CYCLADES

A game by Ludovic Maublanc and Bruno Cathala, for 2 to 5 players

In the Cyclades archipelago, off the coast of a not-yet unified Greece, the great cities (Sparta, Athens, Corinth, Thebes and Argos) are growing and struggling against one another to establish their supremacy, under the benevolent gaze of the Gods.

Goal of the game:

Demonstrate the supremacy of your parent city by being the first player to have 2 Metropolises at the end of a cycle

Game setup:

Each player gets the items of his color ❶ which he places in front of his screen ❷ visible to all, and 5 GP ❸ which he hides behind his screen.

Place the game boards ❹, Troops and Fleets according to the number of players, as indicated on the illustrations on pages 7 and 8 (you'll find numbers corresponding to the number of players at the bottom of each board).

Shuffle the Mythological Creature cards and place them, face down, in a pile on the proper place ❺. Place the 5 figurines next to the discard pile ❻.

Place the Philosopher cards ❼ and the Priest cards ❽ on the place reserved for them on the board.

Each player takes only one of his offering tokens. These tokens are shuffled and randomly placed on the first places of the game turn ❾ (the second offering token is only used for two-player games).

Leave the 4 God tiles ❿ next to the game board.

The building tiles, the Metropolis tiles, the two special dice, the prosperity markers and the GP which have not been given out are set aside while not in use in the game.



Contents

3-part game board

2 special dice

98 gold pieces (GP)

16 prosperity markers

5 figurines: Kraken, Minotaur, Medusa, Polyphemus, Chiron

17 Mythological Creature cards

17 Philosopher cards

18 Priest cards



4 large God tiles

40 buildings:

10 Ports

10 Fortresses

10 Temples

10 Universities

10 Metropolises

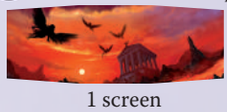
For each of the 5 game colors:

2 offering tokens

8 Fleets

3 territory tokens

8 Troops



1 screen

The game:

The game takes place over a series of cycles during which the players will:

- first, **gather their revenue** in GP (production of their islands + seafaring commerce)
- then **make offerings to the Gods** (auction). It will sometimes be necessary to spend much in order to gain the favors of the God of your choice.
- finally, depending on the God whose favor you obtained, **perform the actions** specific to that God (each God has a "free" action, while others can only be used by spending more of one's precious GP).

The goal of each player is to own two Metropolises at the end of a cycle (either by building them and/or by conquering them). The game ends at the end of a cycle if at least one of the players has completed this objective. If multiple players reach this goal in the same cycle, then the richest one (whoever has the most GP) wins.



Explanation of a Cycle:

1) MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES:

During each cycle some Mythological Creatures will be wandering the isles of the Cyclades.

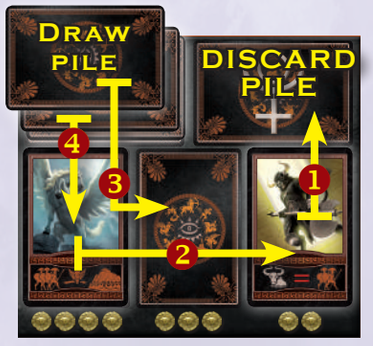
At the beginning of each cycle, the first thing to do is update the Mythological Creature track (see illustration) to have three visible Creatures, one on each of the spaces. The GP under each space indicate the price to be paid to use that Creature during the action phase (see later). Proceed thus:

- Discard the Creature on the "2 GP" space if it wasn't used during the previous round.
- Then move all other cards to the right, in order to fill all empty spaces.
- Finally, fill the remaining spaces by drawing new cards.

When the draw pile is empty, shuffle the discard pile to create a new draw pile.

Special case at the beginning of the game:

- During the very first cycle, draw the first Mythological Creature and place it face-up on the left hand space on the track (4 GP).
- During the second cycle, if this Creature has not been used, move it one square to the right and put the first Creature from the draw pile face-up on the space which was just freed. (If it was used, place the two first Creatures from the draw pile on the 4 GP and 3 GP spaces.)



