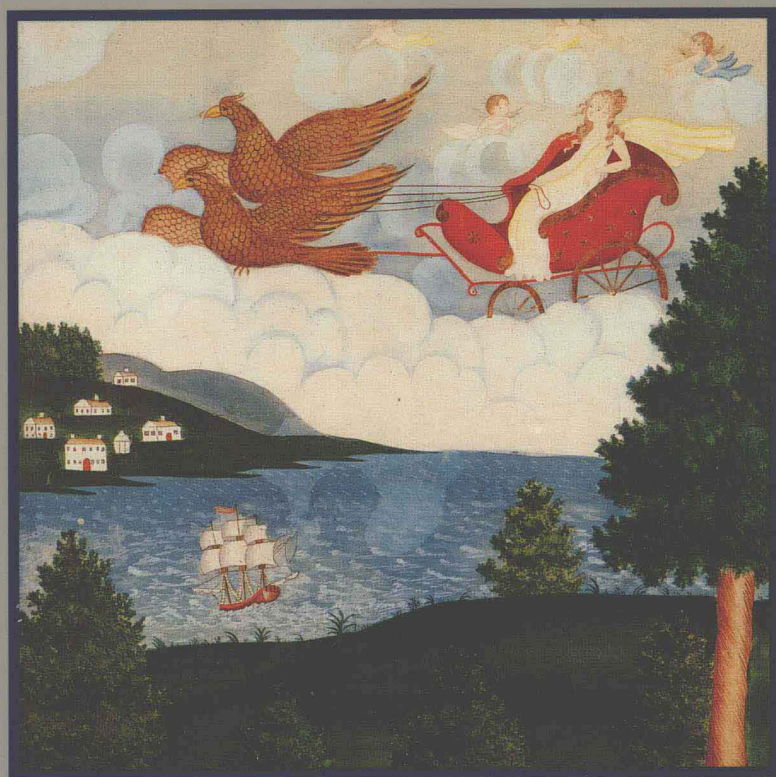


# CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

S I X T H   E D I T I O N



Mark P. O. Morford

Robert J. Lenardon

# CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

SIXTH EDITION

MARK P. O. MORFORD

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

ROBERT J. LENARDON

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY,

EMERITUS

SINCLAIR COLLEGE



LONGMAN

---

An imprint of Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

New York • Reading, Massachusetts • Menlo Park, California  
Harlow, England • Don Mills, Ontario • Sydney  
Mexico City • Madrid • Amsterdam

Editor-in-Chief: Patricia Rossi  
Senior Editor: Lisa Moore  
Associate Editor: Natalie Hart  
Marketing Manager: John Holdcroft  
Project Coordination, Text Design, Art Studio, and Electronic Page Makeup:  
Thompson Steele Production Services  
Cover Designer/Manager: Nancy Danahy  
Cover Art: *Aurora*, artist unknown. New England (possibly Massachusetts), ca. 1820, formerly called *Chariot in the Clouds* and *Venus Drawn by Doves*. Watercolor and gold paper collage on silk; 14½ × 14¼ in. See page 44.  
Full Service Production Manager: Eric Jorgensen  
Photo Researcher: PhotoSearch, Inc.  
Senior Print Buyer: Hugh Crawford  
Printer and Binder: The Maple-Vail Book Manufacturing Group  
Cover Printer: The Lehigh Press

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Copyright © 1999 by Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc.

Morford, Mark P. O.

Classical Mythology / Mark P. O. Morford, Robert J. Lenardon. — 6th ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-801-31953-6

1. Mythology, Classical. I. Lenardon, Robert J.

III. Title.

BL1722.M67 1998

292.1'3--dc21

98-20831

CIP

678910-MA-9897

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States.

Please visit our website at <http://longman.awl.com>

ISBN 0-801-31953-6

12345678910-MA-01009998

*Dedicated to the memory of*  
WILLIAM ROBERT JONES  
*teacher, scholar, and friend*

## PREFACE

This is the sixth edition of *Classical Mythology*, which was first published in 1971. Successive revisions have been extensive, in grateful response to sensitive and appreciative critics over many years. They have encouraged us to remain firm in our conviction that the literary tradition of Greek and Roman mythology must always remain our first consideration but they have also confirmed our need to incorporate, in so far as possible, additional comparative and interpretative approaches and the evidence from art and archaeology. Thus our work, more than ever, stands as a comprehensive study of classical mythology, where one may go to explore the nature of the Greek and Roman deities and the substance of their legends: a source where one may nourish a sympathetic understanding of the great mythological heritage bestowed by classical antiquity. Enriched with this knowledge and appreciation, readers will be prepared to make exciting comparisons of all sorts, anthropological, psychological, literary, artistic, or musical, and to pursue whatever further explorations they may desire.

