



# **The Greek Council: The Trojan War**

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# Introduction

**Message from the Chair:** Hello, I'm Amber Nguyen, a UMass sophomore (Class of 2022) majoring in Neuroscience and Legal Studies. I have seen MUN in action as a delegate, a chairwoman, and a secretary general prior to my time at MinuteMUN 2020.

Regarding this MUN experience, I hope that you all would impress yourself by making wise choices and be present for the twists and turns that will come into being. Be aware and alert. Not a single moment should be wasted on remaining passive. Steal the podium, play your role, and defend your interests. In the end, I ardently hope that you will find yourself renewed after MinuteMUN 2020 as I believe wholeheartedly in your great potential. I aspire to observe your superb talents at work during conferences and wishing you all the best of luck!

**Message from the Crisis Director:** Hello delegates! My name is Kyran and I am a recent graduate of UMass (Class of 2019) with a BA in History and Certificates in Latin and Native American studies. I'm thrilled to be returning to help out! If you have any questions about the committee, your character's positions, or pre-conference research you can contact me at [kyranschnur@gmail.com](mailto:kyranschnur@gmail.com).

This committee presents us with a unique experience to dive into. For the most part, the stories we experience, however otherworldly, come from a cultural perspective very close to our own. Game of Thrones, Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, even if these stories take place in fantastical worlds they are written from a perspective that is familiar to many. Even if we don't agree with the opinions of the author or find their methods distasteful, they come from a worldview that has been shaped by the same culture we live in. In this era of globalization, we're quite comfortable with how our stories are told and interpreted. However, there is one

place where downright alien perspectives and cultures can sneak in through the back door: Our historical classics. Studying them is part of our culture, more than a few of you probably had to read an epic or two for your classes, and yet in many ways they very clearly don't fit with modern culture.

The inciting incident that begins the story our committee is based on is first and foremost an insult. Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek armies, demands that Achilles, the greatest Greek warrior, give him Briseis, a woman he has kidnapped. In doing so he asserts that he is greater than Achilles, and deserves to have Achilles submit to him. In response Achilles abandons the battlefield along with all of his troops, and prays to his goddess mother that the Greeks will lose the war so that they will see how much they need him and how much greater he is than all of them.

There is a lot to unpack there! In addition to the extremely entrenched patriarchy that has women seized and bargained for, the actions of both Achilles and Agamemnon seem completely foreign to modern U.S. culture. This is a war! Sure they disagree, but can't ONE of them bite the bullet and apologize? Nope. Even when the army is on the brink of annihilation Agamemnon insists that Achilles must recognize him as the better man. And wait, Achilles just took all his troops and refused to fight in a war he's bound by treaty to fight in. Isn't that treason? Nope, most of the Greeks understand his actions and are willing to pay ungodly amounts of gold to make up for the insults. To make sense of this, delegates in this committee will have to inhabit the perspective of another time, when one's personal honor and one's chance to win glory were valued to an astonishing degree. When a king like Agamemnon would consider apologizing to Achilles as unacceptable as we would consider allowing Peru to annex Chicago.

Throughout this conference, we invite you to inhabit and explore these unique perspectives. We know very little about what actually happened during the Trojan War millenia ago, but we do know that these were the heroes the ancient

Greeks aspired to be. These were the lessons they most valued. This was a story that shaped their history and, in turn, ours.

## History

Helen of Troy, a woman whose beauty rivaled that of any god, was courted by kings across the Aegean Sea and beyond. Most prominent among her suitors were the kings of the many Greek city-states, some of whom were children of the gods themselves. These kings recognized a potential problem. After Helen chose a husband, dozens of wars might break out as the kings she did not pick fought to claim her. To prevent this, the kings signed a treaty that pledged that all of them would unite and go to war if anyone ever attempted to kidnap Helen from the life she chose. This treaty was an impressive feat, as the kings were normally at each other's throats. Eventually Helen did choose a husband, the warrior Menelaus, King of Sparta.

