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PHILEMON. See BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

PHILOCTETES. The son of Pocus, king of Malia, Philoctetes was the only one present at the death of Heracles who was willing to light the

funeral pyre at the hero's entreaty. For this service, Heracles gave Philoctetes his bow and arrows. (Some sources say it was Philoctetes' father who lit the pyre and later gave the weapons to his son.)

Philoctetes was one of Helen's unsuccessful suitors and therefore joined the Greek expedition against Troy. But on the voyage, while sacrificing to Athena (or Apollo), Philoctetes was bitten on the foot by a serpent (instigated by Hera, according to some accounts). The wound became so fetid that his fellows could not stand the stench or his agonized cries. At the urging of Odysseus (Ulysses), Agamemnon ordered that Philoctetes be put ashore on the deserted island of Lemnos, and his forces were taken over by Medon.

For ten years Philoctetes remained on Lemnos, suffering terrible pain and loneliness. He supplied himself with food by shooting birds with Heracles' bow and arrows. After the death of Achilles at Troy, either the Greek seer Calchas or the captured Trojan seer Helenus prophesied that Troy could not be taken without the son of Achilles and the arrows of Heracles. Odysseus (with Diomedes, according to some) was dispatched to Scyros to fetch Neoptolemus (Pyrrhus), Achilles' son by Deidamia, and thence to Lemnos. Obeying a stratagem invented by Odysseus, Neoptolemus at first tricked Philoctetes into giving up Heracles' bow and arrows, but then relented and returned them to him. The shade of Heracles appeared, bidding Philoctetes to go to Troy.

At Troy, Philoctetes was at last healed by Machaon (or Asclepius). He joined the battle and fought valiantly, slaying Paris with one of Heracles' arrows. After the fall of Troy, Philoctetes returned home safely; some accounts say that he later founded two cities in Italy as well as a shrine to Apollo, at which he dedicated the bow and arrows of Heracles.

Classical Sources. Homer, *Iliad* 2.716–28; *Odyssey* 3.190, 8.219ff. Sophocles, *Philoctetes*. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca* 4.38. Virgil, *Aeneid*, 3.401ff. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 9.233; 13.45ff., 313ff., 329, 402. Strabo, *Geography* 6.1.3. Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.10.8., E3.14, E3.27, E5.8, E6.15b. Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 8.33.4., 10.27.1. Hyginus, *Fabulae* 36, 102. Quintus of Smyrna, *Sequel to Homer* 10.179ff.

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See also TELEMACHUS; TROJAN WAR, General List.

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