

# KIN DRED

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Integrative Project  
2018 - 2019

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## Introduction

On my twelfth birthday party, a friend of mine gave me the young adult novel, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. The book starts with Percy Jackson as a twelve-year-old boy who quickly finds himself accused of stealing Zeus's lightning bolt and later, learns that he is a demigod: he is the son of Poseidon and mortal Sally Jackson. The novel takes place in twenty-first century USA, where the Greek gods and monsters have acclimated themselves to the modern US culture but coexist secretly amongst mortals. I grew up with Percy as I continued to read the rest of the series and admired how Rick Riordan modernized Greek mythology; it made me realize how relevant those stories were in building the foundations of a cultural identity. More importantly, it made me enjoy learning about other cultures and think about how different, or how similar, it was with my Indian culture.

My project aims to examine the idea of cross-cultural mythologies as a card game that prompts young adults to realize the similarities some cultures have between each other. As a cultural probe and educational tool in middle schools, high schools and colleges, my game will bring mythology into everyday discussion and show how comparable mythological gods and goddesses are across different cultures. The card game has thirty-six cards, with eight gods from four different cultures: Aztec, Japanese, Indian, and Greek. Each culture will have eight illustrations of their respective gods with symbols to show what these gods are associated with, which will help players make connections between cards that are not within the same culture. Future iterations of this deck will include having twelve gods for each mythology and more mythologies to include other cultures.

## Contextual Discussion

### *Comparative Mythology*

Julie Cruikshank defines myths as “universal truths” or “an exemplary model” that contribute to one’s understanding of history and creativity of cultures across the world. More specifically, myths have been defined as an attempt to solve a problem in the form of a logical model, overcoming contradiction and reflecting the social and psychological conflicts faced by people from diverse cultures<sup>1</sup>. Joseph Campbell describes mythology as a way of telling stories to “come to terms with the world and harmonize our lives with reality.”<sup>2</sup> What if these stories were similar to each other in some way or the other?

Comparative mythology started in the late 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries through comparative philology, a subject that deals with the structure and development of languages. Many scholars such as William Jones and Jacob Grimm founded parallels with languages from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, which lead to the establishment of Proto-Indo-European as a parent language. The research went into more details with Indo-European mythology to establish connections similar to the Indo-European languages. Friedrich Max Müller was a scholar who studied German comparative philology but did much research on theological ethnography as a means of showing cultural parallels among widely dispersed peoples. While most of Müller’s efforts focused on India and its connection to Indo-European societies, his works also implied

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1. Cruickshank, Julie. *When the World Began*, n.d.

2. Campbell, Joseph, and Bill Moyes. *The Power of Myth*, n.d. Accessed January 7, 2019.

that one might expect to make more intercultural connections all over the world<sup>3</sup>. Hence, much of the similarities between Indian and Greek mythology exist due to the Indo-European parent language where there are commonalities even between the names, such as Zeus, the Greek god of thunder and lightning and Dyaus, the Hindu counterpart of Zeus.

Japanese mythology, on the other hand, holds many connections between both Indian and Aztec mythology due to the influence of religion and its geographic location. The connection between Japanese and Hindu mythology is present due to the influence of Buddhism in Japan, a religion that originated from India. An example of this is Daikokuten, the Japanese god of wealth, households and darkness, relating back to Mahakala, a Hindu and Buddhist deity responsible for time, destruction, and power<sup>4</sup>. Michael Witzel, a German philologist and academic, furthermore expands on the concept of light and fire and how they emerge as similar motifs across Meso-American and Asian mythologies. In Japanese mythology, the sun god Amaterasu hides and re-emerges from a cave after getting upset with her brother's cruel pranks, thereby bringing light back into the world. Similarly, in the Vedas in Hindu mythology, Ushas, the goddess of dawn, is trapped in a cave until Indra, the king of the heavens breaks through the cave, and brings the world its "first dawn."<sup>5</sup> While the cave motif does not exist in Meso-

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3. Schrempp, Gregory. "Comparative Mythology." In *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art*, 2nd ed., edited by Charlie T. McCormick and Kim Kennedy White, 300-306. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011. Gale Virtual Reference Library (accessed February 22, 2019).  
<http://link.galegroup.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/apps/doc/CX1764100071/GVRL?u=umuser&sid=GVRL&xid=6eb4c12e>.

