*. They are both skilled in Earth and Fire (with Earth as their primary element). Their usual tactic is to use *Hands of Stone* to immobilize their victims then use *Blazing Sphere* as their next attack. They will wait until an appropriate time and surprise the party.

See the appendix of the adventure for the twins' stats.

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Assuming the characters defeat the treacherous pair, a few hours after the battle, they encounter a young woman who introduces herself as Irianna, an acolyte of Demeter from the Megara at Therros.

She explains she has been sent to escort them by the head acolyte Zara, who has been warned of their arrival by visions from the goddess. This young woman is actually the evil Shapeshifter Mykale, the consort of the treacherous priestess of Cybele who has taken over the Megara as "head acolyte Zara".

According to the servants of Cybele's nefarious plot, the twin elemental assassins were supposed to eliminate the adventurers before taking Iona to the Megara (where she would have been sacrificed to Cybele). Having learned of the adventurers' victory over Helios and Selene, Zara has decided to send a disguised Mykale to meet them, in order to defuse their suspicions about the situation at the Megara.

Mykale will play the part of Irianna the nervous-but-faithful acolyte, relieved to find Iona and her escort alive and eager to provide them with information:

"Odd things have been happening at the temple since the day of our priestess' death. Strange signs and ominous portents..."

All the acolytes have run away, except Zara, our head acolyte - and me, of course. At night, strange creatures can be heard lurking around the temple - servants of the dark powers who are trying to enter our sacred abode.

Zara has managed to recruit a few men from the nearby villages to stand watch, but they are not real warriors, and only a true priestess of our goddess will be able to deliver us from the evil presence that threatens our place of worship."

This is, of course, complete rubbish. This account of the situation at the Megara serves two purposes: to divert the adventurers' suspicions from Zara and "Irianna" and to explain the presence of disguised cultists of Cybele at the Megara: the "men from the nearby villages" are in fact Degenerate Men.

See the appendix of the adventure for Mykale's stats.

At the Megara

On the approach to the Megara, the characters will notice two of the "local men" mentioned by "Irianna" standing guard outside the sanctuary; they have very unkempt hair and beards, are dressed in rough brown tunics and are armed with gnarled wooden clubs – an appearance that should not seem that unusual for rustic followers of the Earth goddess...

As mentioned above, these men (and the four other "villagers" now staying at the temple) are actually **Degenerate Men** (see *Creature Compendium*, p. 34) devoted to the Dark Mother Cybele and posing as acolytes of Demeter.

One of them addresses the characters in a low, slurred voice, speaking a broken form of Minean:

"We been awaiting arrival of young lady Iona. The Goddess thank for your service. Please enter. Head acolyte there soon. Please follow."

He then leads the characters to the kitchen / dining area then excuses himself.

The chief acolyte, Zara, then enters the room. She is a very attractive woman in her early thirties, with penetrating eyes and an air of authority.

The Megara at Therros

The Megara sits on a cliff so one must come to it on the main path.

The temple itself is a simple design. There is a statue of the goddess Demeter set upon a dais with many steps.

To the right are three rooms. The first is where we acolytes would stay when it is their time to serve at the temple. The middle room is the dining area/kitchen and the last room along the back is the storage room. On the opposite side in the same order are the guest room, the priestess' chamber, and a library.

She smiles to the characters:

"So, Iona, you have arrived. I have troubling news for you. Since the priestess' death there have been incursions by dark powers that defy the gods. Old powers ... Oh, I almost forgot. That is us."

Zara (who is actually a priestess of Cybele) then immediately attacks the young priestess with her Divine Wrath and all six Degenerate Men rush and attacks the party.

After the third round of combat, characters with above-average Wits (13+) will notice that "Irianna" is not being attacked. On the fourth round, the young acolyte (who is actually Mykale, a treacherous Shapeshifter destined to take the place of Iona once she has been sacrificed to Cybele) will begin to transform into a big Cave Bear (see *Creatures Compendium*, p. 12) to attack the characters.

See the appendix of the adventure for Zara's stats.

Rewards

If the characters survive, the goddess will appear and grant favors upon the party.

