A GUIDE TO
THE TWO SOURCES OF
WESTERN CIVILIZATION

西方文明起源导读

（英汉对照版）

[英] 马克·巴克（Mark Buck）●编著

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PREFACE

This is a book written for the general reader who is interested in evaluating and understanding Western culture. It aims to provide an introduction to the two main sources of Western civilization — Greek mythology and the Bible — and assumes no previous background knowledge of either. Until recently the study of Greek and Roman culture, and of the classical languages of Greek and Latin in particular, was a major feature of western education. Until very recently too, most educated westerners had a fairly extensive knowledge of the Bible, as a result both of their education and of fairly widespread religious observance. So Western writers assumed a quite detailed knowledge of both Greek mythology and the Bible in everything they wrote. A working knowledge of these two very large areas is therefore a necessary key to understanding most Western literature and art.

The book's first object is therefore to select from very extensive and often very complex material what is most essential. However, in doing this, we have been reluctant to restrict ourselves and our readers to a purely narrative presentation of the subject. We wish to make the reader acutely aware of the historical context in which the Greek myths and the books of the Bible were written, and to insist that this historical context shaped what they said and how they said it. We also wish to provoke the reader into detecting the values of the people who told these stories, and to judge them against the values of other ancient civilizations and against our own today.

There is plenty of room for textual criticism. Stories both mythological and historical are transformed as they are repeated. They are often used for purposes quite different from those intended by their creators. There is therefore a need

for critical analysis, especially when dealing with the Bible. It is important to treat the Bible as a series of historical documents and to apply the same rules of textual criticism to them as one would apply to any other text. This is not to denigrate a text which many regard as sacred; it is to enable a deeper, more mature and more relevant understanding of it.

We have often raised questions without offering definitive answers. That is because to some questions there are none, while to others the conventional answers are unsustainable. We contend that it is important never to fear rational enquiry or critical analysis, even with religious texts.

Mark Buck
Chen Hongwei
Beijing
August 2018

前　言

　　此书旨在面对想了解西方文化并对之做出批判性思考的大学生及其他广大读者。此书将立足希腊神话与《圣经》文化，对西方文明的两大源头展开介绍和评述。传统上，学习希腊罗马文化，以及希腊和拉丁文等古典语言，一直都是西方教育的重要内容。直到近些年，大多数受过教育的西方人对《圣经》都有很深的了解，这不仅是源于学校的教育，也源于对宗教信仰习俗的遵守。以此，西方作家在创作时，都会不自觉地大量涉及希腊神话和《圣经》文化的知识。可以说，对这两大领域知识的领悟是理解西方文学和艺术的入门钥匙。

　　此书的首要目标是从这浩瀚、庞杂的体系中，选取出最精粹的部分，以呈献给读者。不过，我们却不希望单纯地呈现这些故事，我们更希望看到的是读者能通过读这部书，不仅可以熟悉这些叙事，还可以了解这些希腊神话故事和《圣经》故事的历史背景；而且希望读者能够看到，这些故事之所以如此，这些人物之所以如此，是其所处的历史语境塑造的。我们还希望，这部书能够激发读者探究这些神话书写者的价值观，并且将这些价值观与古代其他文明进行批判性的比较，也与我们今天的价值观进行观照。

　　在书写这两个源头的过程中需要做文本批评的地方有很多。不管是神话故事，还是历史故事，在被反复讲述的过程中都经历了各种"变形"。而被"变形"的目的，常与最初讲述这些故事时的动机不同。这样，就有了批判性分析的契机，尤其是《圣经》故事。重要的是，我们在读《圣经》故事时，需记它们皆是历史文本，我们应像读普通文本一样对待它。这样做并非是要亵渎这一神圣文本，而是要更加深入和成熟地理解这部经典。

　　我们常常会提出很多无法得出确切答案的问题。因为有些问题本就是

没有答案的，而有些问题在传统上虽有答案可循，但似乎并不能站住脚。所以，理性的探究与批判性的分析至关重要，哪怕是针对宗教文本也是如此。

此书能够付梓，得益于北京科技大学的项目支持，也得益于剑桥大学的威廉·霍布里教授、哈特福郡圣安德烈教堂的牧师威廉·丘特的建议和点评。在此一并致谢。

马克·巴克
陈红薇
于北京
2018 年 8 月

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I

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

第一部分

希腊神话

WHAT IS MYTH?