4. Roberts, Jeremy. *Japanese Mythology A-Z*. 2nd Edition. New York: Chelsea House, 2010.

5. Witzel, Michael. "Vala and Iwato: The Myth of the Hidden Sun in India, Japan, and Beyond." *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies (EJVS)* 12, no. 1 (March 2005): 69.

American mythologies, having a sun and/or fire god does with part of the reason being that Japan and Mexico are located near the Pacific Ring of Fire, an area of the earth which is prone to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes<sup>6</sup>.

Aztec mythology has some connections with Indian mythology as well due to the references several Indian academics have cited of Central and South America sharing similar mythological motifs with India. However, there is no hard evidence to confirm this. Of these connections, Chaman Lal brings up the Indian epic, *Mahabharata* in his novel *Hindu America*, specifically the excerpt when the Hindu prince Arjun is exiled to Patala, the Hindu underworld. There, he meets Princess Uloopi who has a waist made of snakes or crocodile skin<sup>7</sup>. Uloopi bears some resemblance to descriptions of Aztec goddesses in the Codex, like Coatlicue, an Aztec earth goddess described to have a skirt of snakes. In this way, Lal claims that Central and South America bear connections with India, although there is no other evidence to cement this claim.

### ***Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious***

Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and analytical psychologist, recognized the collective unconscious, and the role of the archetypes in how they shape the similarities that cultures have with each other. The collective unconscious can be best described as a compilation of ideas and memories and is formed by various kinds of signs, symbols and behavioral patterns, which when projected in reality, create myths, stories, and paintings. These ideas and memories

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6. Matsumura, Kazuo. *Mythical Thinkings: What Can We Learn from Comparative Mythology?* Lulu.com, 2014.

7. Chaman, Lal. *Hindu America*. Bombay, India: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960.  
[https://archive.org/details/HinduAmerica\\_201511/page/n27](https://archive.org/details/HinduAmerica_201511/page/n27).

are repetitive within all cultures and contain archetypes that humans innately recognize. An archetype is a typical idea of a person or role<sup>8</sup>. For example, in mythology, clowns or trickster figures exist as with Loki, the god of mischief in Norse mythology and Hermes, the god of thieves, trade, and trickery in Greek mythology. To this effect, Jung claimed that these archetypes in myths, manifested through many archetypal images, are almost the same for all cultures and are shared amongst people of all ages and races. Jung believed that the mind is not a blank slate from birth; there are other entities that exist within the human mind frame that are inherited and psychic in nature, thus allowing people from different corners of the globe to think similarly of the world around them<sup>9</sup>.

### ***Using Tabletop Games as a Medium of Communication and Education***

Tabletop games provide a platform for amusement and entertainment, while also teaching players strategy, chance, and probability. In *Ludology*, a podcast created by Gil Howa and Geoff Engelstein, games are described to be a form of competition that provide thrill, whether this competition requires players to be in teams against each other or individual participation. Tabletop games then provide “structured socialization”; players interact with other players through the rules and objectives of the game, thus giving a level playing field for all of them to engage in as they will all be learning and implementing this information from the game. Additionally, games open up the realms of fantasy and offer a getaway from reality. By using

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8. Adamski, Adam. “Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious of Carl G. Jung in the Light of Quantum Psychology” 9, no. 3 (September 2011): 563–71.

9. Rajcok, Paul. “Jung’s Psychology and the Study of Myth.” Wichita State University, 1982. [https://soar.wichita.edu/bitstream/handle/10057/1769/LAJ\\_v14\\_p5-24.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://soar.wichita.edu/bitstream/handle/10057/1769/LAJ_v14_p5-24.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

mythology, I play with the concept of fantasy and reality, as many of the gods are from ancient cultures, but are fantastical in nature.