Demeter appears as a serene, beautiful middle-aged woman with an aura of motherliness around her and speaks, *"Thank you. You have shown that I too have enemies. It is not easy to humble a god."*

Demeter will heal all wounds and even raise those who have fallen in the fight. She will also grant one appropriate Divine Boon, preferably in the form of a single mythic item (see *M&M Companion*, p. 8) to each of the brave adventurers... who are now involved in the Long Game of the Old Gods.

And the game is only beginning...

Adventure created by **Darren Pech**

Edited by **Olivier Legrand**

Hooded Horror illustration by **Emmanuel Roudier**

The Megara of Demeter

Non-Player Characters

Iona

Level 2 Priestess of Demeter

Attributes: Might 9, Skill 9, Luck 16, Wits 14, Will 18, Grace 13.

Combat: Initiative 11, Melee n/a*, Missile n/a*, Basic Defense Class 19*, Hits Total 10.

Magic: Spiritual Aura +5, Mystic Strength 17, Power 11 pts, Divine Prodigies of Demeter.

Saving Rolls: Athletic Prowess +2, Danger Evasion +3, Mystic Fort. +6, Phys. Vigor +5

Personal Charisma: +6 (+8 with reputation)

** Iona's blindness prevents her from taking part in any form of physical combat. To counterbalance this disability, the merciful Demeter has bestowed a special form of protection on her young servant, allowing her to add her Spiritual Aura to her Defense Class, making her strangely difficult to hit with melee or missile attacks.*

Zara

Level 4 Priestess of Cybele

Attributes: Might 10, Skill 12, Luck 19, Wits 16, Will 20, Grace 17.

Combat: Initiative 12, Melee +4, Missile +6, Basic Defense Class 16, Hits Total 14.

Magic: Spiritual Aura +8, Mystic Strength 20, Power 20 pts, Divine Prodigies of Cybele (see *M&M Companion*, p. 30).

Saving Rolls: Athletic Prowess +4, Danger Evasion +6, Mystic Fort. +10, Phys. Vigor +8

Personal Charisma: +11 (+15 with reputation)

Mythic Items: Sickle of Cybele (see below).

Sickle of Cybele: When used against male opponents by a devotee of Cybele with a Will of 13+, this vicious weapon (Enc = 1) allows the attacker to add his Will bonus to his damage rolls (which, in the case of Zara, means a pretty impressive +4 bonus).

Helios and Selene

Level 3 Twin Elementalists (Earth and Fire).

Attributes: Might 10, Skill 13, Luck 16, Wits 18, Will 18, Grace 15.

Combat: Initiative 14, Melee +3, Missile +6, Basic Defense Class 14, Hits Total 12.

Magic: Elemental Mastery +6, Mystic Strength 18, Power 16 pts, primary element: Earth.

Saving Rolls: Athletic Prowess +3, Danger Evasion +6, Mystic Fort. +8, Phys. Vigor +5

Personal Charisma: +7

Mykale

Level 3 Shapeshifter

Attributes: Might 10, Skill 13, Luck 17, Wits 16, Will 15, Grace 16.

Combat: Initiative 13, Melee +4, Missile +6, Basic Defense Class 15, Hits Total 12.

Magic: Metamorphosis; Protean Repertoire +5; Power 15pts (see *M&M Companion*, pp. 24-26).

Saving Rolls: Athletic Prowess +4, Danger Evasion +6, Mystic Fort. +7, Phys. Vigor +5

Personal Charisma: +7

MYTHIC BESTIARY

ALL CREATURES GREAT & SMALL

A Collection of Oversized Opponents & Diminutive Denizens

Geryonid

Taxonomy: Monster

Description: Grotesquely misshapen Giants with three heads and three pairs of arms. As their name implies, they are said to descend from Geryon, a multiple-headed Giant from the Age of Myth. Luckily for adventurers, Geryonids can only be encountered on a few Mysterious Islands of the Great Ocean.

