

# THE NEW OLYMPIANS

*The New Argonauts* web enhancement

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In Greek myth and tradition, there are constant themes. Fathers are supplanted by their sons. The shedding of a kinsman's blood brings a curse upon an entire household. The fortune of generations—good or ill—depends on the actions of one's ancestors, until the immortal gods and the Fates have been satisfied. This divine order extended even to the gods themselves, with Cronus' castration of his father Uranos avenged by the rebellion and ascension of his own son, Zeus, as king of the gods.

There is evidence that, as Greek culture evolved and became more centered around cities, worship of Zeus declined as that of Athena grew. With the growth of Greek colonization and concentration on the arts, Apollo began to eclipse his divine father in veneration. Athena grew in her aspect as the patron of civilization, and Apollo of the supremacy of reason over passion.

What if Apollo truly had deposed his father? This web enhancement suggests a possible course of events if Apollo replaces Zeus as king of the gods.

## FALL OF THE FIRST GODS

Finally growing intolerant of Zeus' dalliances and his many half-divine offspring, Hera disrupted the divine order by striking out against her husband in his sleep, seemingly slaying him. Enraged at this unforgivable act, three gods arose to avenge their father: Athena, Apollo, and Heracles, none of whom claimed Hera as their mother. Apollo had prophesied Zeus' removal from Olympus—like Cronus before him, Zeus had opposed his father in combat, and would one day be replaced by his own son. Athena declared that justice required Hera's death as well, and Apollo concurred, stating that reason could not bear a wife slaying her husband. Heracles bound Hera's arms behind her as Athena carried out the sentence, leaving his half-siblings to rule as king and queen of Olympus, himself content with the vengeance of his father.

Men know that the gods cannot die, even if, in their hurts and pains, the immortals themselves often forget. Zeus was not truly slain by Hera. Instead, he was sent to the underworld, there to live out the rest of eternity. Hera joined him soon after, and the two immediately took up their marital squabbling with renewed vigor.

## GODS AND THE WORLD

Oracles across the entire world proclaim the fall of Zeus and the ascension of Apollo and his new order of Olympians. Although Hades and Poseidon retain their positions of lordship over the underworld and the seas, respectively, they are no longer counted among the residents of Olympus, withdrawing themselves from the concerns of living men and their worship.



With the fall of Hera, **Aphrodite** assumes fully her role as patron of marriage and women, and comes to an understanding with Hephaestus about her previous infidelity. They remarry, and while she engages the occasional dalliance, Aphrodite's attentions are now focused more on marital love than romance or lust.

**Apollo** ascends to king of the gods, and is god of archery, prophecy, music, healing, and reason. He is less concerned that men be ruled by law than by reason, and so is worshipped by some who oppose the current social order.

Enraged by the turning of Aphrodite's attentions back to Hephaestus, **Ares'** wars become matters of frenzy rather than politics. He feels that Athena has usurped the more structured, "civilized" aspects of war, so he encourages barbarians to attack the cities of the Greeks regularly.

**Artemis** remains largely unchanged, remaining the goddess of the hunt, childbirth, and the protection of children. Her brother's ascension to kingship does not appear to affect her behavior or her worship at all.

**Athena**, now queen of Olympus, is goddess of wisdom, heroism, battle-skill, and the defense of cities, and with her ascent she adopts two larger roles as the patron of both civilization and of law.

**Demeter** is the last of Zeus' generation to remain on Olympus, and as goddess of harvest and agriculture, it is she who is entrusted with the growth of populations and cities.

As the cities of Greece grow in importance, their festivals and theatres become more elaborate, and the importance of revels and wine to the common people becomes clearer. **Dionysus'** influence grows in this time, and he maintains his comfortable seat among the gods.

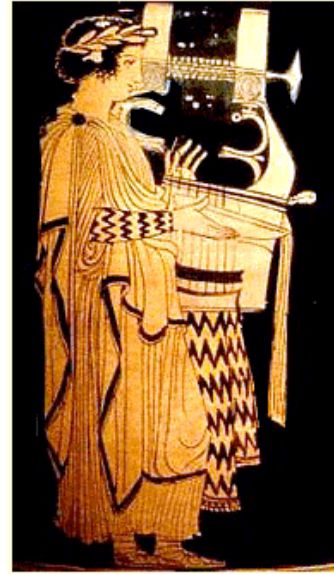
What his mother lacks in passion and vigor, **Eros** takes it upon himself to make up for, growing into the patron of lust and romantic love.

**Hecate** ascends to the Olympian ranks as goddess of sorcerous magic. Although few worship her, some—particularly women—call on her in moments of need for protection or vengeance.

**Hephaestus** remains the god of the forge and fire, patron of all physical crafts. He works closely with Hermes, and the two bring new ideas to a civilizing world.

Strongest of the gods, **Heracles** is god of strength, athletics and physical prowess. Although the Olympic games are still conducted in honor of Zeus, in truth most see them as a display of veneration for Heracles.

**Hermes** grows in power and scope, now patron to all merchants and inventors, messengers and guides, and the god of travel and wealth (obtained from Hades when he withdrew from the concerns of the living).



## The Sons of Cronus

No longer counted among the Olympians, Hades and Poseidon still receive the worship of men. Poseidon, as god of the sea and earthquakes, is appeased now far more than truly venerated, with sacrifices offered to keep off his wrath. Hades, as god of the underworld, is merely recognized as the keeper of the dead, and the view of many is that his brother Zeus, once the god of justice, is now responsible for determining the fates of those that cross the Styx.