Elizabeth N. Treher offers more insight into the importance of tabletop games as a tool for knowledge and skill development for people of all ages. Treher introduces the concept of heads-on versus hands-on learning, and how tabletop games can embody the best of both learning practices. Treher uses this as a springboard to talk about how games cater to all kinds of learning by providing analogies and metaphors to link information together. This works well with those who understand the big picture and are supported by the metaphors of the game. For those who might need specific examples, games translate abstract concepts through gameplay. So, when playing in teams, players learn together and are not singled out as all the information players have lies in the game. In this way, games accommodate a myriad of different learning styles. To support this, Treher offers the example of a study performed at the University of Connecticut in the School of Pharmacy that used *The Pharm Game* as a learning tool for students, in comparison to lectures and library assignments. Results showed that the mean scores for the game were much higher than those from the lectures and assignments, with better long-term retention and performance on tests<sup>10</sup>.

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10. Treher, Elizabeth. "Learning with Board Games." Minnesota: Lasting Perception, LLC. Accessed January 7, 2019. [https://www.thelearningkey.com/pdf/Board\\_Games\\_TLKWhitePaper\\_May16\\_2011.pdf](https://www.thelearningkey.com/pdf/Board_Games_TLKWhitePaper_May16_2011.pdf).



### ***Game Development: Referencing Existing Games***

Jumperound, a creative laboratory and indie board game developer realized many of their games through Kickstarter campaigns. Of these games, Jumperound developed a card game called *World of Mythology*. This card game requires players to use gods from ancient mythologies and defeat the other gods that the rest of the players have. Fans are able to buy 4 mythologies as a standard set and have the freedom to choose which mythologies they would like from what Jumperound has developed. Players play for one mythology, however, will have a random hand of cards which **they** can use to defeat the other player's gods using their own gods' unique powers and stats. The game ends when there are no playing cards left. At its current development, players can buy the game with four ancient mythologies, with each mythological set having twelve gods and goddesses. Jumperound aims to continue and expand its card deck to include more mythologies from all over the world<sup>11</sup>.

I was drawn to their approach of learning mythology in an entertaining manner, and the idea that the game can be iterated upon more so in the future by including more gods and more mythologies. Visually, I was also inspired by their use of symbols to convey what powers each god had and how I could reduce the number of words on each of the cards that I created.

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11. Jumperound. 2015. “\* WORLD OF MYTHOLOGY \*.” Kickstarter: World of Mythology. Kickstarter. 2015. <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/jumperound/world-of-mythology-0>.



Fig. 1 Jumperound, “Playing Card Details in *World of Mythology*”, 2015

Another game that was particularly inspiring was an online, multiplayer game called *Famously* by Hotovo. *Famously* gets famous people, all over the world, and from different time periods, to come together and form “legendary teams” (Fig.2). Players battle for a random card from the deck by matching the symbols on their own cards to the selected card in order to build the teams. The player’s card with the most similar symbols to the selected card wins the round. From this game, I took much of the inspiration to make connections between the gods in order to form teams that transcend their own mythologies. Similar to *World of Mythology*, I also took inspiration of using symbols as a way of communicating what the gods and goddesses are associated with.



Fig. 2 Screenshot of the video game, *Famously* by Hotovo (Hotovo, *Famously*, 2018)

## Methodology

The aim of the project was to create a piece of work that combined all the skills that I had garnered in college. I thought that using tabletop games as a medium of communication offered many advantages both for me as a designer, and for users I would like to cater this piece of work to. As someone who has dabbled in different areas of art and design, creating a tabletop game gave me the advantage of combining my abilities and knowledge in graphic design, illustration, product design, and interaction design. For users, this would be a different way of learning information; the way users learn of mythologies is gamified thereby adding a layer of entertainment to this learning.

## ***Initial Process***

My project's start point began by finding a way to build something based on South Indian culture. However, I realized that my experience living in different countries like Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates offered me an opportunity to show what I have learned being in different places and what I enjoyed about them. Moreover, coming to the US, and realizing that talking about culture is challenging, I wanted to create something that allows people to easily engage in different cultures without having the weight of conversations about culture holding them back. I started to interview international friends and classmates at the University of Michigan to find more information about how living in different countries has shaped their knowledge of the world around them. There was one quote I found of particular interest: "A lot of my values have been shaped by different cultures and I have the option to pick and choose. I am exposed to all kinds of ideas<sup>12</sup>". After interviewing the international students, I started to develop a set of game requirements and personas that would narrow down to whom I would be targeting this game.