Size: Gigantic

Ferocity: Deadly

Cunning: Average

Mystique: Unearthly

Movement: 120'

Initiative: 17

Melee Attack: +10

Damage: 3d6 (weapon)

Defense Class: 19

Hits Total: 60

Detection / Evasion: +2 / 0

Mystic Fortitude: +10

Special Abilities: Charge into Battle (Initiative 21, Melee +14), Crushing Damage (grapple), Crushing Missiles, Extra Arms (four), Fearsome, Grapple (Might = 24, +4 per extra pair of arm involved), Magic Resistance, Multiple Heads (three heads), Supernatural Vigor, Tough Skin, Trample.

Awards: Glory 1500, Wisdom 60.

Note: Their Multiple Heads and Extra Arms allow Geryonids to attack as many as EIGHT different man-sized opponents in a single round. See the *Creature Compendium* (p. 115) for a full description of the Extra Arms ability.



Well, we DID say "grotesque", didn't we?



A Kerkope – don't be fooled by his cute smile

Kerkope

Taxonomy: Folk

Description: Short-sized humanoids with a bluish skin and a monkey-like face, known for their insatiable curiosity as well as for their penchant for mischief and thievery. These insufferable pests apparently love nothing more than tormenting poor adventurers by throwing rocks at them from behind cover, stealing their stuff and supplies or luring them into the lair of far more dangerous creatures.

Size: Small

Ferocity: Aggressive

Cunning: Crafty

Mystique: Normal

Movement: 60'

Initiative: 20

Melee Attack: +3

Missile Attack: +4

Damage: 1d3 (weapon)

Defense Class: 14

Hits Total: 4

Detection / Evasion: +10 / +12

Mystic Fortitude: 0

Special Abilities: Lightning Fast, Missile Weapons (thrown rocks, 1d3, 30'), Sharp Senses, Stealthy (22), Uncanny Agility.

Awards: Glory 12.



*Yes, Laestrygonians are ugly.
No, it's not a good idea to tell them.*

Laestrygonian

Taxonomy: Monster

Description: Huge (8' to 10' tall) humanoids often mistaken for Giants. They can be found on various Mysterious Islands of the Middle Sea and often live in communities including 2-12 adult individuals. They are very fond of human flesh – but despite what the tall tales of some Mariners would have you believe, they are not big enough to actually destroy passing ships by hurling huge rocks at them (unlike true Giants and Gigantic Cyclops).

Size: Large

Ferocity: Dangerous

Cunning: Average

Mystique: Normal

Movement: 90'

Initiative: 12

Melee Attack: +6

Damage: 2d6 (huge club)

Defense Class: 14

Hits Total: 30

Detection / Evasion: 0

Mystic Fortitude: +4

Special Abilities: Charge into Battle (Initiative 16, Melee +10), Crushing Damage (grapple), Grapple (Might = 20), Magic Resistance, Supernatural Vigor, Tough Skin.

Awards: Glory 240, Wisdom 30.

Additional Lore: According to some theories, they might be degenerate Titanians.

Spartos

Taxonomy: Animate

Description: Magically animated, rock-hard statues of child-sized warriors, fully equipped with helmets, shields and spears. They stand eternal guard over the treasures and lairs of long-dead Autarchs. They are always encountered in even numbers and always fight in pairs against man-sized opponents.

Size: Small

Ferocity: Deadly

Cunning: Average

Mystique: Weird

Movement: 45'

Initiative: 17

Melee Attack: +6

Damage: 1d3 (weapons)

Defense Class: 19 (with shield)

Hits Total: 10

Detection / Evasion: 0 / +4

Mystic Fortitude: +6

Special Abilities: Charge into Battle (Initiative 18, Melee +7), Lightning Fast, Magic Resistance, Mindless, Natural Armor, Supernatural Vigor.

Note: They know how to use the *Shield Wall* maneuver.

Awards: Glory 18, Wisdom 40.

Additional Lore: The name of the Spartoī, which literally means “sown men” clearly suggests that they are the products of some sort of elemental earth ritual. This name has also led some scholars to believe that the Spartoī were created by sowing the teeth of a Hydra – but this is a foolish notion, since, as noted in the *Creature Compendium* (p. 62), all true sages know that doing such a thing actually creates Skeleton warriors.



- Say I'm short and I'll impale your kneecap.