Storytelling

The English word "myth" comes from the Greek **μύθος** meaning a story. Today we are so used to a world in which the printed or electronic word is easily available that it is easy to forget that in more ancient civilizations writing was a specialized skill, rather like that of a calligrapher today. In ancient civilizations information was transmitted far more by the spoken word than by the written word. The stories which make up Greek mythology would have first been passed orally from one generation to another.

Of course, we have no recordings of ancient peoples speaking aloud. But the spoken word was reinforced by visual images and there is plenty of evidence of ancient Greek art. The stories that make up the Greek myths are often first found in the painting on Greek vases. About 100,000 vases survive from ancient Greece. The images become far more sophisticated from the late 7th century B.C.. The superman Herakles was a highly popular subject.

One Version or Many?

So myths were originally transmitted by oral or visual means. And of course there were lots of different people telling these stories. So the ways they told them soon began to vary. Quickly there began to be many versions of the same story. That is why there are many versions of the Greek myths. However, that is not something that should concern us. There is no need for us to try to establish a single authentic version. It is not the case that there is one correct version and all

神话是什么？

讲故事

英文单词"神话"（myth）来自希腊文单词 μύθος，意思是"故事"。当今在我们生活的世界，印刷与电子书籍唾手可得，活在其中的我们很容易忘却，在古代的文明里，书写是一项专门的技能，有点像今天的书法。在那个时候，信息更多靠口头传播，而非书面文字。希腊神话故事最初也是以口头形式一代代传承下来的。

我们自然没有古人讲话的录音，但口述经由视觉形象得以加强。古希腊留下了许多视觉艺术，可以作为一种佐证。希腊神话故事往往先发现于希腊古瓮上。从古希腊流传至今的古瓮有十万余件。从公元前七世纪开始，古瓮上面的人物形象渐趋复杂。超人赫拉克勒斯的故事曾风靡一时。

一个版本还是多个版本？

如此说来，古希腊神话故事最初是以口头或者视觉艺术传播。由于有许多不同的人在讲述这些故事，他们讲故事的方式很快便出现不同。慢慢地，同一个故事就有了多种版本。因而希腊神话版本众多。不过，这个并不妨碍我们的阅读。我们也没必要确立一个权威版本。这些版本皆可共存，

the others are wrong.[1]

We should next consider how anything that is transmitted orally is likely to be transformed as it passes from one storyteller to another. Most probably, the storyteller wishes to impress; at the very least he wants to hold the audience's attention. So he develops and elaborates what he has to tell. He knows that people are fascinated by what is exceptional, by deeds which exceed what normal humans are capable of, by what can be called "epic" tales. So the stories become more and more fantastic. Many of them may have a basis in fact, but the facts have been elaborated and dramatized with the telling of them.

So it is not surprising that there are many inconsistencies in different versions of the Greek myths as we know them today. And it is not surprising that many of the myths are stories that enter the realm of fantasy to the point of absurdity.

Why Do People Tell Stories?

We need to ask ourselves: Why do people tell each other stories? We have already identified one simple reason: to impress and hold the attention of the listener. But there are other reasons too. One is the need to explain the world around us — how it all began; Man's powerlessness in the face of Nature. Another is to explore the psychological strengths and weaknesses of human nature. This need to explain and make sense of the world and the human condition goes a long way to account not only for the Greek myths but also for the myths which every civilization and people develop.

For the Greeks were not unique. Other civilizations and religions have their "myths" too, even though they may not call them that. Many people are unwilling to call many of the stories in the Bible "myths." But that is what they are. For example, the account of the fall of man at the start of the Bible is a myth. As we shall see later, it tells us something about the human condition, the fallible and fallen (but not evil) nature of man. And what it tells us is, arguably, eternally true.

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[1] Indeed, so far as we know, the Greeks themselves did not worry about establishing a single authentic collection of all the myths. There is no surviving textbook of Greek myths in the ancient world until a book called the *Library* of Pseudo-Apollodorus in the 2nd century A.D. ("pseudo" means "lying, false, pretending to be something that it is not." The *Library* was attributed to Apollodorus of Athens, a Greek scholar born in 180 B.C.. However, it cannot all have been written by him as it discusses events which occurred after he had died. Hence the author is generally referred to as "Pseudo-Apollodorus.")

