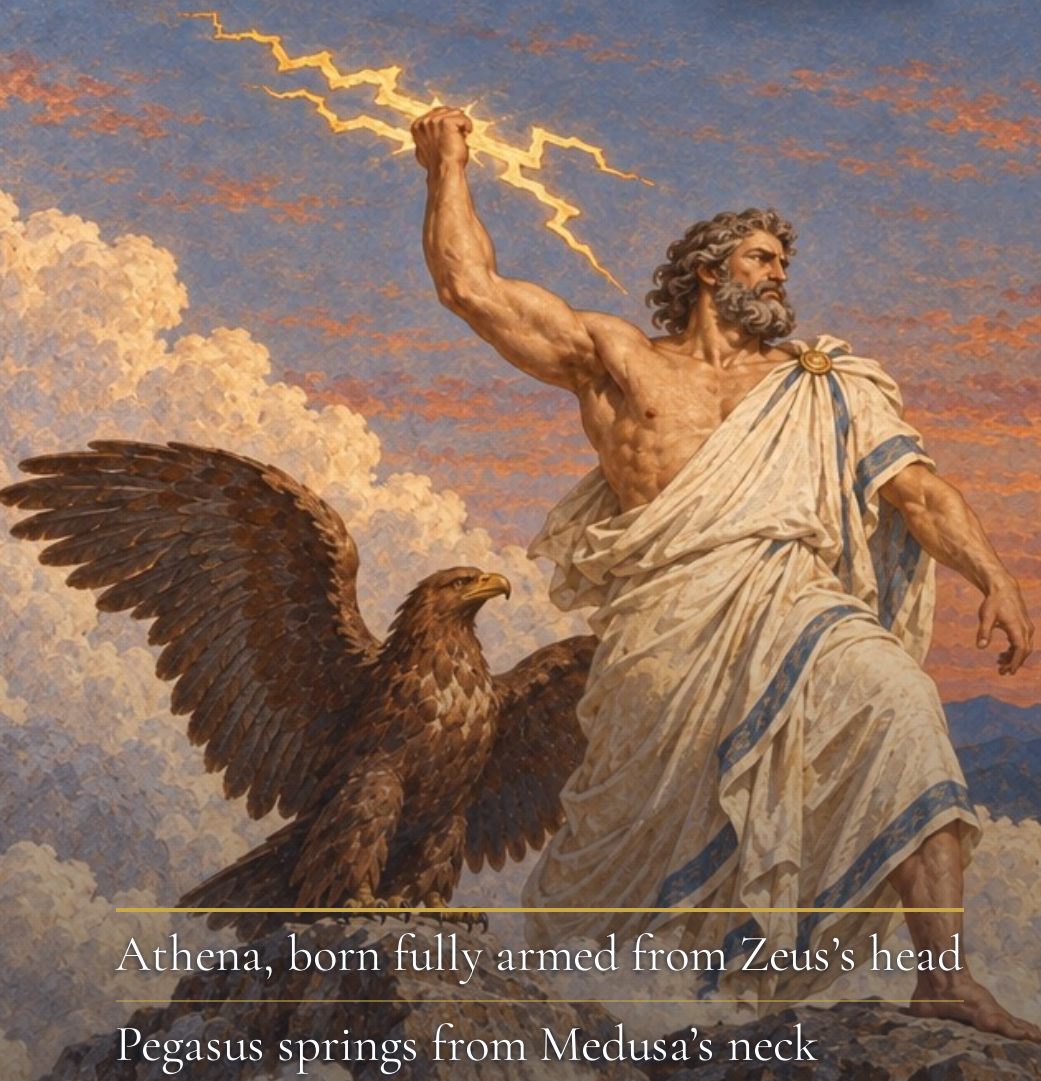
A2A WORLD · THE FIELD GUIDES

NO. 08

# Greece

## Ελληνική μυθολογία

**ΕΛΛΑΣ**



Athena, born fully armed from Zeus's head

Pegasus springs from Medusa's neck

Heracles and the many-headed Hydra

Orpheus looks back at the threshold

20 FIGURES TO FIND IN THE LAND

GREECE, THE AEGEAN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

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*Athena's owl on an olive branch*

INTRODUCTION

# Greek Mythology Field Guide

Names, attributes, and narratives from Greek creation stories, the Olympian gods, the monsters and heroes, and the stranger tales — organised so each entry can be used as a search target in deliberate pareidolia practice.

Many constellations used around the world today carry the names the Greeks gave them: Orion, Perseus, Andromeda, Cassiopeia. The Greeks set their stories in the sky; this guide invites learners to find them on the Earth.