Sylph

Taxonomy: Spirit

Description: Tiny, winged spirits of Air, noted for their curiosity, playfulness and love of music. While they appear to be fully solid, they are intangible and cannot be harmed by mundane means.

Size: Tiny

Ferocity: Peaceful

Cunning: Clever

Mystique: Eldritch

Movement: 40' (120' flying)

Initiative: 19

Melee Attack: n/a

Damage: n/a

Defense Class: 16

Hits Total: 1

Detection / Evasion: +8 / +14

Mystic Fortitude: +8

Special Abilities: Insubstantial, Lightning Fast, Magic Resistance, Sixth Sense, Stealthy (26), Uncanny Agility, Winged.

Awards: None. Killing such a harmless, cute spirit brings neither Glory nor Wisdom of any kind.

Additional Lore: As lovers of music, Sylphs are extremely well-disposed toward Lyrists and always behave in a friendly manner with them – except if you try to trick them. They can easily be attracted by the sound of a Lyrist's harp or orphic voice.



Willow People

Taxonomy: Spirit

Description: Mischievous, crafty nature spirits who look like very thin and nimble children, with pointed ears and greenish skins. They dwell in willow shrubs and often love to play cruel tricks on unsuspecting travelers. Like many Spirits, Willow People tend to be solitary creatures; they get on reasonably well with Heleads and Naiads but are usually very suspicious of other beings.

Size: Small

Ferocity: Aggressive

Cunning: Crafty

Mystique: Eldritch

Movement: 60'

Initiative: 20

Melee Attack: +3

Damage: 1d3 (claws)

Defense Class: 16

Hits Total: 6

Detection / Evasion: +10 / +12

Mystic Fortitude: +8

Special Abilities: Amphibian, Camouflage (in willows and similar vegetation, 24), Entangle (animated willow branches, range 5', Might 12, can only be used within 5' of a willow shrub), Lightning Fast, Magic Resistance, Sharp Senses, Stealthy (22), Supernatural Vigor, Uncanny Agility.

Awards: Glory 19, Wisdom 60.

Additional Lore: According to some scholars and Nymphs, Willow People are the hybrid children of Naiads / Heleads and Sylvans – but it should be noted that neither kin has denied or confirmed this hypothesis (which, incidentally, would explain many of the creature's special abilities).

GRIFFIN ARCHIVES BONUS FEATURE

PERILOUS SHORES

An Updated and Expanded Version of an Obsolete Revision, by **R. Dan Henry**



Once more, the stalwart ship of our brave adventurers approaches the mysterious shores of an unknown island...

2013 Foreword

In the very beginning, *Mazes & Minotaurs* had tables to use for the random generation of mysterious islands. These tables were a great boon, and hardly a Maze Master exists who has not used them at some point. Some have relied on them through entire campaigns as their main source of locations. While later supplements added additional random generators, the mysterious island tables themselves were never officially updated to reflect the additional material, specifically new monsters, that had been accumulated over multiple expansions to the game. A little over a year before *Revised Mazes & Minotaurs* started coming out, a *Griffin* article covered this gap in the advancement of the game. It was well received and very popular with Maze Masters who regularly ran random odysseys. The biggest controversies were over Table D2d, which generated a lot of arguments about the relative rarity of various races of beastmen.

Unfortunately, when the *RM&M Maze Masters Guide* came out, the original charts were used, taking the whole mysterious island generation process back to year one and leaving out many monsters that were now part of the game's core, having been incorporated into the *Creature Compendium*.

This article is an update to that old article, which includes as well a number of creatures taken from the pages of *Minotaur* magazine (Issues 1 through 10). In order to facilitate the look-up of those creatures not to be found in the *Creature Compendium*, those taken from the *Minotaur* have the issue number listed after the name of the creature (e.g., "Genie #8" means that the Genie is taken from the 8th issue of the *Minotaur*).

An "MMG" after a creature name indicates it is a sample creature from chapter II, "Creatures", of the *Maze Masters Guide*. Note that many creatures from the *Minotaur* are deliberately left out because they are characteristic of specific locations in Mythika and it would dilute the special flavor of those settings to scatter all their creatures across the islands.