## ***Ideation***

From my interviews with international students at the University of Michigan, I was inspired by the idea of picking and choosing aspects from different cultures to shape your syncretic culture. I started with a paper prototype of a board game that had five categories on the board: Element/Addition, Burden, Tradition, Growth/Decay, and Catalyst. Additionally, there were 2 types of cards, a card deck for different landscapes and a card deck for different components that comprise a culture (e.g., clothing, architecture, language, etc.). Lastly, there

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12. Heath, Chelsea. On being a Third Culture Kid. Interview by Srishti Gupta, n.d., September 21, 2018.

were tokens that would act as a form of currency. Players would randomly select a landscape that they would collectively use as the setting or background for their culture. Each player would then select “a domain” of culture which they rule. As they rolled a die and landed on any of the categories on the board, they would then have to make certain decisions on how they wanted to shape their culture based on what aspect of culture they controlled, and then take votes on the decisions made.

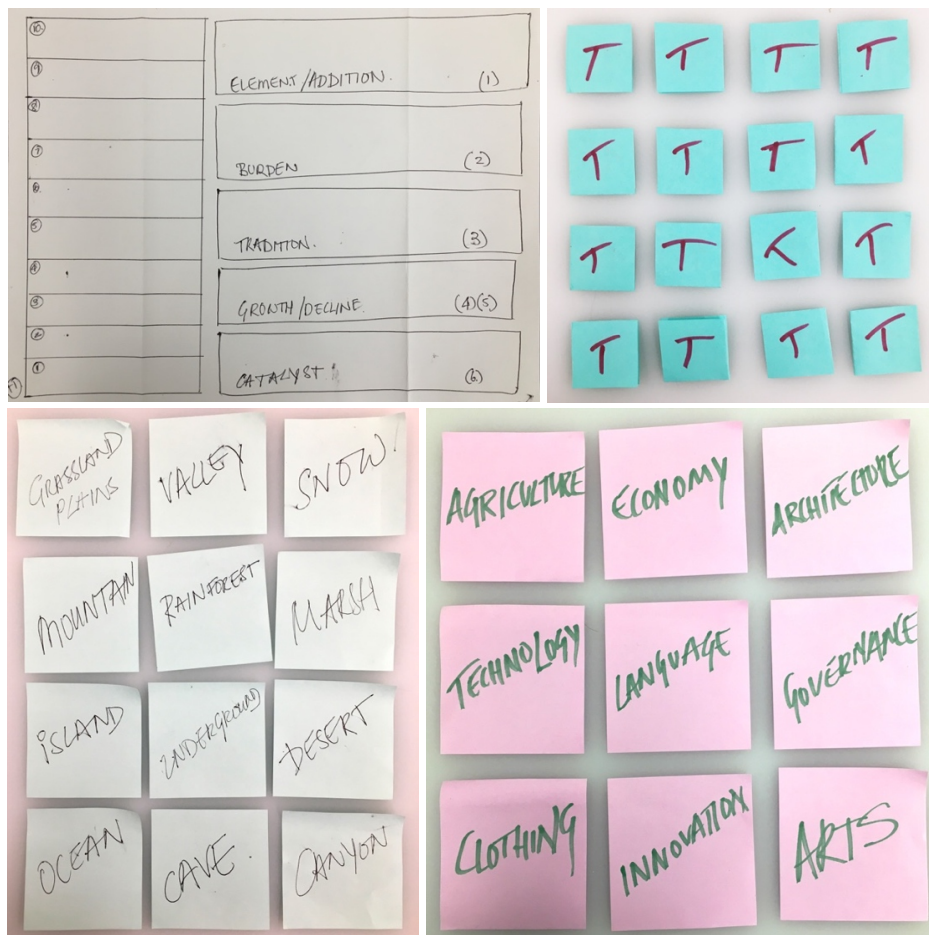


Fig. 3 Paper Prototype of my first game, Ann Arbor, November 2018

After playtesting my prototype, I realized that while this game was good for worldbuilding that could be used for other games and/or stories, it relied on the players' knowledge of cultures. What if players did not know as much about other cultures? Where would they get their information from then? The game asked players to seek information about different cultures outside the game, which took away from the overall enjoyment of it. The game also tried to encompass too many aspects of culture, which did not give the game any focus.

