



Myths of Greece and Rome

Hélène A. Guerber

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Myths of Greece and Rome Details

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From Reader Review Myths of Greece and Rome for online ebook

Helén Sz?ke says

shared this book with my daughter as her school were teaching myths and legends with some bizarre variations. It has a lot of concise stories that won't overly tax a child's concentration BUT (big but) you do have to dumb down the vocabulary to a child's understanding as some of them used would confound an adult.

Clare Farrelly says

This was a very interesting book, and although I have already read a lot of the more well known myths in more depth this brought up lots I had never heard of. It is informative and thoughtful. It is also funny at times because the 'gods' seem to really like turning things into other things to be helpful but really who would want their ships turned into water nymphs or be turned into a bird or constellation of stars? But it was a good read, and about what I expected from the book.

Ensiform says

Revised by Dorothy Margaret Stuart. A formidable tome, retelling a great many of the myths, from creation and the twelve main gods to Bellerophon to the Trojan War to the Aeneid. The language is rich and literate, representative of the time the book was written (originally published in 1907). Guerber also adorns her retellings with excerpts from Milton, Shakespeare, Keats and other poets whose work was drenched in mythological allusion. She finishes the book with some interesting comments on interpretation of myth.

Her style is on the whole pleasingly arch, as for example when she mentions that Cronus must have been "not of a very inquiring turn of mind" when he swallows a rock instead of Zeus. On the negative side, Guerber often robs the tales of their drama: she skims over such incredible feats as Bellerophon's destruction of the invincible Solymi, and fails to tell how exactly the sons of Boreas destroyed the harpies, or where King Admetus managed to find and ride a chariot drawn by boars. I also found the tales gutted in places; I'm not speaking of obvious bowdlerization such as references to homosexuality, but surprising omissions such as how Heracles ripped Theseus' hips when he rescued him from Hades, or why Echo was punished by Hera (it wasn't just for talking too much). Guerber doesn't even make it explicit that Achilles refuses to fight in the Iliad! These odd gaps aren't too distracting, however, as Guerber is usually thorough, and as noted before, her style is entertaining.

Nancy says

Having only a basic familiarity with some of the most well-known Greek and Roman myths, I felt that I needed to read this. Guerber presents an overview that surely must cover all the gods and goddesses and mythical mortals whose names survive in our constellations and in our language. I started out taking notes about the relationships among the gods, but soon found it to be overwhelming. Guerber includes a sort of

family tree at the end which is baffling, with some gods (immortal, of course) showing up in many generations and, as the stories bear out, married to one goddess or mortal after another. Many of the stories have strikingly similar themes, such as the pride of mortals leading to their downfall, and the certainty that to renege on a promise is to invite punishment. I am pleased that I read the book, but I also admit that I was glad to reach the end of it.

Nick McCarthy says

Great reference, and well written. Very easy to dip in and out of as well. the language is dated though, and the logic of its argument, in places, is weak

Martha Wilkins says

This book is very informative and I am glad to say that learned a lot from it. I would like to comment on the fact that the author uses a lot of words throughout the book that are not very common and unless you have an extensive vocabulary, you might want to have a dictionary nearby. The author also does not make the distinction between the Roman names and the Greek names given to the Gods; unless you are already familiar with their names it may require independent research. Aside from that, he does a good job of going through each myth and he even adds snippets of famous works from literature which pertain to the myth being discussed.

Suz Davidson says

Nice overview of the origins and myths of the major deities, with a nice amount of storytelling, though at times the language used is a bit flowery for a smooth flow.

Dawn says

The copy I read was published in 1893 and presented the various Greek myths along with quotations taken from poets who alluded to the mythology and included artwork interspersed appropriately in the text. The last three chapters of mythology were retelling of The Iliad, The Odyssey, and The Aeneid. Finally, the author included a map, an analysis of the myths, a genealogy chart, a listing of the artwork, an index to the poetry quotations, and a detailed glossary and index.

Mark Woodland says

One of the least useful books on mythology that I own. Its format is a listing

Louise Colclough says

A fantastic collection of Greek and Roman myths and legends - If you're interested in Homer's or Virgil's but are unsure if you want to read them in their entirety then this book gives you the short versions of all their classic epics. I enjoyed the book and I especially like how's it written and paced, with the main chapters then sub-chapters. It's an easy book to pick up, read a little, and if you're short on time you can read a section quickly and put it down to resume at a different time.