During the previous cycle, a player has used the Creature on the 3 GP space. The track must now be updated for the beginning of the new cycle:

1. *The Minotaur is discarded (no one wanted it)*
2. *The Pegasus is moved onto the 2 GP space*
3. *The 3 GP and 4 GP spaces*
4. *are filled with the first Creatures off the top of the draw pile*



2) THE GODS:

The order in which the Gods grant the players their actions changes at the beginning of each cycle.

The 4 large God tiles are shuffled and placed randomly on the 4 empty spaces above Apollo's space. In a game with 5 players all 4 tiles are placed face-up.

When playing with 4 players, the last of the 4 Gods will be placed face-down. It will not be available for this cycle. During the following cycle, you will place this God in the first space, face-up, and shuffle the other 3. Once again, the God placed in 4th place will be face-down and will become first God during the following cycle.

When playing with 3 players, the first two Gods will be placed face-up and the last two face-down. During the next cycle, the two Gods which were face-down will be used. On the cycle following that, the 4 Gods will be shuffled again to make two new random pairs.

The rule changes specific to 2-player games are detailed on page 6.

3) REVENUES:

Each city earns gold pieces (GP) according to the prosperity of its isles and of seafaring commerce.

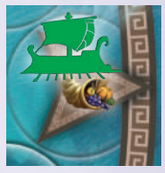
Each player gets **1 GP for each prosperity marker** he controls.

The prosperity markers are present on multiple isles (printed on the board, then present on the board as markers due to Apollo, as seen on page 6), as well as certain sea spaces (printed on arrows which represent the fact that present ships are trading with other nations).

The GP earned by the players must be hidden behind their screens.



This island earns 2 GP for the Blue player.



This commerce square earns 1 GP for the Green player.

4) OFFERINGS:

To gain the support of the Gods and the actions associated with them, the players will have to sacrifice part of their riches (GP).

In the playing order, each player chooses a God and places his offering marker on the space corresponding to the offering that the player wishes to make to that God.

If an offering goes over 10, the player places one of his territory markers on the 10+ space, with the offering marker then indicating any remaining number beyond 10 (example: to bid 13, a player places his territory marker on 10+ and his offering marker on 3).

A God grants his favor to only one player: the player who made the highest offering.

If a player has made an offering to an already chosen God:

- The offering must then be higher than the one already taking place.
- The player who made the previous offering must take his marker back and must immediately bid on a DIFFERENT God.

It is possible that the player thus outbid will outbid another player. Any such case must be resolved before the next player in the turn order places his offering marker. Any player may place his offering marker on Apollo's space without spending anything, as only Apollo does not require any offerings. It is possible for multiple players to choose Apollo in the same cycle. The first player to choose Apollo places his token on the 1 space, the second on the 2 space, etc.

The offering phase is over when each player has placed his marker on a God.

Each player pays the number of GP he offered to his God, taking into account any possible reductions due to Priest cards (see later).

Important: even though the number of GP each player has must be kept secret during the game, it is forbidden to make an offering you can't afford! The Gods' wrath would be terrible!

EXAMPLE: OFFERINGS



The Blue player wants to go to war and makes an offering to Ares.
He places his marker on 5, thinking that this value will scare off other players.



But the Red player makes an offering worth 6 on Ares!
The Blue player must immediately make a new choice.
He then makes an offering worth 1 to Poseidon, hoping to be ousted in order to come back to Ares.



And that's exactly what happens: Yellow makes an offering worth 3 to Poseidon, ousting Blue.
Blue immediately makes an offering worth 7 to Ares, ousting Red, who must now make an offering to another God... What will Red do?

5) PERFORMING ACTIONS:

The Gods are activated in the order determined at the beginning of the cycle.

The player who has won the offering bid on the first God can perform, in the order of his choice, the actions specific to that God, and use a Mythological Creature by paying the cost corresponding to each of those actions.

