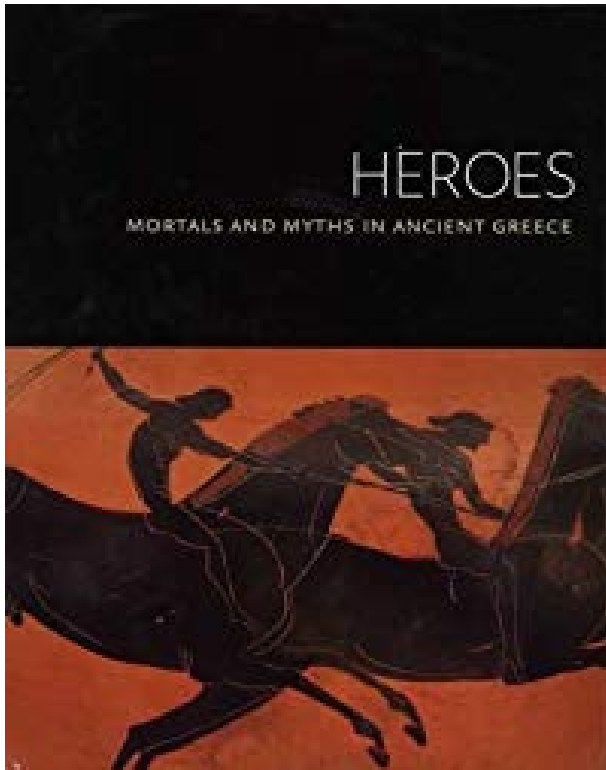


# Heroes: Mortals and Myths in Ancient Greece



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This handsome volume explores the integral role of heroes in ancient Greek art and culture. More than a hundred stunning statues, reliefs, vases, bronzes, coins, and gems drawn from major American and European collections highlight how heroes were represented, why they were important, and what encouraged individuals to seek them out. To contemporary eyes, Greek heroes embody contradiction: they might have superhuman powers, but their mortality was what made them heroic.

Many were regarded as benevolent ancestors with powers to protect and heal, but others were dangerous and haunted spirits of the dead, who had to be appeased. Although epic, drama, and the visual arts abound in representations of heroes whose fame has carried over into modern times, cult and funerary architecture commemorate many more individuals whose names and deeds are entirely lost to us.

Featuring essays by leading authorities in the field, this book draws on recent archaeological, literary, and art historical research to explore such issues as gender, cult, and iconography, as well as overlooked aspects of familiar (Herakles, Achilles, and Odysseus) and unfamiliar heroes (Helen of Troy).