### ***Iteration***

During the winter break, I had gone back home to the United Arab Emirates and came across an old middle school project of 3 small paintings; they were death gods from Egyptian, Japanese, and Aztec mythology respectively. I was particularly proud of this project; it explored culture through mythology and drew comparisons between the death gods. What if that could be gamified? With that spark of inspiration and some basic Google search, I developed prototypes of cards for Greek, Indian, and Aztec gods with the aim of players trying to lose all their cards by making comparisons and connections between gods of different cultures.


















<p>5</p>  <p>In Aztec mythology, Coatlicue, also called Ixcipactli, meaning "maiden", was a goddess associated with concepts of fertility, beauty, and female sexual power, serving as a protector of young mothers and a patroness of pregnancy, childbirth, and the crafts practiced by women such as weaving and embroidery. She is often identified with a marigold.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Tlaloc is a member of the pantheon of gods in Aztec religion. Tlaloc is also a god of earthly fertility and of water. He was widely worshipped as a beneficent giver of life and sustenance. However, he was also feared for his ability to send hail, thunder, and lightning. Tlaloc is also associated with caves, springs, and mountains. His animal forms include herons and water-dwelling creatures such as amphibians, snails, and possibly sea creatures, particularly shellfish.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>In the Aztec religion, Huitzilopochtli is a deity of war, sun, human sacrifice, and the patron of the city of Tenochtitlan. He was also the national god of the Mexicas, also known as Aztecs, of Tenochtitlan. However, Huitzilopochtli was known as the primary god of war in ancient Mexico. The people had to make sacrifices to him to protect the Aztec from infinite night. He wears a Xihcoatl, a turquoise serpent, as a weapon, associating him with fire.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Mictlantecuhtli in Aztec mythology, was a god of the dead and the king of Mictlan (Chicunauhmictlan), the lowest and northernmost section of the underworld. He was one of the principal gods of the Aztecs and was the most prominent of several gods and goddesses of death and the underworld. The worship of Mictlantecuhtli sometimes involved ritual cannibalism, with human flesh being consumed in and around the temple. He is associated with a dog, one of the signs in the Aztec calendar.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Death, Underworld, Dog</p> <p>2</p>
<p>1</p>  <p>Quetzalcoatl was related to gods of the wind, of the planet Venus, of the dawn, of merchants and of arts, crafts and knowledge. He was also the patron god of the Aztec priesthood, of learning and knowledge. Animals thought to represent Quetzalcoatl include resplendent quetzals, rattlesnakes (coatl meaning serpent in Nahuatl), crows, and macaws. In his form as Ehecatl he is the wind, and is represented by spider monkeys, ducks, and the wind itself. In his form as the morning star, Venus, he is also depicted as a harpy eagle.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Wind, Venus, Dawn, Merchants, Arts, Knowledge</p> <p>1</p>	<p>5</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Hermes <b>Type:</b> God of Trade, Commerce, Heraldry, Roads and Sports. Also messenger of the gods and a "divine trickster". <b>Symbol:</b> Caduceus: two serpents wrapped around a winged staff. He is also god of boundaries and the transgression of boundaries, giving him the ability to move between the mortal world and the divine.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>4</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Hades <b>Type:</b> God of Underworld, Precious Metals and Wealth. <b>Symbols:</b> Pomegranate, Cerberus <b>Association:</b> Greek Trinity, 12 Main Gods He is considered sometimes to be the eldest amongst Poseidon and Zeus. He is infamous for luring the goddess Persephone into the underworld by tricking her into eating a pomegranate, the fruit of the underworld.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>3</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Poseidon <b>Type:</b> God of the seas, earthquakes, storms and horses. Protector of many seafarers, and patron of many cities in Ancient Greece. <b>Symbols:</b> Trident, Dolphins, horses He is the brother of Zeus and part of the Greek Trinity. He is well known for his rivalry with Athena in terms of being the patron god of Greece.</p> <p>3</p>
<p>2</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Zeus <b>Type:</b> King, Sky, Thunder, Trinity <b>Symbols:</b> bull, thunderbolt, eagle and oak <b>Association:</b> 12 Main Gods King of the Gods on Mount Olympus, where the Ancient Greek Gods were said to reside. Zeus was the god of the sky and thunder. He is part of the Ancient Greek Trinity, along with Poseidon and Hades. In most stories, he is told to be married to the goddess Hera. He is often well known for his erotic escapades on earth!</p> <p>2</p>	<p>1</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Athena <b>Type:</b> Warfare, wisdom and handicrafts <b>Symbol:</b> Owl, Olive Tree, Serpents <b>Association:</b> 12 Main Gods, Athens She was considered as the patron or protector of many cities, primarily Athens, from which she most likely received her name.</p> <p>1</p>	<p>5</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Shiva <b>Title:</b> Creator, Maintainer, Destroyer <b>Symbol:</b> Serpent, Third Eye, Crescent Moon <b>Association:</b> Trimurti or Hindu Trinity Shiva, part of the Hindu Trinity, is known as the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the universe. His responsibility is to create, protect and transform the universe.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>4</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Vishnu <b>Type:</b> Preserver, Protector <b>Symbols:</b> Mace, Discus, Conch, Lotus <b>Association:</b> Trimurti or Hindu Trinity He usually takes the form of a human and comes down to earth whenever evil threatens the world. His most famous avatar is Rama in the Indian epic the Ramayana. He is shown to be blue, with four arms each holding a mace, discus, conch and lotus in each of his arm.</p> <p>4</p>
<p>3</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Brahma <b>Type:</b> Creator God, <b>Symbol:</b> Swan, peacock or goose <b>Association:</b> Trimurti or Hindu Trinity, Cardinal Directions Brahma is the creator god, part of the Trimurti or Hindu Trinity, with Vishnu and Shiva. He is shown to have four heads, each pointing to a cardinal direction. He is not involved in Hindu myths of gods coming down to earth, but takes on a more metaphysical or abstract idea of a god.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>2</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Ganesha <b>Type:</b> God of success, wisdom and new beginnings <b>Symbol:</b> Mouse <b>Association:</b> Beginning of rites and rituals He was created from the earth by the goddess Parvati. Once alive, he was told by his mother to guard the door so she could wash her hands. When her husband, Shiva came, Ganesha refused to allow him in as he had never seen Shiva before. Shiva cut his head in frustration, only to later realize that it was his son. He went out to search for a head, and came across an elephant.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>1</p>  <p><b>Name:</b> Durga, The Invincible <b>Type:</b> Goddess <b>Symbol:</b> Lion <b>Associations:</b> Mother, Warrior Embodying the definition of strength, she is shown to have 10 arms with a weapon in each hand and accompanied by a lion. She is the fierce form of the protective mother goddess, willing to unleash her anger against wrong and violence for liberation.</p> <p>1</p>	