The actions are the following:

- Call upon one or more Mythological Creatures (all Gods except for Apollo)
- Recruit (all Gods except Apollo)
- Build (all Gods except Apollo)
- Special action (all Gods except Athena and Apollo)
- Increase revenue (Apollo)

The 4 main Gods work in the same way. Only Apollo is different.

It is possible to alternate actions (example: recruit, built and recruit again).

When the player is done with his actions, he places his offering marker on the last free space of the turn track. It is then up to the player who won the offering bid on the next God to perform his actions.

EXAMPLE: END OF ACTIONS



Red played first: once he is done performing actions, he places his offering marker on the 5 space.
The next player (Green) will place his marker on the 4 space, etc.
Thus, it is the player who played last who will, during the next turn, make the first offering.

• CALL ONE OR MORE MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES

By paying the cost indicated under the card (2, 3 or 4 GP minus any cost reductions due to Temples) the player can take the corresponding Creature card and apply the indicated effect. Once the power is used, the card is placed face-up in the discard pile.

The powers of the Creatures must be used immediately. A player cannot keep a Creature he just bought in order to use it later.

The power of each Creature and the use of the 5 Creature figurines are explained on the 4-page reference booklet contained in the box.

It is important to note that new Creature cards are only placed on the board at the beginning of each cycle. So it's the player who made the best offering to the first God who will get to help himself first. And since there's nothing stopping him from playing multiple Creatures, it is quite possible that the last few players of the cycle will no longer have any Creatures available to them by the time their turn comes around.

• RECRUIT

The main Gods allow players to recruit, depending on their specialty, a Troop, a Fleet, a Priest or a Philosopher for free, but also to get more in exchange for precious gold pieces (GP).



Recruit Fleets

Poseidon offers a free Fleet.

It is possible to purchase extra Fleets, as follows:

- The second Fleet costs 1 GP
- The third one 2 GP
- The fourth one 3 GP

A player cannot purchase more than 3 extra Fleets in any given turn.

No player may have more than 8 Fleets.

Fleets must be built on sea spaces around an isle belonging to the player. This space must either be empty or contain Fleets belonging to that same player.



Recruit Troops

Ares offers a free Troop.

It is possible to purchase extra Troops, as follows:

- The second Troop costs 2 GP
- The third one 3 GP
- The fourth one 4 GP

A player cannot purchase more than 3 extra Troops in any given turn.

No player can have more than 8 Troops.

Troops must be placed on isles controlled by the player.



Recruit Priests

Zeus offers a free Priest.

It is possible to get a single extra Priest for 4 GP.

Priests must be placed in front of the screen, in plain sight.

Effect of Priests:

Each Priest reduces the offering to be paid by 1 GP at the beginning of each cycle.

No matter how many Priests a player has, that player MUST pay at least 1 GP for his offering (only the access to Apollo is completely free).



Recruit Philosophers

Athena offers a free Philosopher.

It is possible to get a single extra Philosopher for 4 GP.

Philosophers must be placed in front of the screen, in plain sight.

Effect of Philosophers:

As soon as a player gets a 4th Philosopher, he must immediately discard them to create a Metropolis (see later).

• BUILD

A specific type of building is associated to each God, each building with a different effect.

During his turn, a player may build the same sort of building multiple times, including on the same isle, so long as he can afford the cost of 2 GP.

As soon as a player owns 4 different buildings, whether on one or many isles, he automatically creates a Metropolis (see later).



Buildings are placed on the white squares of each isle.

POSEIDON



PORT

Effect: the Port gives a defensive bonus during seafaring battles occuring on squares adjacent to this isle (see later).

ARES



FORTRESS

Effect: during battles, the Fortress gives a defensive bonus to Troops present on this isle (see later).

ZEUS



TEMPLE

Effect: each Temple reduces the cost of buying a Mythological Creature by 1 GP. The price reduction of each Temple can only be used once per cycle. No matter how many Temples a player owns, he must still spend at least 1 GP to get a Creature.