## Other Deities

The gods, spirits, titans and immortals not counted among the Olympians are still worshipped, each with their own cults and traditions. Chief among these is Hestia, goddess of the sacrificial fire and sister of Zeus, venerated in secret by some, and silently at the sacrifices to the new gods. Priests still sponsor shrines and tend altars to the other gods, but the worship they now receive—and the power they exercise in the mortal world—diminishes with each passing season.

This is not to say that these beings are ignored by more “modern” Greeks; craftsmen and artists still call upon the Muses, men still watch Helios cross the skies at day and Selene at night. Each of these gods is still worshiped in the old ways. The new Olympians, however, have a new vision of Greece, and a new form of priest to fulfill that mission.

## PRIESTS AND CLERICS

As cities and civilization grow, DMs might decide to introduce more familiar game elements—like clerics—into the campaign world. Since the cleric as it appears in the *Player’s Handbook* does not fit the campaign model as presented in *The New Argonauts*, even when advanced several generations, presented below is a prestige class modeled after the cleric class, but more suited to the tone and feel of an Argonauts campaign.



### To the DM...

The requirements of the Hellenic cleric can cause problems for a campaign where all the characters are greater scions. If you are planning an Argonauts campaign of this level, you should let your players know before you begin whether or not you’ll be allowing this prestige class later on, so that they can properly decide whether or not to play as greater scions with the rest of the group (see the Bloodlines and Effective Character Level sidebar in Chapter 1 of *The New Argonauts* for how this works). If you are introducing this class to an existing Argonauts campaign, you should decide whether to allow greater scions to be reduced to lesser scions, trading the +1 level adjustment difference for their first level in the Hellenic cleric class.

## HELLENIC CLERIC

As Greek culture advanced, with the rise and fall of various gods, so too did the ability of worshippers to call on the power of the gods grow. The Hellenic cleric is a priest of the new gods, one who has learned how directly to call upon the power of the immortals to change the world in powerful ways.

Players and DMs should both note that the introduction of a Hellenic cleric can very much alter the tone of a campaign, as the slightly greater access to healing, and the presence of spellcasting in general, can change the balance established through play using *The New Argonauts*.

**Hit Die:** d6

### Requirements

To qualify to become a Hellenic cleric, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Base Will Save:** +5

**Skills:** Knowledge (religion) 8 ranks

**Feat:** Hellenic Priest

**Special:** A candidate for the Hellenic cleric class may not be a greater scion of any god, and must worship a specific Olympian deity.

### Class Skills:

The Hellenic cleric's class skills are Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion), Profession, and Spellcraft.

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int modifier

**Table 1: The Hellenic Cleric**

Level	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Spells Per Day		
	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		1st	2nd	3rd
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Domain	1+1	—	—
2	+1	+3	+0	+3		2+1	—	—
3	+2	+3	+1	+3		2+1	1+1	—
4	+2	+4	+1	+4		3+1	2+1	—
5	+3	+4	+1	+4		3+1	2+1	1+1

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Hellenic cleric class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The Hellenic cleric gains no additional proficiency with any weapons or armor.

**Spells:** A Hellenic cleric casts divine spells, which are drawn from the cleric spell list. However, his alignment may restrict him from casting certain spells opposed to his moral or ethical beliefs; see Chaotic, Evil, Good, and Lawful Spells, below. A Hellenic cleric must choose and prepare his spells in advance.



To prepare or cast a spell, a Hellenic cleric must have a Wisdom score equal to at least 10 + the spell level. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a cleric's spell is 10 + the spell level + the cleric's Wisdom modifier. Like other spellcasters, a Hellenic cleric can cast only a certain number of spells of each spell level per day. His base daily spell allotment is given on Table 1: The Hellenic Cleric. In addition, he receives bonus spells per day if he has a high Wisdom score. A cleric also gets one domain spell of each spell level he can cast, starting at 1st level. When a Hellenic cleric prepares a spell in a domain spell slot, it must come from his domain (see Domain, below).

Hellenic clerics meditate or pray for their spells. Each cleric must choose a time at which he must spend 1 hour each day in quiet contemplation or supplication to regain his daily allotment of spells. Time spent resting has no effect on whether a Hellenic cleric can prepare spells. A Hellenic cleric may prepare and cast any spell on the cleric spell list, provided that he can cast spells of that level, but he must choose which spells to prepare during his daily meditation.

**Chaotic, Evil, Good, and Lawful Spells:** A cleric can't cast spells of an alignment opposed to his own alignment. Spells associated with particular alignments are indicated by the chaos, evil, good, and law descriptors in their spell descriptions.

**Domain:** The Olympian gods—and the former Olympians Hades, Poseidon and Zeus—each grant access to a particular domain. Each domain gives the Hellenic cleric access to a granted power and a domain spell at each spell level he can cast (1st to 3rd). The cleric gets the granted power of the domain selected, although some granted powers may not be as useful in an Argonauts campaign.

<b>Deity</b>	<b>Available Domain</b>
Aphrodite	Luck
Apollo	Knowledge
Ares	War
Artemis	Animal
Athena	Protection
Demeter	Plant
Dionysus	Chaos
Eros	Trickery
Hecate	Magic*
Hephaestus	Fire*
Heracles	Strength
Hermes	Travel*
Hades	Death
Poseidon	Water*
Zeus	Law

\* Indicates a domain with a granted power that is less useful in an Argonauts campaign than in a standard campaign.