不存在谁对谁错的问题。[1]

下面我们猜想一个问题：故事在口口相传的过程中，变化是如何产生的？很有可能是讲故事的人想给听众留下深刻印象，抑或是希望听众可以专心地听讲，于是他就对故事进行了演绎和加工。他知道听众的趣味：惊人的故事、常人所不能做到的英雄事迹，以及史诗般的宏伟篇章。于是，经由讲故事者之口，这些故事变得越来越精彩。很多故事可能在起初确是有事实依据的，但随着人们的讲述，事实便被演绎和发挥成了故事。

所以，这便不奇怪为什么今天我们读到的神话故事会有那么多互相冲突的地方，又有那么多不同的版本。有很多故事读起来近乎玄幻，甚而荒谬也就全在情理之中了。

🏵 为什么要讲故事？

我们需要自问：为什么人们要互相讲故事呢？我们已经说到一个简单的理由：为了给听众留下印象，抓住他们的注意力。但还有其他的原因。一个原因是我们需要解释周围的世界——世界是如何开始的，人类在自然面前的无力。另一个原因则是探索人性中的心理优势与弱势。为了解释这个世界与人类的处境，于是产生了希腊神话，以及其他一切文明和人类的神话。

神话并非希腊人所独有。其他的文明与宗教也都有自己的"神话"，虽然他们可能并不一定也称其为"神话"。虽然《圣经》里面的很多故事是神话故事，但很多人并不愿意称之为"神话"。比如《圣经》开卷所讲人类堕落的故事就是一个神话故事。如我们后面会讲到的那样，这个故事揭示了人类之初的处境，以及人类可堕落且已经堕落（但并非邪恶）的本性。虽然它所讲述的不无争议，但基本上是真实的。虽然我们今天可能不再沿

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[1] 其实，据我们所知，希腊人自己都没想过要建立一套权威的神话故事集。古希腊没有留下神话故事的集子，直到公元二世纪才有了以伪阿波罗多罗斯（Pseudo-Apollodorus）之名写下的《图书集》（*Library*）。（"Pseudo"的意思是"撒谎的，虚假的，作伪的"。《图书集》这部书虽归在希腊人阿波罗多罗斯的名下，但是，这部书不可能都是他写的，因为这位希腊学者出生于公元前180年，但书里面探讨的一些内容却是他死后才发生的事情。所以后人才称这部书的作者为"伪阿波罗多罗斯"。）

The story was expressed in a way we would probably not express it today, but the truth that lies behind it remains relevant.

Are Myths "True" or "False"?

One reason why some people are reluctant to call stories in the Bible "myths" is that the word "myth" has developed a meaning it never originally had. In everyday use today, it means something that is "not true," not scientifically proven. So to say that something is a "myth" is to say that it should be rejected and disbelieved. Certainly the great majority of the Greek myths, like the myth of the Creation and the Fall in the Bible, if they are taken literally, contradict sense and science and cannot be true. However, there are different kinds of Truth. It is possible for a story which is not literally true to convey a psychological truth. This is the case with many of the Greek myths and with many of the stories in the Bible. There are many Chinese myths which have a value of this kind too.

Why Do Ancient Myths Survive in the Modern World?

We have already argued that myths changed because, before the written word was common, storytellers in the ancient world elaborated and developed them. We need also to notice that the changes did not stop with the arrival of the written word. A good story is referred to, repeated and used by generation after generation. The way it is used reflects the concerns and interests of each succeeding generation. So these changes tell us a great deal about the societies that made use of the myths.

Furthermore, until the mid-20th century a classical education in Greek and Latin was common in Western society, as was knowledge of the Bible. For this reason, writers, poets, painters, sculptors and musicians readily used ancient myths and the Bible as material to enrich their work, to make a point, to draw a parallel, to reinforce a perception about human psychology or simply to be elegant and show off. So ancient myths and biblical narratives have become deeply embedded in Western culture. Some ages have used them more extensively and more skillfully than others but right up to the present day they are essential to an understanding of western culture.

The Romans adopted and re-named the Greek gods, sometimes combining their cults with other eastern cults they encountered as their territories expanded.

用《圣经》讲故事的方式，但其故事背后所传达的真理却具有重大的意义。

神话是真是假?