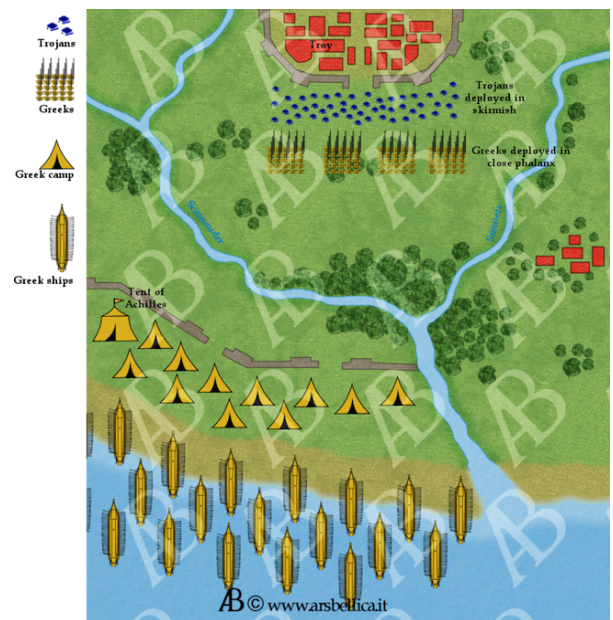
While this was a diplomatic achievement for the ages, the Fates conspired to test it. The goddess of discord herself crafted a magical golden apple, and decreed that it would go to the most beautiful of the three great goddesses. Those goddesses were Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, and Hera, goddess of rulership and marriage. Zeus, the king of the gods, decreed that the apple would be awarded to the goddess chosen by Paris, Prince of Troy, the richest city in all of the Mediterranean. Each of the goddesses offered Paris a boon, but in the end Paris chose Aphrodite because she promised to make the most beautiful woman in the world his wife. This had two direct results. First, Aphrodite made Helen fall in love with Paris and run away with him to Troy. Second, Athena and Hera swore undying vengeance on Paris and his city.

The goddesses were not the only ones swearing vengeance. In accordance with the treaty, the great kings of Greece put aside their wars temporarily and united in a grand army. They set sail for Troy, under the command of Menelaus'

brother, the power hungry Agamemnon of Mycenae. While the Trojans were united in their fury at Paris for starting a war, they nonetheless prepared to defend their prince as honor mandated. The forces of Troy fell under the command of Paris' brother Hector, the greatest warrior of Troy, and Troy's allies marched to its defence from across Asia Minor and beyond. Soon Troy was under siege and the Greeks had erected their war camp.

What followed were nine years of stalemate. Troy was not only the richest city in the Mediterranean, it was also the most well defended. Its walls were legendary, and the Greeks had great difficulty breaching them. In addition, both sides had gods directly intervening in the conflict on a near constant basis. Athena and Hera were eager to see Troy destroyed, and Aphrodite would not let her favored couple Paris and Helen come to harm. However, the Trojans had no hope of driving the Greeks from away largely because of one man: Achilles. King of the Myrmidons, Achilles had a strength in battle that rivaled that of the gods. As long as he was in the ranks of the Greek armies, the Trojans could not hope to counter-attack successfully and so stayed hidden behind their walls. For the stalemate to end either the walls of Troy or Achilles had to be removed.

It was Agamemnon that finally broke the stalemate, indirectly and inadvertently. As commander of the Greek forces he always gave himself first pick of any plunder as well as the largest share. On one occasion he kidnapped the daughter of a powerful priest of Apollo, god of archery and music, and when Agamemnon refused to give her back Apollo cursed the army of the Greeks with a horrible plague. The other kings begged Agamemnon to return the woman, but he insisted he would only do it if Achilles gave him his own captured woman, Briseis. Achilles did so, but was so insulted by Agamemnon's domineering ways that he abandoned the war and returned to his tents with his soldiers, convincing his goddess mother Thetis to turn Zeus, the king of the gods himself, against the Greeks. Finally, the Trojans had their opening.



This is where our conference begins. It has been twelve days since Achilles withdrew. The Greeks have lost their greatest fighter and the king of the gods has abandoned them. The Trojans are preparing for a counter-attack, and the army has only just recovered from a disastrous plague. After nine years of war, the fate of Troy and Greece is now in your hand

## Committee Expectations & Goals

1. **Research the Iliad! But don't rely on it.** Our source for everything in this committee is Homer's Iliad. It has tons of great information to help you understand the war, your position, and your character. BUT neither the Trojan Horse nor getting Patroclus killed will work in this scenario. As Crisis Director, I'll be taking pains to have problems arise that do not even show up in the epic poem. Greek mythology has a lot of things to choose from! So come up with your own strategy, and get ready to think on your feet.