ATHENA



UNIVERSITY

Effect: the University has no special effect... but it is one of the 4 buildings you will need to create a Metropolis.

• SPECIAL ACTION

Some Gods grant you special actions.

During his turn, a player may perform these actions multiple times, as long as he has enough GP to afford them.

POSEIDON

Move Fleets

For 1 GP, the player may move Fleets currently on the same sea space and move them a maximum of 3 spaces. He can add or abandon Fleets during that movement.

If Fleets enter a space occupied by enemy Fleets, their movement ends and a naval battle begins immediately.

ARES

Move Troops

For 1 GP, the player may move some or all Troops on an isle to another isle connected by a chain of Fleets of his color.

- If he lands on an isle where enemy Troops are present, a battle starts immediately.
- If he lands on an isle where there are no Troops, he claims this isle without a battle, even if the isle has a Fortress.
- If his Troops leave their starting isle empty, he must leave a territory marker there. This isle belongs to him as long as no opponent lands there. *(An isle owned by a player can therefore never become neutral again).*

Last isle: a player may NOT attack the last isle of another player, unless he can prove that he would win the game were he to sucessfully conquer the isle.

If, for example, the player who has chosen Ares already owns a Metropolis, he has the right to attack the last isle owned by another player if that isle contains a Metropolis: if the invasion were to be successful, he would win the game.

ZEUS

Change the Creatures.

For 1 GP, the player can discard an available Creature card and replace it with the first card of the draw pile.

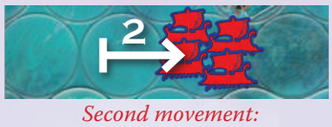
This action can be used to get rid of a dangerous Creature at a lesser cost or "seek" a specific Creature the player may need.



Example of Fleet movement
The initial situation above.



First movement:
The group of 3 Fleets joins the adjacent Fleet.



Second movement:
The 4 Fleets move together 1 space.



Third movement:
2 Fleets are left behind while the other 2 make one final movement.

EXPLANATION OF BATTLE:

1) Each player participating in battle rolls 1 die and adds the number of Troops/Fleets he has in the combat zone.



If the battle takes place on an isle where one or more Fortresses have been built, the defender adds «1» to his die value for each Fortress.



If the battle takes place on a sea space adjacent to an isle (or isles) where the defender has built one or more Ports, the defender adds «1» to his die value for each Port.

2) The player who has the lowest result loses the first assault. He removes a Troop / Fleet from the battle and places it in his reserve, in front of his screen. If the result is a tie, both players lose a Troop / Fleet (see note at the bottom right corner of this page).

3) If both combatants still have Troops / Fleets, the defender can decide to retreat (see below). If he does not (or if he cannot), the attacker can also retreat. If neither of the players retreat, a new assault takes place (see step 1).

4) These steps are repeated until only one player is left in the combat zone. That player takes control of the isle or the sea space in which battle occurred.

If it was an isle, the winner also gets all buildings found on the isle.

Retreating during a land-based battle: if one of the players wants to abandon combat, he must bring his Troops back to an isle belonging to him and linked by Fleets to the one where battle occurred. If these conditions are not met, the Troops cannot retreat.

Retreating during a sea-faring battle: if one of the players wants to abandon combat, he must move his Fleets to an empty adjacent space or one he controls. If no space matches these requirements, the Fleets cannot retreat.