Chris says

The late W M S Russell, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Reading, was a modern-day polymath: classicist, sociologist, biologist (he helped formulate the principle of the three Rs of humane animal experimentation: Reduction, Replacement and Refinement), folklorist (former President and Secretary of the Folklore Society), radio quiz panellist (a sometime stalwart of *Round Britain Quiz*), raconteur, singer, novelist... Well, you get the picture. I was privileged to be a longtime correspondent of his, and while I never had the opportunity to meet up with him in person I knew him from phone conversations to be knowledgeable, personable and friendly. His premature death was a great sadness to me personally and a loss to his many friends and acquaintances generally.

Bill Russell provided a new introduction to this re-issue, one of a series entitled *Myth, Legend and Folklore*, the result of a collaboration between Wordsworth Editions and The Folklore Society which it is intended will make the archive of the Society more generally accessible than at any time since its beginnings in 1879. This classic narrative of classical mythology, first published in 1908 and written by British academic Hélène Adeline Guerber, was apparently highly regarded in its day. Though not as famous as *The Age of Fable*, which I remember from my childhood as the first part of *Bullfinch's Mythology*, Guerber's retelling comments on their origins and significance from a later and more scientific viewpoint, as its opening sentence proclaims:

Mythology is the science which treats of the early traditions, or myths, relating to the religion of the ancients, and includes, besides a full account of the origin of their gods, their theory concerning the beginning of all things.

My review copy from 2000 is actually full of Bill's handwriting, correcting the handful of typographical errors that had slipped through the editing process to appear in the published version, so I am particularly fond of it. Unlike modern academic tomes, there is no extensive bibliography – indeed, none at all, as Guerber's contemporary references are now all well out of date. However, there remains the nineteenth-century penchant for quoting classical and contemporary poetry at appropriate points in the text. For all that the text reads easily enough, with sub-headings to chop up the text in bite-size chunks and a useful index to locate names (though the numerous but bald page references for Heaven, Earth, Love *etc* are a bit daunting – a bit of cross-referencing would have been more useful).

Every so often someone will lament the passing of an age when to be educated meant being as familiar with the ancient Greek and Roman myths as with your own neighbourhood. For better or worse that is no longer the case but, as with the practice of straitjacketing the English language with the rules of Latin grammar, this knowledge could often constrict the creative imagination. Maybe the passing of time may lead to public re-acquaintance with this ancient matter, resulting in a kind of mini-renaissance.

Or maybe not. Professor Russell's introduction reminds us nevertheless that classical myths and folk-tales have inspired modern writers in unexpected ways, especially science-fictioneers such as Asimov, Arthur C Clarke, Sprague de Camp and Brian Stableford; one tale-type even provided the name of pioneering rock band The Grateful Dead. And as you yourself read through these various stories, and immerse yourself in tales of boar hunts, and wild hags decapitated by heroes, and kings with animal ears betrayed by barbers, and ships returning with black sails (all classical motifs recurring in, for example, Arthurian legends), you may well begin to wonder if there is anything new under the sun except a change of name and a new context.

<http://wp.me/s2oNj1-myth>

Snufkin says

A fantastic collection that perfectly balances ease of reading and informativeness. Cover to cover it is wonderful.

Jack Coleman says

Very entertaining return to myth and legend. Well written spiced with poetical quotations and a comprehensive addendum for pronunciation.

I was reading this at the time of the Olympic games and was really ticked off at the Norwegian ladies soccer official. At the time I was reading the story of the flute playing contest between Apollo and Pan. Pan was king Midas's man and awarded the contest to Pan. Apollo being incensed with the injustice causes generous sized ass's ears to grow on either side of his head. So if you see a Norwegian soccer official with abnormally large ears. Its my fault!

"The god of wit, to show his grudge,
Clapt asses ears upon the judge;
A goodly pair, erect and wide,
Which he could neither gild nor hide." SWIFT.

Shannon says

Be prepared for a long read.

Jayvee Lopez says

For a quick retelling, for me this book fits the criteria. It's well written and Gruuber made it as simple as connect-the-dots as to those myths which are related to each other or in connection with the other. Nevertheless, I'd still prefer Edith Hamilton's Mythology. It's much more detailed.