How to Use the Tables: The tables are labeled with a letter and a number. If this number is 1, you always roll on that table. Other tables with the same letter are rolled on only if you are instructed to do so. Some of the tables have subtables with a further lowercase letter affixed after the number.

Editor's Note: These tables only use d6s and d20s, unlike the tables of the original article (which also used d10s and even – Zeus forbid! – a d30).

A: Surroundings

A1: What is the Coast Like? (1d20)

1-4 = Ringed by reefs†

5-6 = Ringed by smooth, sandy beaches

7-8 = Ringed by high cliffs

9-12 = A variety of coastline exists

13-14 = Ringed by reefs*†

15-16 = Ringed by smooth, sandy beaches*

17-18 = Ringed by high cliffs*

19-20 = A variety of coastline exists*

* = There are coastal lurkers, roll 1d6, if it is 1-3 roll again on Table A2, if 4-6 on Table A3

† = Reefs require the captain of a ship to make a Danger Evasion roll to avoid taking 1d6 damage to his ship. Target number is 15 normally, but rises to 20 if the craft approaches the island in a storm (this is independent of the risks from the storm itself).

A2a: Types of Ships (1d20)

1-11 = Minean

12-17 = Other human

18-19 = Non-human

20 = Atlantean War Galley!

The exact type of human or non-human crew is left to the Maze Master, since appropriate types vary in commonness depending on the island's location.

Fishermen and Merchant results are generally friendly, if wary. If a "merchant ship" turns out to be an Atlantean War Galley, it will be on a trade/negotiation mission and relatively peaceful. If "fishermen" turn out to be an Atlantean War Galley, the crew have some undersea business and will generally be non-aggressive unless interfered with.

Atlantean war and pirate ships, war ships of any openly hostile powers, and pirate ships will normally be hostile and will attack if they seem to have the advantage.

A2: Who Lurks Near the Coast? (1d20)

1 = Delphins #1

2 = Dolphins

3 = Hogrebos #1

4 = Ichtyocentaurs

5 = Ichtyosatyrs #10

6 = Lyrians #10

7 = Merions #1

8 = Mermaids

9 = Nereids (1 in 6 chance it is Oceanids #1)

10 = Sons of Dagon

11 = Tritons (1 in 6 chance leader Triton class #1)

12 = Tritonides #10

13-14 = Ship(s), Fishermen*

15-16 = Ship(s), Merchant*

17-18 = Ship(s), Pirate*

19-20 = Ship(s), War*

* = Roll on Table A2a

A3: What Lurks Near the Coast? (1d20)

1 = Amphydra #10

2-3 = Attack Kelp

4 = Cetoceros #10

5 = Hexapod #1

6 = Langustos #1

7 = Large Octopus #1

8 = Morid #1

9 = Sea Gorgon #1

10 = Sea Horror

11 = Sea Horses

12 = Sea Hydra

13 = Sea Lions

14 = Sea Serpent

15-16 = Sharks, Common #10

17 = Shark, Giant #10

18 = Siluros #10

19-20 = Telchines

B: Human Presence



- No! Wait! Come back! There IS human presence on this island!

B1: Are There Human Inhabitants? (1d20)

1-9 = None

10 = Hermit / Sage (roll on Table B2)

11-13 = Small villages*

14-17 = Town with some surrounding villages*

18-20 = Powerful city ruling an island kingdom*†

* = roll on Table B3

† = optionally, use the random city-state generator in addition to or in place of B3

B2: Types of Sages / Hermits (1d6)

1 = Minor character, typically a sage or holy man

2 = Retired warrior (Noble, Spearman, Centaur, etc.)

3 = Retired specialist (Thief, Hunter, etc.)

4-5 = Magician (Sorceress, Priest, Lyrist, etc.)

6 = Chironian Centaur

A hermit may be an exile, a self-exile, or simply seeking solace or enlightenment. Some magicians live as hermits simply because they prefer to study undisturbed. Centaurs are, of course, not human, but they do exist as hermits, so they are included here. Nymphs never adopt the hermit lifestyle. Hermits often have some unusual knowledge.

B3: Current Human Affairs (3d6)

3 = Unusual technology or a new invention is present

4 = A public celebration is occurring or upcoming (birth, wedding, etc.)