Our own translations of the ancient authors become more extensive with each edition: among Greek authors, all thirty-three Homeric Hymns; all the important episodes in Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*; excerpts (many of them substantial) from Homer, Pindar, and the Lyric poets, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Plato, and Lucian; among Latin authors, passages from Vergil, Ovid, Statius, and Manilius.

We have always considered the powerful influence of classical mythology upon diverse artistic forms (painting, sculpture, literature, music, opera, dance, theater, and cinema) to be a most vital study. This is why we believe our treatment (in Part III) of its survival and our inclusion of illustrations from not only ancient but also subsequent depictions in art to be of the utmost importance. The tenacious persistence of Greek and Roman mythology as a living force throughout the ages but most particularly in contemporary society has become its most identifiable characteristic. After all, its inspiration has never died. It is retold and reinterpreted with infinite variations continuously; these gods and goddesses, these heroes and heroines and their stories never remain fixed but constantly change. We can never really pronounce with finality upon the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and the legend of Heracles or upon the character of Achilles and Helen, because no sooner is the pronouncement made than the myth, the legend, and its characters have been transformed

anew and we feel compelled to include and discuss their most recent transformations and the fresh insights they provide for our own world.

New to this edition are the following revisions: an Appendix to Chapter 8 (Artemis) that discusses Euripides' *Hippolytus* in the context of lengthy excerpts; an appendix to Chapter 16 (The Mycenaean Saga) that provides a critical, comparative analysis of the Electra legend as treated by all three of the Greek tragedians with extended translations from Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, and the *Electra* of Sophocles and Euripides; Chapter 15 (The Theban Saga) now includes a more lengthy treatment of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* and a psychoanalytical interpretation of his *Oedipus Tyrannus*; additions have been made to Chapters 17 and 18 (The Trojan Saga and The Returns): a critique of the Olympian gods in battle, an expanded section on the wooden horse, and more lengthy excerpts from the *Odyssey*, with a deeper appreciation of the character and role of Penelope. The Introduction incorporates the most recent excavation reports of Bronze Age Troy. Throughout the text we have made many improvements and we have updated the bibliographies and the notes. There are six new illustrations.

Originally, we each undertook the major responsibility for certain sections—Professor Lenardon for the Introduction, Part I, and Chapter 26, and Professor Morford for Parts II and III (other than Chapter 26 and the illustrations). In subsequent revisions we both have contributed freely throughout and take joint responsibility for the whole.

Consistency in spelling has proved impossible to attain. In general we have adopted Latinized forms (*Cronus* for *Kronos*) or spellings generally accepted in English-speaking countries (*Heracles*, not *Herakles*). The Greek spelling of Greek names has become more and more fashionable today and so we have included an appendix listing the Greek spellings with their Latinized and English equivalents.

A separate *Companion to Classical Mythology* was published in 1997. It includes summaries of key myths, bibliographical and interpretative material, translations from the ancient authors, a discography of pertinent music available on CD, an annotated listing of relevant works of art, and derivations of English words from Greek and Roman mythology. It also designates paths through the Perseus CD-ROM, keyed to every chapter of *Classical Mythology*.

In connection with this sixth edition, a website has been developed, which will allow the reader to consolidate, broaden, and enrich the study of classical mythology in a multitude of ways. It affords a wide array of varied resources, which incorporate and enhance the material to be found in the *Companion*, described in the previous paragraph. For exploring this added dimension to the text, the address is: <<http://longman.awl.com/mythology>>.

We have received help and encouragement from many colleagues, students, and friends over the years and, in the publishing of each of the six editions, numerous people have been involved in editorial development and production. To all who have contributed so much, we are deeply grateful. For

fifteen years, Gordon T. R. Anderson was our editor, colleague, and friend, and we were saddened by his death. Our affectionate thanks go to Virginia L. Blanford, who helped us immeasurably in the complex, major revision of the fifth edition, upon which the present edition is based. We could not do without the vigorous and sensitive support of Roth Wilkofsky. From the beginning, Charles Alton McCloud has shared with us his expertise in music and theater; and Michael Sham, who contributed so much to the *Companion* and the creation of our website, has provided valuable suggestions. We are grateful to the following reviewers, who provided critical commentary on this revision: Leon Fitts, Dickinson College; Robert E. Gaebel, University of Akron; Kevin Glowacki, Indiana University; Karelisa Hartigan, University of Florida; Richard Henze, Colorado State University; Borimir Jordan, University of California, Santa Barbara; Andre Lardinois, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; Philip Long, University of Pittsburgh; John Thorburn, Baylor University.