*The Greeks set their stories in the sky; this guide invites learners to find them on the Earth.*

CONTEXT

# How Greece Held Its Myths

Greek myth was told by poets, painted on vases and enacted in tragedy across hundreds of independent city-states, each with its own local heroes and versions. There was no single scripture. The stories were later adopted and renamed by Rome, and have shaped Western art and language ever since.

*There was no single scripture.*

SOURCES

Homer's Iliad and Odyssey (c. 8th century BCE). Hesiod's Theogony and Works and Days. The Homeric Hymns. The Athenian tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The Library attributed to Apollodorus (1st–2nd century CE) gathers many myths; Ovid's Metamorphoses gives Roman tellings.



*Greek myth was told by poets, painted on vases and enacted in tragedy*

A GREEK PRECEDENT

Greeks placed their heroes and creatures among the stars — catasterism — so that the night sky became a map of story. Aratus's poem Phaenomena (3rd century BCE) describes the constellations figure by figure. Reading figures in nature, and telling the story at the figure, is old Greek practice.



*Athena, goddess of wisdom and craft, born fully armed from the head of Zeus*

THE FEATURE

# Athena

## Ἀθηνᾶ

*Goddess of wisdom and craft; owl, olive, aegis.*

Born fully armed from the head of Zeus.

LOOK FOR IN THE LAND

*An owl; a helmeted head.*

## Pegasus Πήγασος

*Winged horse.*

Springs from Medusa's neck when Perseus beheads her; tamed by Bellerophon with a golden bridle; becomes a constellation.

LOOK FOR IN THE LAND

*A horse with outspread wings.*



*A horse with outspread wings*

THE TWO BEST FIRST TARGETS

1. Pegasus — the winged horse; spreading wing-shaped headlands suit it. 2. The Hydra — the many-headed serpent; branching deltas and river systems suit it. Strong alternates: Medusa's head, the Minotaur, and Heracles with his club.



I · CREATION & FOUNDING

# I From Chaos to Olympus

The first powers, the Titans and the gift of fire.

*Above: From Chaos comes Gaia, the Earth, who bears Ouranos, the starry Sky*

## Chaos, Gaia and Ouranos

Χάος · Γαῖα · Οὐρανός

*The first powers.*

From Chaos comes Gaia, the Earth, who bears Ouranos, the starry Sky, and with him the Titans. Ouranos imprisons his children within her until Kronos overthrows him.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A reclining earth-mother figure beneath an arching sky.*

## Kronos and the Titanomachy

Κρόνος

*The war of gods and Titans.*

Kronos swallows his children; Rhea hides the infant Zeus on Crete and gives Kronos a stone wrapped in cloth. Zeus grows, frees his siblings and defeats the Titans in a ten-year war.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A swaddled stone; a giant swallowing.*

## Atlas

Ἄτλας

*Titan who holds up the sky.*

Punished after the Titanomachy, he stands at the western edge of the world bearing the heavens; the Atlas Mountains carry his name.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A figure bearing a sphere on his shoulders.*



*Chained to a rock in the Caucasus, an eagle above*

## Prometheus

Προμηθεύς

*Titan who gave fire to humanity.*

He steals fire in a fennel stalk and is chained to a rock in the Caucasus, where an eagle eats his liver each day until Heracles frees him.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A figure bound to a rock; an eagle above.*

## Deucalion and Pyrrha

Δευκαλίων · Πύρρα

*Survivors of the flood.*

After Zeus floods the world, they land on Mount Parnassus and throw stones over their shoulders; the stones become people.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *Two figures on a mountain; scattered stones.*



II · GODS & GODDESSES

# II The Olympians

Twelve great gods, each with signature attributes.

*Above: Zeus with thunderbolt and eagle, Poseidon's trident, Athena's owl, Demeter's sheaf, Artemis's bow and deer, Apollo's lyre*

## Zeus

Ζεύς

*King of the gods; thunderbolt and eagle.*

Rules from Mount Olympus; takes many forms — a bull, a swan, a shower of gold — in his pursuits.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *An eagle; a figure hurling a bolt; a bull swimming.*



*A trident; horses rising from waves*

## Poseidon

Ποσειδῶν

*God of the sea and earthquakes; trident and horses.*

Contests Athena for Athens: he strikes the Acropolis and a salt spring appears; she offers the olive tree and wins.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A trident; horses rising from waves.*

## Demeter and Persephone

Δημήτηρ · Περσεφόνη

*Grain goddess and her daughter.*

Hades carries Persephone to the underworld; Demeter's grief brings winter. Having eaten pomegranate seeds, Persephone must return below for part of every year.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A woman holding a sheaf; a pomegranate.*

## Artemis and Apollo

Ἄρτεμις · Ἀπόλλων

*Twin archers; moon and sun, hunt and music.*

Born on the island of Delos, which in one telling floated until it was anchored for their birth.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A huntress with a bow and deer; a lyre.*



III · CREATURES & MONSTERS

# III Beasts of the Heroic Age

The best-known creature silhouettes in Western art.