5 = At war with another island nearby

6 = Sage or magician is protected by the islanders

7 = Pirates regularly plunder this island

8 = The inhabitants live in harmony

9 = The inhabitants are a colony from another land

10 = Islanders are regularly attacked by a cruel monster

11 = The island hides a gruesome secret or terrible curse. Is a god involved?

12 = Peculiar population (e.g., no children, no adults, no men, no women, etc.) Why?

13 = Under sway of an evil god/witch/goddess

14 = They have never seen outsiders!

15 = Island is the property of a minor or major god

16 = There are athletic Games currently underway

17 = There is an artistic competition (theater, music, etc.) underway

18 = The island is expecting or hosting visiting dignitaries

C: Notable Features



- Greetings, strangers! Wanna see our unusual features?

C1: Notable Features (1d20)

1-12 = Construction; roll on Table C2

13-19 = Natural Features: roll on Table C3

20 = Roll again twice (yes, even if you rolled this already)

C2: Construction (3d6)

3 = Crashed spaceship/airship

4 = Carved mountain

5 = Necropolis ("city of the dead", i.e. a big graveyard)

6 = Chasm and rope bridge

7 = Statues

8 = Ancient mine(s)

9 = Old road

10 = Ruined fortress

11 = Secretive tower

12 = Remote temple

13 = Territorial markers (skull, etc.)

14 = Witches' cave/glen

15 = Unguarded (but probably hidden and maybe protected by traps) treasure

16 = Labyrinth*

17 = An entire lost/abandoned/ruined city

18 = Enchanted building†

* = Roll 1d6. If the result is 5-6, there is a Minotaur. Roll on table D3i.

† = Left over from the Age of Magic, if not an even earlier time, such a building is highly magical, typically having a construction that would normally be impossible and/or interior features that deny normal expectations.

C3: Natural Features (3d6)

3 = Strange climate (e.g., cold island in warm sea)

4 = Unusual plant life (giant trees, tiny trees, huge flowers, etc.)

5 = Abundant normal resource (shells, berries, etc.)

6 = Entrance to the Underworld

7 = Waterfalls

8 = Forests of nymphs

9 = Abundant beasts (roll on C3a for type)

10 = Large caves

11 = Volcano (roll 1d6: 1-3 = Active, 4-6 = Dormant)

12 = Second island just off the coast

13 = Natural fountain or hot springs

14 = Perilous swamp

15 = Sacred animals*

16 = Enchanted spring/fountain/pool

17 = Maelstrom off the coast

18 = Exotic resource (e.g., Golden Apple tree)

* = Sacred animals are normal animals of high quality; harming them will anger the god they belong to. There should be some clue or warning of their protected status. Roll on table C3a below.

C3a: Animal Types (1d20)

1 = Bears, Brown

2 = Bears, Cave

3-4 = Boars

5-6 = Bulls (Cattle, or Aurochs)

7 = Cats

8 = Eagles

9-10 = Foxes

11-12 = Horses

13 = Horses, Magical

14 = Lions

15-16 = Rams (Sheep)

17-18 = Stags (Deer)

19-20 = Wolves

D: Creatures



Local denizens may sometimes react quite strongly to impromptu explorations of their private shores and caverns

D1: Unusual Creatures (1d6)

Roll on this table 1d3 times.

- 1-2 = Folk, roll on Table D2
- 3-4 = Monster, roll on Table D3
- 5 = Spirit, roll on Table D4
- 6 = Animate, roll on Table D5

D2: Folks (1d6)

- 1-2 = Roll on Table D2a
- 3-4 = Roll on Table D2b
- 5-6 = Roll on Table D2c

D2a: Folks (I) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Arimaspians
- 3-4 = Atlantean Nobles
- 5-9 = Beastmen (roll on Table D2d)
- 10-11 = Bee-Folk
- 12 = Carapax
- 13-16 = Centaurs (roll on Table D2e)
- 17-18 = Dactyl #8
- 19-20 = Derros (1 in 6 chance of Derros Warcraft)

D2b: Folks (II) (1d20)