Fig. 3 The first set of card prototypes made in January 2019

I was even more motivated to continue forth with this idea when I found out games such as *Famously* and *World of Mythology* existed. These games made me change the wordy descriptions of each god into symbols that they were associated with. From then on, I needed to decide upon the total number of cards that were needed in order to make the game, given that I would also be creating the illustrations and symbols. I also needed to do further research to help shape the connections of the gods between the different cultures. For this, I created a table (Fig. 4) that would help sort out my connections between each god in the figure below.

Countries / Civilizations

India	Greece	Japan	Aztec
Indra	Zeus	Raijin	Tlaloc
Parvati/Durga	Hera/Hestia	Kishijoten	Coatlucue
Pushan	Hermes	Daikoku	Yacatecuhtli
Surya	Apollo	Amaterasu	Tōnatiuh
Saraswati	Athena	Benzai-ten	Quetzalcóatl
Yama	Hades	Enma	Mictlantēcutli
Varuna	Poseidon	Susano	Chalchiuhtlicue
Kartheeya	Ares	Hachiman	Huītzilōpōchtli
Kamadeva	Aphrodite	Aizen Myōō	Xochiquetzal
Aditi	Demeter	Inari Ōkami	Xipe Totec
Prithvi	Gaia	Izanami	Tlaltecuhli
Vishwakarma/ Tvastri	Hephaestus	Amatsumara/Kaiishin	Xiuhtecuhtli
Chandra	Artemis	Tsukuyomi	Coyolxauhqui
Kali? Bagalamukhi?	Hecate?	Okuninushi	Tezcatlipoca
Agni	Hestia	Kōjin	Chantico

Fig 4. A table I created to note down all the gods and goddesses that I would use from each culture. All the gods on each row have something in common so there are at least 4 different connections that can be made with a single card.