2. **Missions.** The Greek kings are great heroes, without exception, and can be of great help wherever they are deployed. **In negotiations and debate, kings should remember to use themselves and their abilities as key bargaining chips.** However, they can only leave the camp as a result of a Directive. That directive will lay out the mission and strategy of those deployed, which they follow to the letter unless a different directive is passed. In addition, **there can only be 7 kings deployed in various missions at a time.** Without the majority of the kings watching over their soldiers, either in the camp or in the rear of a battle, the entire Greek army will desert. They've been here for nine years! When a king is absent, it is assumed a **surrogate** remains behind to represent their views and vote for them. So while Medon might be off negotiating with the Mysians to get them to change sides, the delegate representing him will remain in the room to debate and vote.
3. **Divine Favor.** The gods are as powerful as they are fickle. They can give you their favor for being good at checkers and take it away because you sneeze without covering your mouth. In plenty of Greek myths it isn't even explained why one god likes a hero and another doesn't. To replicate this changeable nature, **at the beginning of every session of this committee delegates will each draw a random slip of paper.** Most of them will be blank, but some of them will grant that delegate the favor of a specific god. That favor can be cashed in once during that session, in a way that relates to that god's divine domain. The favor of Demeter, goddess of agriculture, might be traded in for a bountiful feast for the troops to lift their spirits. The favor of Nemesis, goddess of revenge, might be traded in to coax a particular Trojan hero out for single combat so you can defeat them and win greater glory. **Favor can be called on through a note to Crisis or a Directive, but will have a greater impact as a Directive because all the Greeks can join in praying for it.**

4. **Glory and Honor.** Remember that many of these kings are here specifically to win glory in battle, a strong currency in these mythic times. Glory can be won by killing a great Trojan hero, like Sarpedon of Lycia or Aeneas of the Dardanians. Or it could be won by saving an allied hero from certain death. The Iliad has many of these people listed, feel free to pick your fated rival/battle brother and hunt/protect them come hell or high water. There are many other creative ways to win glory, just make sure people are talking about you. At the same time, abide by your honor by helping the Greek cause and honoring the gods. **The most successful delegate will contribute to debate and strategy while also striving to make themselves the most legendary hero of the Trojan War.**
5. **Troops, Ships, and Conscripts.** Every delegate will have their own supply of troops that they can maneuver as they see fit. In the end, you are all kings. They can be moved through letters to Crisis or through Directives passed by the war council (Directives are the way to go unless you're trying to keep your troop movements secret for some reason.) **Any collaborative effort must be a Directive. If Crisis believes that a collection of individual orders constitutes a larger scale collaborative war plan, it can send the orders back to the Chair for them to be written into a Directive.** Unless they are given specific orders, it is assumed that troops stay in the Greek camp and defend it from attack. Each king also has ships, which can be used for naval combat or to transport troops. Unless they are given specific orders, it is assumed they are beached behind the Greek camp. There are also a large number of **conscripts** that are under the command of the lesser kings of Greece. These soldiers are vastly inferior to the average soldier of a great king, but they can be useful. Conscripts can only be moved through Directives, otherwise it is assumed that they stay in the camp and defend it.

## Troop Types

### **Elites**

These are the most potent soldiers in any army. Trained in a multitude of different weapons and fighting styles, a single elite can be worth ten normal soldiers. The leadership skills of elites can also improve the performance of an army slightly if there are a significant number of them to take command. Some of them even have special powers gained through divine favor.

### **Archers**

Greek bows are not especially long ranged, but they can be the deciding factor when two evenly matched armies meet. Ideal for slowing an enemy advance or covering an allied retreat, they are an excellent source of support but are cut down quickly on their own. They also maximize casualties if the infantry is able to rout the enemy.

### **Chariots**

Highly trained warriors on chariots that can easily alternate between smashing through enemy lines like wrecking balls and striking enemies from mid-range with thrown spears. Most Greek kings choose to ride into battle on a chariot. Chariots are a great deal faster than soldiers on foot, but cannot usually carry a battle without support from infantry.

### **Infantry**

The backbone of an army. Trained to stand their ground, take orders, and fight with simple weapons such as spears, swords, and short bows.

## Topics of Consideration

Much of your discussion will focus on how to deal with the many crises that will be regularly arising. However, there are several key questions that you must address to keep the army at full effectiveness.

### **War Aims**

An army needs a mission, and for nine years that mission has been fairly vague. It must be defined now, or the soldiers are unlikely to fight with any conviction. If the Greeks are victorious, what is to be the fate of Troy? Is the fighting merely to force Troy to negotiate? Or will only its complete annihilation be acceptable? Or will it perhaps become part of a Greek kingdom? If so, whose? Is this a war for Helen, or for all the wealth of Troy? And what of the Trojan allies, will the Greek army go on to attack their homelands after they have spent nine years preventing the fall of Troy? All of these questions and more must be answered in a Directive before the army can be expected to perform well. A soldier must know what they fight for.