- 1 = Dichotomians
- 2-3 = Draconians #4
- 4 = Ghostlings
- 5-6 = Grotesks
- 7-10 = Lesser Cyclops (1 in 3 chance of Flamoids)
- 11-12 = Lizardians
- 13-14 = Morlocks
- 15-16 = Muscusii & Rhabdosians
- 17-18 = Myrmidons
- 19-20 = Ogres

D2c: Folks (III) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Orkoï
- 3-7 = Satyrs (2 chances in 20 of Calibans instead)
- 8-9 = Scorpion Folk
- 10 = Selenites
- 11 = Silent Lurkers
- 12 = Stygian Lords
- 13-15 = Sylvans
- 16-17 = Titanians
- 18-20 = Wildmen

D2d: Beastman Types (1d20)

- 1-2 = Acteons
- 3-4 = Apemen
- 5 = Bearmen
- 6-7 = Boarmen
- 8 = Cynocephals
- 9 = Equinians
- 10 = Hyenakin
- 11 = Leonids
- 12-13 = Lycans
- 14 = Orycters
- 15 = Ratlings
- 16 = Serpent Men*
- 17 = Swampfolk (or Anubians if island is arid)
- 18-19 = Tragos
- 20 = Turtlemen #6

** = 50% of the time, if there are Serpent Men on an island, the island will have a passage to the Underworld leading to the Serpent Men's home area.*

D2e: Centaur Types (1d20)

- 1-6 = Normal Centaurs
- 7-8 = Normal Centaurs + Centaur class NPC leader(s)
- 9-10 = Normal Centaurs plus Sagittarians
- 11-12 = Bucentaurs
- 13-14 = Brutaurs
- 15-16 = Onocentaurs
- 17-18 = Sataurs
- 19-20 = Sylvan Centaurs #3

D3: Monsters (1d6)

- 1 = Roll on Table D3a
- 2 = Roll on Table D3b
- 3 = Roll on Table D3c
- 4 = Roll on Table D3d
- 5 = Roll on Table D3e
- 6 = Roll on Table D3f

D3a: Monsters (I) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Aberrant Beast
- 3-4 = Argusoids
- 5-6 = Asheebea
- 7-8 = Bapharon
- 9-10 = Basilisk
- 11-12 = Beast of Abaset #9
- 13-14 = Bicephalous Wolves
- 15-16 = Birds of Ares
- 17-18 = Birds of Hera #9
- 19-20 = Boar, Juggernaut

D3b: Monsters (II) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Catoblepas
- 3-4 = Cerberions #2
- 5-6 = Cerberus
- 7-8 = Chimera
- 9-10 = Cockatrice
- 11-12 = Crawling Aberration
- 13-14 = Crawling Gorgon MMG
- 15-16 = Daughters of Arachne
- 17-18 = Demon Dogs #2
- 19-20 = Dragon

D3c: Monsters (III) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Eagle, Olympian
- 3-4 = Floating Eye
- 5-6 = Giant (Roll 1d20: 1-13 = Common Giant, 14-17 = Two-Headed Giant, 18-19 = Mountain Giant, 20 = Other Giant-kin (such as a Geryonid, Laestrygonians etc. – see this issue's *Mythic Bestiary*))
- 7-8 = Gigantic Cyclops (1 in 6 chance it is a Horned Cyclops)
- 9-10 = Gigantosaur
- 11-12 = Giant Animals, roll again on Table D3g
- 13-14 = Gorgon
- 15-16 = Griffins (1 in 6 chance it is Gryphons)
- 17-18 = Harpies
- 19-20 = Harpies, Classic #3

D3d: Monsters (IV) (1d20)

1-2 = Hellephaut
3-4 = Hippodrac
5-6 = Hippogriffs
7-8 = Hooded Horrors
9-10 = Hydra (roll 1d6: 1-4 = Classic Hydra, 5 = Singing Hydra #4, 6 = Pyrohydra)
11-12 = Lamia (2 times in 20 there will be a Son of Cecrops on the island as well)
13-14 = Leucrota
15-16 = Magical Animals, roll again on Table D3h
17-18 = Manticore
19-20 = Minotaur, roll again on Table D3i