Martha Morford was a constant support to the authors, with her critical acumen and profound knowledge of the history of art, and she is remembered with deep gratitude.

Mark P. O. Morford  
Robert J. Lenardon

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**M**ark Morford is Professor of Classics at the University of Virginia, where he joined the faculty in 1984 after teaching for 21 years at The Ohio State University and serving as Chairman of the Department of Classics. He has also served as Kennedy Professor of Renaissance Studies at Smith College. He has taken a leading part in bringing together teachers and scholars in universities and schools, and teachers of classical literatures and those in other disciplines. He has published books on the Roman poets Persius and Lucan and the Renaissance scholar Justus Lipsius (*Stoics and Neostoics: Lipsius and the Circle of Rubens*), as well as many articles on Greek and Roman literature and Renaissance scholarship and art.

**R**obert Lenardon is Professor Emeritus of Classics, The Ohio State University, where he was on the faculty for 25 years and served as Director of Graduate Studies in Classics. He has also taught at many other places, among them the University of Cincinnati, Columbia University, and the University of British Columbia; at present he enjoys giving courses at Siena College. He was a Visiting Fellow at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and has written articles on Greek history and classics and a biography: *The Saga of Themistocles*. He has served as Book Review Editor of *The Classical Journal* and presented radio programs about Mythology in Music, a subject dear to his heart.



# CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS AND WORKS OF ART ix

PREFACE xiii

INTRODUCTION 1

## PART ONE THE MYTHS OF CREATION: THE GODS

CHAPTER 1 ❖ MYTHS OF CREATION	35
CHAPTER 2 ❖ ZEUS' RISE TO POWER: THE CREATION OF MORTALS	50
CHAPTER 3 ❖ THE TWELVE OLYMPIANS: ZEUS, HERA, AND THEIR CHILDREN	70
CHAPTER 4 ❖ ANTHROPOMORPHISM AND GREEK HUMANISM	85
CHAPTER 5 ❖ POSEIDON, SEA DEITIES, GROUP DIVINITIES, AND MONSTERS	98
CHAPTER 6 ❖ ATHENA	105
CHAPTER 7 ❖ APHRODITE AND EROS	116
CHAPTER 8 ❖ ARTEMIS	141
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 8: EURIPIDES, <i>HIPPOLYTUS</i>	150
CHAPTER 9 ❖ APOLLO	163
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 9: THE <i>HOMERIC HYMN TO APOLLO</i>	182
CHAPTER 10 ❖ HERMES	189
CHAPTER 11 ❖ DIONYSUS, PAN, ECHO, AND NARCISSUS	204
CHAPTER 12 ❖ DEMETER AND THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES	233
CHAPTER 13 ❖ VIEWS OF THE AFTERLIFE: THE REALM OF HADES	250
CHAPTER 14 ❖ ORPHEUS AND ORPHISM: MYSTERY RELIGIONS IN ROMAN TIMES	273

## PART TWO THE GREEK SAGAS: GREEK LOCAL LEGENDS

CHAPTER 15 ❖ THE THEBAN SAGA	289
CHAPTER 16 ❖ THE MYCENAEAN SAGA	317
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 16: THE THREE ELECTRAS	328
CHAPTER 17 ❖ THE TROJAN SAGA AND THE <i>ILIAD</i>	348
CHAPTER 18 ❖ THE RETURNS AND THE <i>ODYSSEY</i>	388
CHAPTER 19 ❖ PERSEUS AND THE LEGENDS OF ARGOS	406
CHAPTER 20 ❖ HERACLES	416
CHAPTER 21 ❖ THESEUS AND THE LEGENDS OF ATTICA	442
CHAPTER 22 ❖ JASON, MEDEA, AND THE ARGONAUTS	464
CHAPTER 23 ❖ MYTHS OF LOCAL HEROES AND HEROINES	480

## PART THREE THE SURVIVAL OF CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

CHAPTER 24 ❖ THE NATURE OF ROMAN MYTHOLOGY	503
CHAPTER 25 ❖ THE SURVIVAL OF CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY IN LITERATURE AND ART	542
CHAPTER 26 ❖ CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY IN MUSIC AND FILM	577