### **Food**

An army needs food! Maintaining a force as massive as the Greek Army is a daily struggle, particularly when it comes to food. The stores brought from Greece are running low, and a Directive must be passed soon to avoid a revolt. Maintaining a supply route with Greece would provide plentiful food, but it's risky. Troy has many allies and plenty of them are seaborne, and there are even more factions that would be happy to engage in a little piracy. Substantial resources would have to be dedicated to protecting the trade ships, resources that are badly needed to protect the Greek camp. Alternatively, troops could be given free reign to

raid the Trojan countryside. There are clear moral implications to this, and tactical ones too as troops could be more unruly and the peasants who work the land would obviously be resentful. However this is resolved, it is a pressing matter indeed.

### **Prisoner Policies**

Soldiers must know how to conduct themselves in this war. Should they prioritize taking prisoners or slaughtering Trojans? Prisoners can fetch hefty ransoms, particularly from a wealthy city like Troy, and can make fighting less bloody. But they also require substantial troop commitments to keep them secure. Also, with the camp so close to the front lines a large prison population is extremely risky. Will there be a different policy for native Trojan fighters and those of the Trojan allies, or do the Greeks have an equal quarrel with them both? Without clarification war will be a confusing affair.

## **Key Players - The Kings of Greece**

***Conscripts: 654 ships and 78480 soldiers. These are nowhere near as effective as the forces of the great kings.***

### **Agamemnon of Mycenae (100 ships)**

Agamemnon gave more than any other man to be here today. He sacrificed his own daughter, Iphigenia, to the gods in order to get the wind the Greek ships used to sail to Troy. He has long desired to make himself king of the whole Aegean, and taking the greatest city of this land will be the key first step. He wants to see Troy dismantled brick by brick, its streets covered in blood, and its great riches brought to his vault at Mycenae. He is undeniably the greatest general of the Greek army,

increasing the effectiveness of large forces of armed men more than any other king could hope to. However, his brash and abusive manner can sometimes raise the specter of mutiny.

Chariots: 50

Archers: 50

Elites: 200

Infantry: 11700

### **Agapenor of Arcadia (60 ships)**

The Arcadians were able to make the journey to Troy thanks to ships provided by King Agamemnon. As a result their king Agapenor is a close ally of his. The Arcadians were certainly worth the investment. A reclusive and mysterious people, they have the special favor of the god Pan. As a result, they can call on the power of Panic to disorient and terrify their foes as they charge into battle.

Chariots: 200

Archers:

Elites: 500

Infantry: 6500

### **Ajax the Greater of Salamis (12 ships)**

A man who towers over all others on the fields of Troy, Ajax the Greater is far and away the greatest warrior the Greeks have now that Achilles has retired to his tent. Hand-to-hand combat is second nature to him. His elites are similarly skilled, and he takes great pride in them. He is a skilled commander, particularly in defensive situations. Salamis is a young polis, and he is determined to win glory for it. He also has a great deal of sympathy for Achilles, and is no great fan of

Agamemnon. One man he would unquestionably die for is his battle brother, King Idomeneus.

Chariots:

Archers:

Elites: 1440

Infantry:

### **Ajax the Lesser of Locria (40 ships)**

No one enjoys being called Lesser, and this dearth of glory has made this Ajax particularly bloodthirsty. Any Trojan present when Ajax enters the city would be well advised to run the other way, not that it would do them much good. Ajax is the fastest runner and best spear thrower in the army, talents he is itching to use to forge a better name for himself and massacre the Trojans.

Chariots: 400

Archers: 200

Elites: 200

Infantry: 4000

### **Diomedes of Argos (80 ships)**

A long time rival of the brothers Agamemnon and Menelaus for control of the Peloponnese, Argos and has temporarily put aside its distaste for Mycenae and Sparta to honor the treaty. King Diomedes is highly skilled in hand to hand combat and also invites greater favor from the gods. When he is granted divine favor, the result tends to be amplified. A normal person with divine favor can work a miracle. He can work an act of true legend. Diomedes has friends and even family fighting on the Trojan side, and he holds them in high regard even if they are his enemies.

