

THE PHOENICIANS

A SUPPLEMENT FOR MYTHIC GREECE: AGE OF HEROES
FOR USE WITH MIDDLE-EARTH ROLEPLAYING (MERP)



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INTRODUCTION

The following provides general culture descriptions of Phoenicians during the Age of Heroes in Mythic Greece. The player character creation rules outlined in *Mythic Greece* and subsequent Guild Companion articles were used to develop this supplement.

The information is intended to serve as a guideline for equipping and developing both player characters and non-player characters. The Outfitting, Lesser Heroes' Options and Hobbies sections have been generated to enhance the process by which the living peoples of Mythic Greece are translated into a game system. The descriptions herein correspond to the generalities described or found in the Greek myths or historical works. However, individual heroes may stray from the norms of their culture. A GM may allow a hero to possess a weapon typically not favored by his or her culture or to learn a language usually of little interest. How much deviation from the norms will be allowed is up to the GM. When a hero does not follow the norms, the GM needs to include plausible reasons for these differences in the character's personal history and background. Remember that adventuring heroes will come into contact with peoples and cultures unknown to them. Thus, heroes may pick up different languages or skills. For example, Heracles learned sewing, weaving and cooking skills while serving Queen Omphale of Lydia, which are rather odd skills for an Achaean male to learn.

In the myths, the Phoenicians of Carthage are contemporary with the Trojans and Minoans. Aeneas, a hero of the Trojan War, fled the sack of Troy to Carthage seeking refuge with the famous Queen Dido. This is fine as myths go, but historically Carthage was not founded until seven hundred years after the sack of Troy. GMs should feel free to omit them if they consider them unfitting for their version of Mythic Greece.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Phoenicians originated on the coast of what is today Lebanon. They were considered to be the greatest seafaring people of the ancient world, having established trading settlements as far away as Spain and the Ivory Coast of Africa. They were great explorers. Some historian claimed they sailed all the way to the Americas some two thousand years before Christopher Columbus. Wherever they went they traded and swapped goods with Egyptians, Assyrians, Achaeans, and wild Spanish and African tribesmen. The entire Mediterranean world and beyond was their bazaar. Their highly prized cedar lumber and royal purple dye made from murex were hot commodities. They functioned as the trading middlemen of the ancient world. Eventually some of their trading posts developed and grew into powerful kingdoms, including Carthage and Tyre. And finally they hold the claim as inventors of the alphabet and their trading empire helped to spread its use throughout the Mediterranean and beyond.

I	Y	≡	△	1	4	✱
Z ZAYIN WEAPON	W WAW HOOK	H HE UNKNOWN	D DALETH DOOR	G GIMEL THROW-STICK	B BETH HOUSE	STOP ALEPH OX
γ	𐤎	𐤌	𐤋	𐤊	⊕	𐤄
N NUN FISH	M MEM WATER	L LAMEDH OX-GOAD	K KAPH PALM OF HAND	Y YODH HAND	T TETH UNKNOWN	H HETH FENCE
X	W	4	φ	𐤓	𐤑	𐤕
T TAW MARK	SH SHIN TOOTH	R RESH HEAD	Q QOPH MONKEY	S SADHE FISHHOOK	P PEH MOUTH	MUTE AYIN EYE
						S SAMEKH SUPPORT

The Phoenician Alphabet

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT IN MIDDLE-EARTH

While this supplement is designed for use in a Mythic Greece campaign using MERP rules, it could easily be adapted for use in games set in Middle-earth. Depending on your needs, the Phoenicians could be analagous to the Umbareans, the Northern Haradrim, or possibly even a trading culture on the Sea of Rhun. After assigning appropriate replacement languages, and changing relevant names, The Phoenicians could be an excellent quick filler for those groups who travel extensively outside of the Northwest of Middle-earth. They could even possibly be the source culture for the ubiquitous “dark outlander” who seems to find a way into nearly every party. With a little quick linguistic research, your outlander could wow local Hobbit hayseeds with strange phonemes and mysterious syllables.



CHARACTERISTICS

Build: Phoenicians tend to be somewhat stocky. They are of average height.



Coloring: Phoenicians have tan to dark complexions with dark hair and dark color eyes although blonde is not unheard of. Those of Carthage possess dark skin and kinkier hair than their eastern brethren in Phoenicia and Cyprus due to intermarriages with the local Libyan population.

Lifespan: Varies; most are human normal.

Endurance and Resistance: Phoenicians are unusually hardy seafarers; Phoenicians do not become sea sick.

Special Abilities: Due to their celebrated skill in seafaring they receive +10 in all boat maneuvering and due to their innate craftiness at trading they receive +10 for appraisal skill.