NOTES 595

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 631

THE GREEK SPELLING OF NAMES 633

INDEXES I-1

A. INDEX OF AUTHORS, ARTISTS, COMPOSERS, AND TITLES

B. GLOSSARY / INDEX OF MYTHOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSONS,  
PLACES, AND SUBJECTS

# ILLUSTRATIONS AND WORKS OF ART

## COLOR PLATES

*following page 285*

1. *Jupiter and Thetis*, by J. A. D. Ingres
2. *Dionysus*, kylix by Exekias
3. *The Death of Sarpedon*, Athenian red-figure krater by Euphronios
4. *Christus Apollo*, third-century vault mosaic
5. *Lycurgus Cup*, early fourth-century glass
6. *The Rape of Helen by Paris*, attributed to a follower of Fra Angelico
7. *The Return of Odysseus*, by Pintoricchio
8. *The Feast of the Gods*, by Giovanni Bellini
9. *Venus and Adonis*, by Paolo Veronese
10. *The Discovery of the Infant Erichthonius*, by Peter Paul Rubens
11. *Nessus and Deianeira*, by Guido Reni

*following page 347*

12. *Cephalus and Aurora*, by Nicolas Poussin
13. *The Forge of Vulcan*, by Diego Velázquez
14. *The Triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite*, by Nicolas Poussin
15. *Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera*, by Antoine Watteau
16. *Earth: Vertumnus and Pomona*, by François Boucher
17. *Ariadne Asleep on the Island of Naxos*, by John Vanderlyn
18. *Pandora*, by Odilon Redon
19. *Demeter*, by Jean Arp
20. *Icarus*, by Henri Matisse
21. *Hector and Andromache*, by Giorgio de Chirico
22. *Landscape for Philemon and Baucis*, by David Ligare

## OTHER WORKS OF ART

- The Endymion Sarcophagus*, marble sarcophagus 43
- Aurora*, artist unknown 44
- The Return of Hephaestus*, from an Attic black-figure column krater by Lydos 78
- Nereid*, by Georges Braque 99
- The Birth of Athena*, from an Athenian amphora 106
- Athena Parthenos*, reconstruction by N. Leipen after Pheidias 109
- Athena*, from an Attic amphora by the Andocides Painter 111
- Mourning Athena*, relief from the Acropolis 114
- Venus Discovering the Dead Adonis*, by a Neapolitan follower of José de Ribera 121
- Psyche Is Brought to Olympus by Mercury*, fresco by Raphael and assistants 139
- Artemis the Huntress*, Roman copy of a fourth-century Greek bronze 142
- The Death of Actaeon*, from an Athenian krater by the Pan Painter 145
- Apollo and Daphne*, attributed to Antonio del Pollaiuolo 174
- Apollo and Daphne*, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini 175
- Apollo*, from the temple of Zeus at Olympia 181
- Mercury*, by Giovanni Bologna 201
- The Indian Triumph of Dionysus*, from a Roman sarcophagus 205
- Maenad*, from an Attic kylix by the Brygos Painter 223
- Dionysus with Satyrs and Maenads*, from an Athenian amphora 224
- Demeter*, cult-statue from Cnidus 234
- Hades and Persephone*, relief from Locri 241
- The Underworld*, Apulian red-figure krater by the Underworld painter 261
- Orpheus, Eurydice, and Hermes*, Roman copy of a fifth-century Greek relief 275
- Orpheus and Eurydice*, by Isamu Noguchi 277
- The Rape of Europa*, metope from Selinus 292
- The Rape of Europa*, by Titian 293
- Oedipus Rex*, by Max Ernst 304
- The Death of Agamemnon*, Attic red-figure krater 325
- The Judgment of Paris*, by Lucas Cranach the Elder 352
- Hector and Achilles*, by Eunice Pinney 376