*Above: For each head Heracles cuts off, two grow back, until his nephew Iolaus sears the stumps with fire*

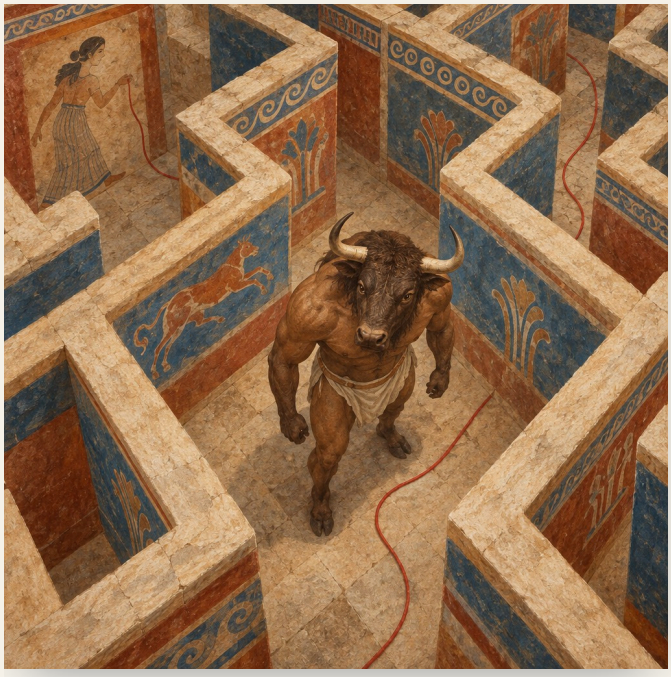
## The Lernaean Hydra

Ὕδρα

*Many-headed water serpent.*

For each head Heracles cuts off, two grow back, until his nephew Iolaus sears the stumps with fire.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A serpent with many branching heads — deltas and estuaries.*



*The Labyrinth of Crete, Ariadne's thread running through it*

## The Minotaur

Μινώταυρος

*Bull-headed man in the Labyrinth of Crete.*

Theseus slays it and finds his way out with Ariadne's thread.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A bull-headed figure; a maze.*



*A face ringed with serpents*

## Medusa

Μέδουσα

*Gorgon with snakes for hair.*

Her gaze turns people to stone. Perseus beheads her using a polished shield as a mirror.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A face ringed with serpents.*

## Cerberus

Κέρβερος

*Three-headed hound of the underworld.*

Guards the gates of Hades; captured by Heracles as his final labour.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A dog with three heads.*



IV · HEROES AND ODD TALES

# IV Stranger Narratives

Journeys, transformations and the price of pride.

*Above: On wings of feathers and wax, Icarus flies too near the sun and falls into the sea*

## Odysseus and Polyphemus

Ὀδυσσεύς

*From the Odyssey.*

Trapped in the Cyclops' cave, Odysseus says his name is 'Nobody', blinds the giant and escapes clinging beneath his sheep.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A one-eyed giant; a ship leaving a coast.*

## Icarus

Ἴκαρος

*The boy who flew too high.*

Escaping Crete on wings of feathers and wax made by his father Daedalus, he flies too near the sun and falls into the sea.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A winged figure falling toward water.*

## Arachne

Ἀράχνη

*The weaver who challenged Athena.*

Her flawless tapestry mocks the gods; Athena turns her into a spider, weaving for ever.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A spider and web.*



*At the threshold he turns, and loses her*

## Orpheus and Eurydice

Ὀρφεύς

*The musician who went to the underworld.*

His song wins Eurydice back from Hades on one condition — not to look back. At the threshold he turns, and loses her.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A figure with a lyre looking back.*

## Jason and the Golden Fleece

Ἰάσων

*The voyage of the Argo.*

With the Argonauts he sails to Colchis, yokes fire-breathing bulls and, with Medea's help, takes the fleece guarded by a sleepless dragon.

> LOOK FOR IN THE LAND
> *A ram's fleece hanging from a tree; a long ship.*

A NOTE ON RESPECT

*Greek names are given in common English forms with the Greek alongside. Versions vary between poets and cities; note which source a telling follows.*

The plates in this issue are interpretive illustrations, not historical artefacts.




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