D3g: Giant Animal Type (1d20)

1-2 = Giant Boar
3-4 = Giant Bull
5-6 = Giant Crab
7-8 = Giant Eagles
9-10 = Giant Lion
11-12 = Giant Ram
13-14 = Giant Rat
15-16 = Giant Scorpions
17-18 = Giant Snake
19-20 = Giant Spiders (roll 1d6: 1-4: Cave Spiders, 5-6: Gigantic Spiders)

D3e: Monsters (V) (1d20)

1-2 = Moon Spawn
3-4 = Orthos Hound #2
5-6 = Pegasus
7-8 = Perytons
9-10 = Phoenix
11-12 = Pterodactyls
13-14 = Reptosaurus #9
15-16 = Roc
17-18 = Serpentine Hydra #3
19-20 = Seven-Mawed Thing

D3h: Magical Animal Type (1d6)

1 = Magical Boar (1 in 6 is also Giant)
2 = Magical Bull
3 = Magical Fox
4 = Magical Lion
5 = Magical Ram
6 = Magical Stag

D3f: Monsters (VI) (1d20)

1-2 = Sirens
3-4 = Sphinx
5-6 = Stirges
7-8 = Swamp Horror
9-10 = Tarasque
11-12 = Teumesian Fox #2
13-14 = Tragostomos
15-16 = Tricephalous Vulture
17-18 = Tyrannosaurus
19-20 = Unicorn * (roll 1d20: 1-14 = Common Unicorn, 15-18 = Flying Unicorn, 19-20 = Malacorn)

D3i: Minotaur Type (1d20)

1-7 = Minotaur
8 = Albinotaur
9 = Bronze Minotaur
10 = Dancing Minotaur
11 = Golden Minotaur
12 = Gorgotaur
13 = Impostours (reroll if uninhabited island)
14 = Megataur
15 = Psychotaur
16 = Red Minotaur
17 = Rhinotaur
18 = Silver Minotaur
19 = Stygian Minotaur #7
20 = Twinotaur

** While they are officially classified as Beasts, the common and flying unicorn are sufficiently exotic and magical to be placed in with monsters, as far as these tables are concerned.*

D4: Spirits (1d20)

- 1 = Alseid (add a ruin if necessary)
- 2 = Cacodemon
- 3 = Charonts
- 4 = Curetes
- 5 = Empusas
- 6 = Eolians
- 7 = Genie #8
- 8 = Ghosts
- 9 = God-Shadow
- 10 = Green Man #6
- 11 = Hags
- 12 = Hamadryad #3
- 13 = Lares (reroll if no agriculture)
- 14 = Lemures
- 15 = Oracle Owls
- 16 = Pyroid #8
- 17 = Salamanders
- 18 = Shadows
- 19 = Stichios
- 20 = Undine #8

D5: Animates (1d6)

- 1-2 = Roll on Table D5a
- 3-4 = Roll on Table D5b
- 5-6 = Roll on Table D5c

D5a: Animates (I) (1d6)

- 1 = Automaton
- 2 = Iron Warriors
- 3 = Mechanical Archers
- 4 = Singing Keledones
- 5 = Skeletons
- 6 = Vines of Tantalus



D5b: Animates (II) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Blood Tree #5
- 3-4 = Bronze Bird
- 5-6 = Bronze Bull
- 7-8 = Bronze Colossus
- 9-10 = Bronze Horses
- 11-12 = Crushing Woman #6
- 13-14 = Golden Ram
- 15-16 = Living Caryatids (add abandoned temple if necessary)
- 17-18 = Midas Men
- 19-20 = Minotaur

D5c: Animates (III) (1d20)

- 1-2 = Mummies
- 3-4 = Rocky Python
- 5-6 = Silver Beetles
- 7-8 = Skeletaur #7
- 9-10 = Stone Titan
- 11-12 = Stygian Hounds
- 13-14 = Titanic Statue
- 15-16 = Tragic Floating Head
- 17-18 = Triffid #9
- 19-20 = Wood Titan

Minotaur Play Nymph n°1 1



The Nymph and the Faun, by Carl Josef Agricola (1804)