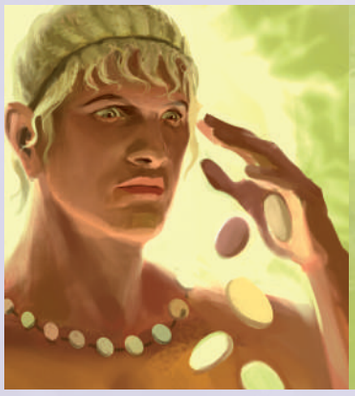


Important: *an isle is considered to be a single space, no matter how big it is. The port above therefore affects all 8 adjacent spaces. And the Troop present protects the entire isle.*

Note: *it is possible that two armies annihilate themselves at the same time. In the case of a land-based battle, the defender keeps his isle. He places a territory marker of his color on the isle. He still benefits from the revenues of that isle and the effects of buildings on it, but it will no longer be defended against a subsequent attack for as long as the player has not recruited new Troops thanks to Ares.*

• APOLLO

Finally, the player(s) who have chosen Apollo will play last and have a very limited choice of actions. Playing Apollo is technically a way to skip one's turn to save money.



The player who has chosen Apollo gets:

- 1 GP if he owns more than one isle
- or 4 GP if he owns a single isle.

The GP thus won are placed behind his screen.

Moreover, he takes one prosperity marker which he places on the isle of his choice (this isle, blessed by Apollo, will earn 1 extra GP at the beginning of every subsequent cycle). A same island can contain several prosperity markers.

Important: if more than one player has chosen Apollo during a single cycle round, all earn the extra GP, but only the first player to have chosen Apollo will get a prosperity marker.

Apollo does not offer any other actions.

6) END OF THE ROUND:

Once every player has played and replaced their offering marker on the turn track, the round is finished.

If one or more players own 2 Metropolises, the game ends. Otherwise, a new cycle begins.

End of the game and victory:

The game ends at the end of a cycle where at least one player owns 2 Metropolises.

That player wins the game!

If more than a single player ends the cycle with two Metropolises, it's the player who has the most GP remaining behind his screen who wins.

The Metropolises:

Each isle has a space reserved for Metropolis (dotted red square).



There are two ways of creating a Metropolis:

- **Economic development:** a player who has all 4 types of buildings (Port, Fortress, Temple and University), even if they are spread over many of his isles, must immediately discard them and replace them with a Metropolis token, which he places on an empty space on one of his isles.
  If there are no free spaces, the player must destroy one or more of his buildings to free the space required to place his Metropolis.
- **Intellectual development:** a player who has 4 Philosophers must immediately discard them to earn a Metropolis.The player places the Metropolis token on an empty space on one of his isles.
  If the only available space is occupied by buildings, the player is forced to destroy them to place his Metropolis.
  If a player only has one isle on which he already owns a Metropolis, his 4 Philosophers are simply discarded (the new Metropolis "replaces" the old one).

There's a third way to earn a Metropolis: conquer an isle where there's already one!

A Metropolis is a "super building" which has the powers of all other buildings.

2 Player game

Set up the game according to the illustration on page 8.

Each player takes the two offering markers of his color.

Shuffle the 4 offering markers and place them randomly on the first spaces of the turn track.

Then play exactly as detailed for 4 players, but each player must make offerings to two Gods instead of a single one (it is possible to outbid yourself).

Note: each player must be able to pay the entire cost of his offerings on both chosen Gods. A Priest allows a player to save 1 GP on each offering.

The game ends when one of the two players owns 3 Metropolises at the end of a cycle (instead of 2 in larger games).

A game by Bruno Cathala and Ludovic Maublanc
Illustrations by Miguel Coimbra
Translation by Eric Harlaux
Revision by Eric & Stephanie Franklin

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Initial Setup for 5 Players

Each player places on the board 2 Fleets and 2 Troops, according to the illustration on the right.

At the beginning of the game, each player thus has 2 isles, as well as a revenue of 2 GP (split between his isles and any possible sea commerce spaces).



Initial Setup for 4 Players

Each player places on the board 2 Fleets and 2 Troops, according to the illustration on the right.