CULTURE

Lifestyle: Phoenicians are a seafaring mercantile society with a strong independent streak. Not having a centralized political nation, Phoenicians are a collection of small independent mercantile city-states with trading posts around the Mediterranean. Each city competes with others in business ventures and commercial trading opportunities.

Each city-state has a monarch who also has some priestly powers. The monarch generally works with a council of elders, which is made up of a group of mercantile aristocrats. The council appoints *suffettes*, who are entrusted to administer the kingdom's daily affairs. The common folk are considered 'citizens' of the city-state and as such have some say in the ruling of the city. They also have a sophisticated code of law and an extensive court system to handle trading disputes as well as criminal issues.

All Phoenician cities are protected by walls and are situated to possess a defensible harbor. Some were built on an isle lying only a few miles from the main land, such as Tyre.

Unlike some of the other cultures in Mythic Greece, women play a significant role in society and politics, and were in some instances equal to their male counterparts as monarchs and high priestesses.

Marriage Patterns: For the most part, Phoenicians are monogamous. Lineage is passed down on either the mother's or the father's side.

Fears and Inabilities: They enjoy the freedom that sea travel provides and their mercantile lifestyle affords. The loss of their freedom, whether to slavery or to an oppressive regime, is their greatest fear.

Demeanor: Phoenicians are crafty, energetic, industrious, curious, and above all they are very pragmatic.

Prejudices: Renowned as explorers, traders, and travelers, they enjoy conducting trade with a wide variety of people and are very tolerant of other cultures.





OTHER FACTORS

Profession Restrictions: Phoenician can be a Lesser Hero or Greater Hero. Phoenicians worship the gods under peculiar names. Their watchers are likely to be Zeus, who they call Ba'al, Aphrodite, who they call Astarte, Athena, who they call Onga, and Hera who is the patron god of Carthage. Additionally, Phoenicians tend to be explorers, scouts, rangers, rogues or scholars.

Languages: All Phoenicians speak their native tongue, Phoenician, to rank 5. Phoenicians of Asia Minor and Cyprus can learn an additional language to rank 5, while those of Carthage can learn an additional African language to rank 5. Due to their extensive trading and interaction with other cultures, they may learn a third language to rank 2. They have no restriction on languages they can learn.

Outfitting: Clothing material tends to be wool or linen, although silk is known. They often dye their clothing purple or red with intricate geometric patterns or patterns of sea animals such as fish, dolphins and seashells. The dress of Phoenician men consists of a single close-fitting tunic, which reaches from the waist to a little above the knee. They are richly patterned and parted on both sides. Phoenicians wear a cap of one kind or another, often conical and shaped like a helmet. Men possess beards arranged in three, four, or five rows of small tight curls, but do not wear mustaches.

Women are normally draped from head to foot in patterned garments with many folds. The waist is generally confined by a girdle, which is knotted in front. A petticoat is also worn over the robe. Female heads are mostly covered with a loose hood, or cap, but sometimes the hair is merely encircled by a band or bands, above and below which hair flows freely.

Both genders wear jewelry in abundance - it is not uncommon for a Phoenician to wear numerous elaborate finger rings, toe rings, bracelets and earrings. Phoenicians tend to wear sandals.

When waging war, they use leather armor and large square shields which are decorated with intricate geometric patterns. The principal weapons are the bow, sickle-like sword (which should be treated as a longsword), and spear. They also sometimes use javelins, staves, slings, dirks (shortswords), or clubs. They, like Achaeans, use chariots in battle.