Chariots: 300

Archers: 200

Elites: 100

Infantry: 9000

**Eumelus of Pharae (11 ships)**

Eumelus has been gifted with the finest horses and chariots the Greeks can put in the field. No one can command chariots like he can, and his horses run swifter than any other alive. Related by marriage to the royal house of Sparta, he views Paris' actions as a personal insult.

Chariots: 1320

Archers:

Elites:

Infantry:

**Eurypylus of Thessaly (40 ships)**

A proud man and the slave of duty, grimly determined to see this war to its end. Skilled at hand-to-hand combat and quick to engage in that very thing if he feels in any way insulted, he is also recognized as a great king and fairly effective general of large armies.

Chariots: 300

Archers: 200

Elites: 100

Infantry: 4200

**Idomeneus of Crete (80 ships)**

One of the greatest kings of Greece, Idomeneus is a skilled general and tactician, particularly when leading offensive attacks. Many look to him to preserve the

Greek alliance. He is frequently caught between his battle brother, Ajax the Greater, and his close ally, Agamemnon.

Chariots: 100

Archers: 100

Elites: 100

Infantry: 9300

### **Medon of Methone and Thaumasia (7 ships)**

The bastard son of the last king, Medon is viewed with great suspicion by his fellow leaders. There's some question as to whether he's even actually a King. Thus, he is more concerned with winning personal glory for himself than anything else. Without glorious deeds to add to his title, he won't have a title when this war ends. Fortunately for him, he commands a force of the greatest archers in the entire Greek army, each of them worth ten normal archers, and he inspires absolute loyalty in his troops.

Chariots:

Archers: 840

Elites:

Infantry:

### **Menelaus of Sparta (60 ships)**

Menelaus is here on a simple mission. Recover his wife, and skin alive anyone who was involved in taking her away from him. He will not rest until Troy knows the fury of Greece. The Trojans would be right to fear him, as he is highly skilled at hand to hand combat and the most skilled among the Greeks in leading small, specialized contingents into combat. His passion and resolve are inspiring tools.

Chariots: 100

Archers: 200

Elites: 500

Infantry: 6400

**Menestheus of Athens (50 ships)**

An old man like Nestor, but not quite so tired of battle. The king of Athens marshals and inspires troops before a battle like no other, and is particularly effective at offensive maneuvers. He has years of detailed experience to draw on, and looks on all things with a warrior-king's eye.

Chariots: 300

Archers: 300

Elites: 100

Infantry: 5300

**Nestor of Pylos (90 ships)**

Nestor is the oldest and wisest of all the Greeks. Indeed, he is old enough that he has fought and even killed some of the great monsters and heroes of legend. Agamenmon might lead the Greeks, but no one unites the Greeks like Nestor. His presence is inspiring, and his council highly valued. He in particular is tired of war, and is a great help to doctors and healers. He desperately wants the Greeks to preserve their honor, and has great respect for the Trojans

Chariots: 100

Archers: 100

Elites: 300

Infantry: 10300

**Odysseus of Ithaca (12 ships)**

Unlike most Greek heroes, Odysseus won his reputation almost exclusively through clever and stealthy exploits. Indeed, he is one of the only Greek kings capable of being stealthy. He hopes to bring the war to a swift conclusion so that he can return home. He has long been a favored hero of Athena, as he is uniquely intelligent and skilled at improvisation under pressure.

Chariots:

Archers: 300

Elites: 300

Infantry: 4200

### **Thoas of Aetolia (40 ships)**

A proud, pious, and deeply honorable man who seeks to follow the will of the gods in every possible way. He is the unquestioned master of erecting and defending defensive structures, maintaining the strong backbone of the Greek army.

Chariots:

Archers: 400

Elites:

Infantry: 4400

### **Tlepolemus of Rhodes (9 ships)**

The son of the mythical hero Heracles (Hercules to all you Romans) Tlepolemus shares his father's mythical strength and desperate desire for glory. He is the most physically strong man in the Greek army. He wants nothing more than to win his place in history by bringing down a powerful Trojan hero. His elites, like him, are blessed by Zeus with unnatural strength.

Chariots: 80

Archers:

Elites: 500

Infantry: 500

## Citations

1. Homer. The Iliad. Trans. Robert Fagles. NY: Penguin Books, 1990.
2. Ars Bellica [http://www.arsbellica.it/pagine/antica/Troia/troia\\_eng.html](http://www.arsbellica.it/pagine/antica/Troia/troia_eng.html)