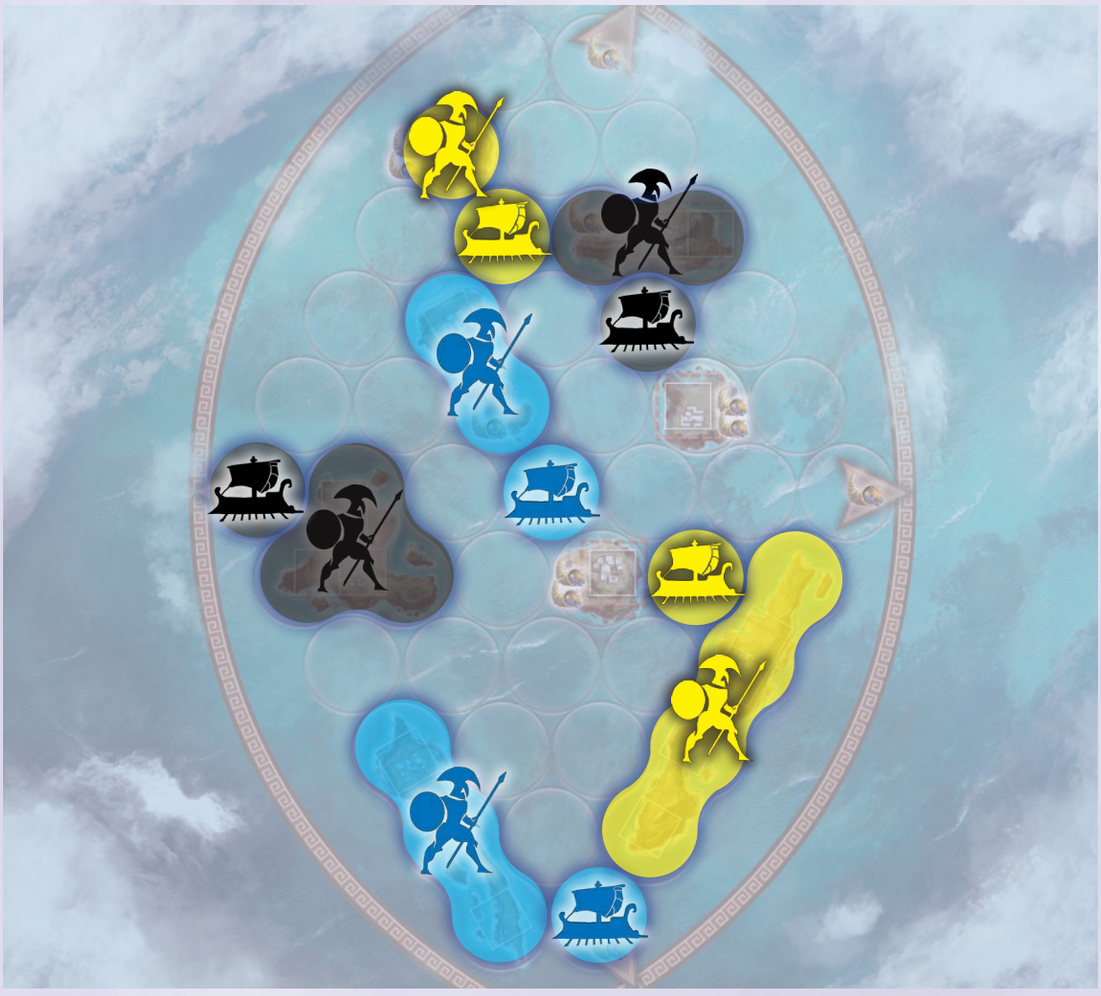
At the beginning of the game, each player thus has 2 isles, as well as a revenue of 2 GP (split between his isles and any possible sea commerce spaces).



Initial Setup for 3 Players

Each player places on the board 2 Fleets and 2 Troops, according to the illustration on the right.

At the beginning of the game, each player thus has 2 isles, as well as a revenue of 2 GP (split between his isles and any possible sea commerce spaces).



Initial Setup for 2 Players

Each player places on the board 2 Fleets and 2 Troops, according to the illustration on the right.

At the beginning of the game, each player thus has 2 isles, as well as a revenue of 2 GP (split between his isles and any possible sea commerce spaces).