Lastly, I needed to figure out the designs and illustrations of the game. I did this by creating a visual bank of all the illustrations and existing card games that inspired me to build the game's aesthetics. Much of the game's aesthetics took inspiration from Gaby Zermano's illustration of a King of Hearts poker card (Fig. 5), which she designed for a contest in creating custom playing poker cards. However, as I continued to create more illustrations, much of the process became more experimental; I tried to make each mythological suit of a certain style, but still have the textures and high contrasting colors as something that visually connects all the cards together.



Fig. 5 Gaby Zermeño, King of Hearts Poker Card, Digital Illustration

## Creative Work

*Kindred* is a card game that includes Greek, Indian, Japanese and Aztec gods, with symbols on each card that prompt players to draw parallels with the gods. There are 32 cards, with eight cards for each mythology. Each mythology is treated as a suit, with a symbol that represents which mythology the god comes from. Every card has a stylized illustration of a god, with an assortment of symbols that indicate what each god is associated with (Fig. 6). There is a total of twenty one symbols to accommodate what each god is associated with (Fig. 8).

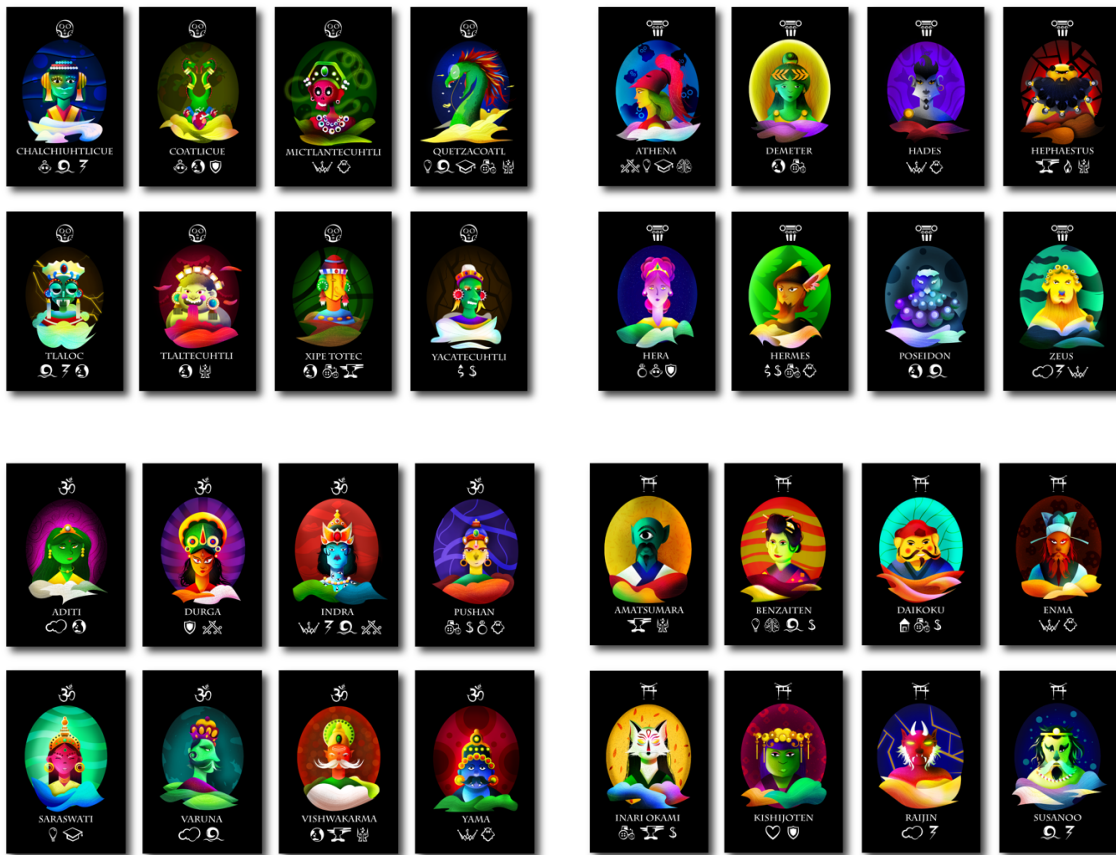


Fig. 6 Aztec Gods (top left), Greek Gods (top right), Indian Gods (bottom left), Japanese Gods (bottom right)