有些人不愿意称《圣经》中的故事为神话，其中一个原因是"神话"一词引申出了一个新的含义。今天说到这个词，它隐含的意思是"不真实的"，未经科学证实的。所以，如果说什么东西是"神话"，其隐含的意思就是说这个东西是不可信的。当然，神话故事中的大部分，如《圣经》中的创世神话、人的堕落等，如果单从故事本身来看，都是违背常理与科学的，都不可能是真实的。但是，真理有多种。一个本身不真实的故事，可能传达出心理学意义上的真理。希腊神话故事大都如此，《圣经》中的很多故事也是，中国很多神话故事的价值也在于此。

为什么古老的神话能存活于现代世界?

我们已经论述过，神话故事之所以发生变化，是因为在书写文字普遍使用之前，讲故事的人对它们进行了演绎。我们还需要注意，这种变化并未随着书写文字的出现而终止。好故事会被一代代人传讲和重复。而它被传讲和使用的方式反映着所传讲时代人们的关怀与兴趣。所以，这些神话故事的变化也在向我们诉说着传讲这些故事的时代与社会。

此外，直到二十世纪中期，西方的教育都普遍传承着希腊语和拉丁语的古典教育，就像《圣经》的教育一样。因此，作家、诗人、画家、雕刻家和音乐家都会使用这些古典神话以及《圣经》里面的故事，来丰富他们的作品，说明一个观点，做一个类比，印证对于人类心理的洞察，或单纯为了优雅或炫耀。所以说，古典神话与《圣经》中的故事在西方文化中留下了深深的印记。有的时代用得更多些，有的时代用得更有技巧;时至今日，这两大源头从来都是理解西方文化的关键。

罗马人接纳了古希腊的诸神，并给他们起了拉丁文名字，有时候还把这些神与他们在领土扩张时所遇到的东方诸神融合在一起。

Despite its rejection of polytheism, in the Middle Ages Christianity preserved many classical texts, and hence the myths in them. This was mainly because these texts provided material for language training, Latin being the language of the church. As a consequence the myths were preserved.

At the Renaissance, the rediscovery of ancient Greece and Rome led to a widespread revival of interest in Greek and Roman mythology, much of which was absorbed through the medium of the Roman poet Ovid. Botticelli, Titian, Rubens and many other artists portrayed not only Christian themes but also the pagan subjects of Greek mythology. As we shall see, the Greek gods have very human features and characteristics (unlike ancient Chinese gods), so ancient Greek and Roman "humanism" was attractive at the Renaissance, which placed new stress on the realization of human potential.[1]

Shakespeare[2] and Milton[3] assumed that their readers would have a close knowledge of the Greek myths. The late 17th century French dramatist Racine re-worked many myths in his tragedies.[4] For the composer Handel in the 18th century they formed the subjects of some of his operas.[5]

In the early 19th century the romantics displayed a new enthusiasm for all things Greek. As we shall see later, the myth of Prometheus appealed particularly to revolutionaries looking for a model of heroic self-sacrifice and struggle against tyranny. And in the 20th century Freud used Greek myths, particularly the myth of Oedipus, as the basis of the new science of psychoanalysis.

To approach Western culture without some knowledge of Greek mythology would therefore be to seek to enter a building without having first secured the key to its front gate.

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[1] This was in contrast to the medieval Christian emphasis on the sinfulness of mankind. Renaissance artists and writers looked back to ancient Greece and Rome for models of heroes who achieved the potential through their own efforts.

[2] Most notably in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is set in the court of Theseus of Athens. Shakespeare mentions Herakles a total of 48 times in 18 different plays. But most of Shakespeare's knowledge of the Greek myths was accessed through Ovid rather than directly from Greek sources.

[3] For example, in the pastoral poem *Lycidas* (1637).

[4] In *La Thébaïde* (1664), which covers the story of the wars between the sons of Oedipus, and also the death of Antigone; *Andromaque* (1667); *Iphigénie* (1674), where Racine alters the ending from the one found in Euripides; and *Phèdre* (1677).

[5] For example, *Teseo* (1713); *Acis and Galatea* (1718); *Admeto* (1727), which is based on Euripides's play *Alcestis*; *Arianna in Creta* (1734); *Oreste* (1734).