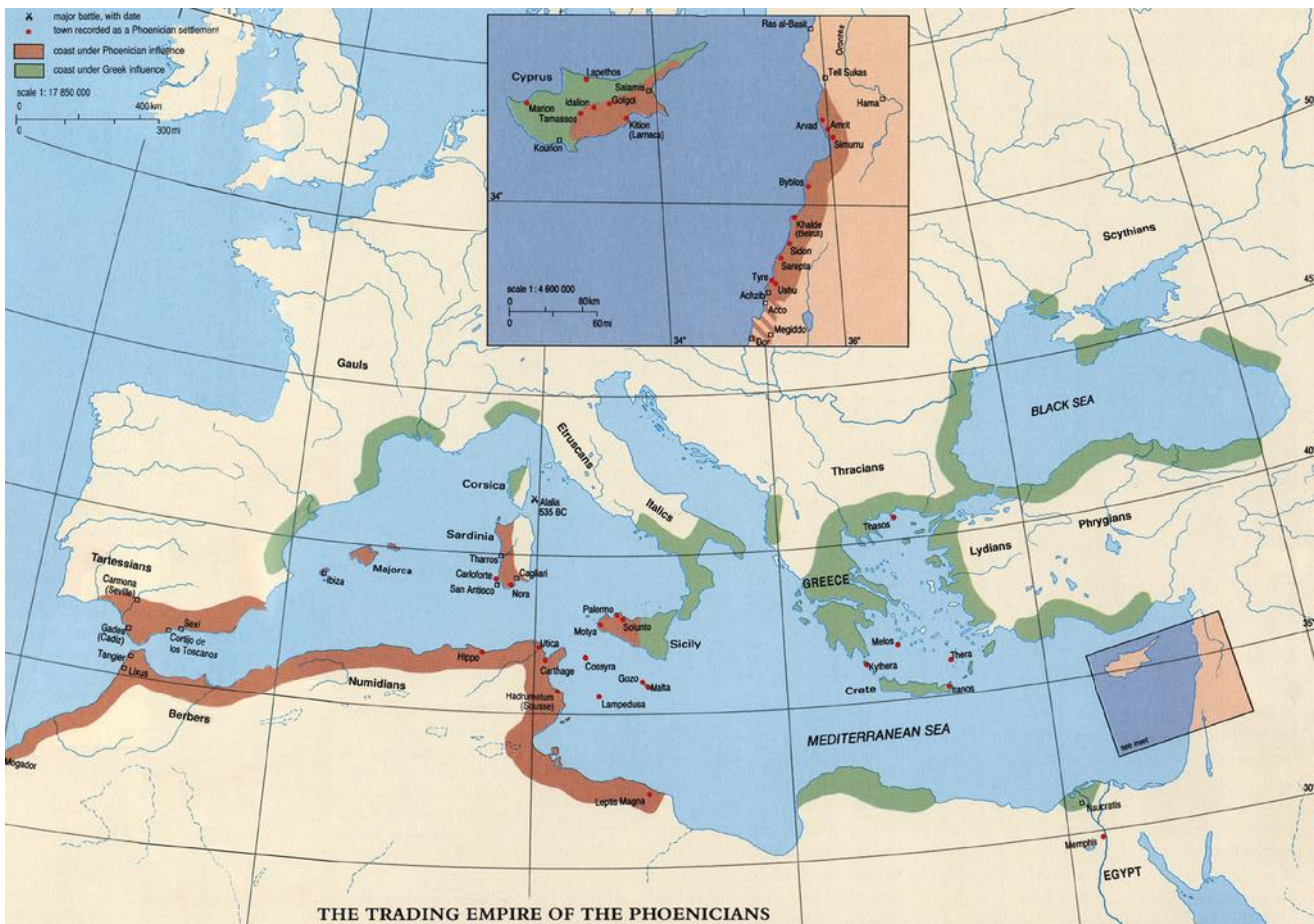
BACKGROUND

BGO Points: 4, due to their contact with other cultures through trade.

Stat Increases: Any stat may be increased.

Lesser Heroes' Option: Replace the roll Great Piety with Great Pragmatic: Phoenicians, due to their pragmatic views of life, receive +10 to Essence and Channeling Resistance Rolls. Also replace the roll Empathy with Mariner: Phoenicians are gifted with directional sense and can always discern which way is north. Phoenicians receive a +20 to all direction sense rolls and +20 to all navigation rolls.

Hobbies: Phoenicians are industrious and hard working folk who love to trade goods with distant cultures. Their hobbies reflect this. They may learn the following skills, Acting, Storytelling, Tumbling, Gambling, First Aid, Foraging, Cookery, Sailing, Wrestling, Trickery, and Sky Watching. Artistic skills are Dancing and Singing. Craft skills are Leather Working, Wood Craving, Boat Handling, and Smithing. Lore skills are Appraisal, History, Religion, Mathematics, Navigation, Engineering, Shipbuilding, and Geography. Influence skills are Leadership, Seduction, Diplomacy, and Public Speaking.





MERP ADOLESCENCE TABLE FOR MYTHIC GREECE

Phoenician Adolescence Table	
Movement & Maneuver	
No Armor	1
Soft Leather	0
Rigid Leather	1
Chain	0
Plate	0
Weapon Skills	
1-H Edged	1
1-H Concussion	0
2-Handed	0
Thrown	1
Missile	1
Pole-Arms	0
General Skills	
Climb	0
Ride	0
Swim	4
Trickery Skills	
Ambush	0
Stalk/Hide	1
Magical Skills	
Read Runes	0
Use Items	2
Miscellaneous Skills	
Perception	2
Body Hits	1
Special	
% for Spells	3%
Languages	5
Background	4

MERP RACIAL MODIFICATIONS TABLE FOR MYTHIC GREECE

Phoenician Racial Modifications Table										
	ST	AG	CO	IG	IT	PR	ESS	CHN	POS	DIS
Human	+5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



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