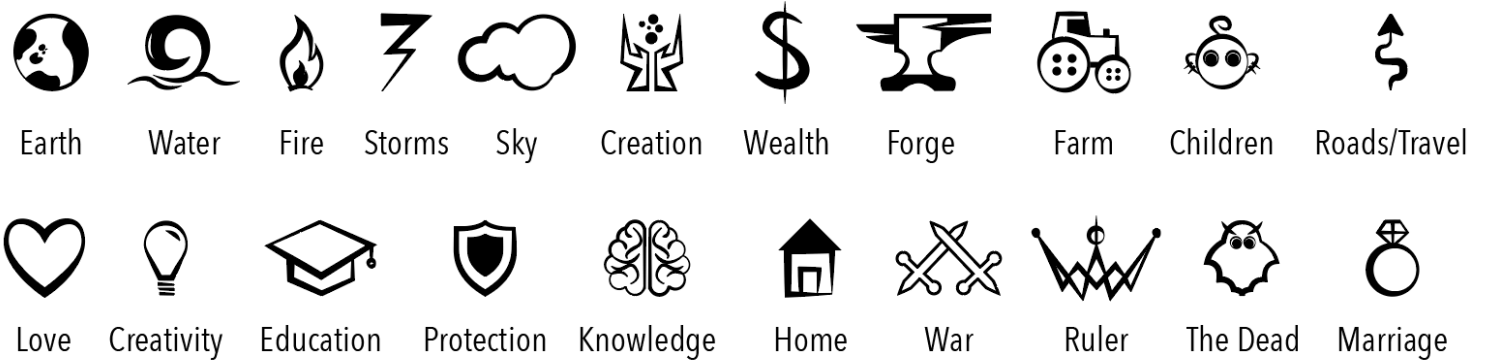


Fig. 8 A guide to understanding the symbols on the cards

*Kindred* comes with the advantage of having flexibility of ways to play the game. One way to play the game is similar to dominoes in which the objective for a player is to lose all their cards by matching them to the randomly laid out cards in front of all the players. The first player to lose all their cards wins. If a player cannot match any of their cards to the set of cards in front of them, they can use their turn to pick up a new card. The game is over when all the cards have been matched together (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7 Players can make a domino like structure by connecting cards with similar symbols together.

Alternatively, players can use the cards as an opportunity to create legendary teams based on the number of symbols they can match. Each player has 3 cards and places a random card from the card pile in front of them. Each player is then encouraged to put in a card that has the most connections with the selected card, and the player with the most connections with the random card wins it (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8 Players win cards by comparing symbols to their cards. In this example, four players are trying to match their card to win the card in the middle. The winner of this round would be the player who owns Benzaiten, as she has the most symbols in common with Quetzalcoatl.

## Conclusion

*Kindred* is the largest project I have done that has incorporated studying tabletop games, researching cultures, making connections between those cultures and synthesizing all that research into something visual and entertaining. I personally feel that I accomplished bringing all the art, design and research skills that I wanted to use in this project. While the first half of the project focused on gameplay and trying to understand what the game would be about, the second half of the project shifted focus to the illustration and design of the cards. Although this shift allowed me to build on and show my design skills, I sacrificed fine-tuning and creating a concrete set of rules for the game through more playtesting and feedback from friends, peers, and potential middle school and high school students. In the future, I would like to refine the set of rules for the game, and perhaps consolidate the number of symbols as there are many symbols that players have to be aware of. Additionally, I would like to test out new mechanics in the game which would allow players to switch cards, take a peek at other players' cards, skip turns etc. to make the game more dynamic. Once this fine tuning is set, I plan to officially publish the game and hope that people who love mythology, learning, and collecting card games will enjoy this project and what it has to offer.

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