- The Building of the Trojan Horse*, by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo 384
- Study for "Aeneas' Flight from Troy,"* by Federico Barocci 386
- The Blinding of Polyphemus*, Proto-Attic vase from Eleusis 392
- Circe and Her Lovers in a Landscape*, by Dosso Dossi 394
- Odysseus and the Sirens*, from an Athenian stamnos 396
- Hermes Ordering Calypso to Release Odysseus*, by Gerard de Lairese 398
- Calypso and Ulysses*, by Emily Marshall 399
- Medusa*, by Harriet Hosmer 411
- Heracles, Assisted by Athena, Cleans the Augean Stables*, from the temple of Zeus at Olympia 422
- Heracles Shows Cerberus to Eurystheus*, from an Etruscan hydria 426
- Heracles and the Cercopes*, metope from Selinus 428
- Heracles and Apollo Struggle for the Pythian Tripod*, from an Attic amphora attributed to the Geras Painter 431
- The Death of Nessus*, from an Attic amphora 433
- The Apotheosis of Hercules*, by Peter Paul Rubens 435
- Hercules Prodicus*, engraving by T. van Thulden after Peter Paul Rubens 436
- The Farnese Hercules*, copy by Glycon after Lysippus 438
- Hercules Victor*, by Hendrick Goltzius 439
- The Labors of Theseus*, from an Attic kylix 451
- Dionysus and Ariadne*, bronze krater from Derveni 454
- Death of a Monster*, by Pablo Picasso 455
- Dionysus and Ariadne* marble sarcophagus 457
- Jason Is Disgorged by the Dragon That Guards the Golden Fleece*, from an Athenian cup 473
- Medea*, by Eduardo Paolozzi 476
- Medea Leaves Corinth in a Chariot Drawn by Dragons*, from a krater attributed to the Policoro Painter 477
- François Vase*, Attic krater by the potter Ergotimos and the painter Kleitias 488–489
- Pyramus and Thisbe*, by Hans Wechtlin 498
- Dido and Anna*, by Washington Allston 531
- Mars and Rhea Silvia*, by Peter Paul Rubens 534
- Romulus and Remus*, by Alexander Calder 535
- Rape of Lucrece*, by Reuben Nakian 540
- Sky-Map of the Northern Hemisphere*, by Albrecht Dürer 571

## MAPS

Greece and the Aegean	<i>frontispiece</i>
The Peloponnese and Central Greece	318
Asia Minor and the Euxine	349
Southern Italy and Sicily	404
The Levant	407
The World According to the Ideas of Hecataeus of Miletus	469
Early Rome	507
Central Italy	524

## CHARTS AND OTHER DIAGRAMS

Descendants of Chaos	36
Children of Ge and Uranus	38
Descendants of Titans	41
The Family of Prometheus	51
The Lineage of Major Deities	71
Plan of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia	75
Descendants of the Sea	103
Descendants of Medusa	104
Plan of the Parthenon	107
Sectional Drawing of the East End of the Parthenon	108
The Children of Cadmus	205
The Kings of Thebes	295
The Dynasties of Thebes	296
The Descendants of Chthonius	297
The House of Atreus	320
The Royal House of Troy	356
The Ancestry of Perseus	408
The Family of Heracles	417
The Royal Families of Athens	443
Plan of the Erechtheum	444
The Family of Jason	466

# INTRODUCTION

## DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF MYTH

The word *myth* comes from the Greek word *mythos*, which means “word,” “speech,” “tale,” or “story,” and that is essentially what a myth is: a story. Some would limit this broad definition by insisting that the story must have proven itself worthy of becoming traditional.<sup>1</sup> A myth may be a story that is narrated orally, but usually it is eventually given written form. A myth also may be told by means of no words at all, for example, through painting, sculpture, music, dance, and mime, or by a combination of various media as in the case of drama, song, opera, or the movies.

Many specialists in the field of mythology, however, are not satisfied with such broad interpretations of the term *myth*. They attempt to distinguish “true myth” (or “myth proper”) from other varieties and seek to draw distinctions in terminology between myth and other words often used synonymously, such as *legend*, *saga*, and *folktale*.<sup>2</sup>

## MYTH, SAGA OR LEGEND, AND FOLKTALE

**Myth** is a comprehensive (but not exclusive) term for stories primarily concerned with the gods and humankind’s relations with them; **saga**, or **legend** (and we use the words interchangeably), has a perceptible relationship to history; however fanciful and imaginative, it has its roots in historical fact.<sup>3</sup> These two categories underlie the basic division of the first two parts of this book into “The Myths of Creation: The Gods” and “The Greek Sagas: Greek Local Legends.” Interwoven with these broad categories are **folktales**, which are often tales of adventure, sometimes peopled with fantastic beings, and enlivened by ingenious strategies on the part of the hero; their object is primarily, but not necessarily solely, to entertain. Rarely, if ever, do we find a pristine, uncontaminated example of any one of these forms. Yet the traditional categories of myth, folktale, and legend or saga are useful guides as we try to impose some order upon the multitudinous variety of classical tales.<sup>4</sup>

How loose these categories are can be seen, for example, in the legends of Odysseus or of the Argonauts, which contain elements of history but are full

of stories that may be designated as myths and folktales. The criteria for definition merge and the lines of demarcation blur.

## COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY

The impossibility of establishing a satisfactory definition of *myth* has not deterred scholars from developing comprehensive theories on the meaning and interpretation of myth, usually to provide bases for a hypothesis about origins. Useful surveys of the principal theories are easily available,<sup>5</sup> so that we shall attempt to touch upon only a few theories that are likely to prove especially fruitful or are persistent enough to demand attention. One thing is certain: no single theory of myth can cover all kinds of myths. The variety of traditional tales is matched by the variety of their origins and significance, so that no monolithic theory can succeed in achieving universal applicability. Definitions will tend to be either too limiting or so broad as to be virtually useless. In the last analysis, definitions are enlightening because they succeed in identifying particular characteristics of different types of stories and thus provide criteria for classification.

Comparisons among the various stories told throughout the ages, all over the world, have become influential in establishing definitions and classifications. In the modern study of comparative mythology, much emphasis tends to be placed upon stories told by preliterate and primitive societies and too often the developed literature of the Greeks and Romans has virtually been ignored. It was not always so; for pioneers in the field, such as Frazer (identified below), classical mythology was understandably fundamental. Yet classical mythology developed from something less sophisticated than the form in which we find it in, say, Homer or Euripides. Although it may be difficult and at times impossible to ascertain with any certainty the precise details of earlier versions of a classical story,<sup>6</sup> its universal, thematic character remains.

True, it can be misleading to press analogies and parallels in the legends of widely divergent societies, especially where, as in Greek mythology, even our earliest literary sources (Homer and Hesiod) appear after a lengthy period of evolution, far removed from the myths' primitive origins. It is equally misleading to posit a "primitive" mentality as if it were something childlike and simple, in contrast to the "sophisticated" mentality of more advanced societies such as the Greeks'.<sup>7</sup> In fact, anthropologists have proved how far the myths of primitive societies reflect the complexities of social family structures; and their tales, however they may be compared to the classical, are far from being merely allogical and mystical.

Despite these warnings, we may assert that the comparative study of myths, especially by anthropologists (as opposed to philologically trained classicists), has been one of the most fruitful approaches to the interpretation of myths. Despite its faults, Sir J. G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough* remains a pioneering monument in the field. It is full of comparative data on kingship and



ritual, but its value is lessened by Frazer's ritualist interpretation of myth (explained later) and by his eagerness to establish dubious analogies between myths of primitive tribes and classical myths.

The application of comparative methods to the classical myths in particular will be discussed at more length below, after we have examined significant definitions, explanations, and classifications of myths.

## MYTH AND RELIGION

Foremost and most compelling is the distinction between true myth and saga and folktale described above, that is, true myth is primarily concerned with the gods, religion, and the supernatural. Most Greek and Roman stories (comprising Part 1 of this book, and actually a substantial portion of Part 2) reflect this universal preoccupation with creation, the nature of god and humankind, the afterlife, and other spiritual concerns.

Thus mythology and religion are inextricably entwined. One tale or another once may have been believed at some time by certain people; specific creation stories and mythical conceptions of deity may still be considered true today and provide the basis for devout religious belief in a contemporary society. In fact, any collection of material for the comparative study of world mythologies will be dominated by the study of texts that are, by nature, religious.

## MYTH AND TRUTH

Since, as we have seen, the Greek word for myth means "word," "speech," or "story," for a critic like Aristotle it became the designation for the plot of a play; thus, it is easy to understand how a popular view would equate myth with fiction. In everyday speech the most common association of the words *myth* and *mythical* is with what is incredible and fantastic. How often do we hear the expression, "It's a myth," uttered in derogatory contrast with such laudable concepts as reality, truth, science, and the facts?

Therefore important distinctions may be drawn between stories that are perceived as true and those that are not.<sup>8</sup> The contrast between myth and reality has been a major philosophical concern since the time of the Pre-Socratics. Myth is a many-faceted personal and cultural phenomenon created to provide a reality and a unity to what is transitory and fragmented in the world that we experience—the philosophical vision of the afterlife in Plato and any religious conception of a god are mythic, not scientific, concepts. Myth provides us with absolutes in the place of ephemeral values and a comforting perception of the world that is necessary to make the insecurity and terror of existence bearable.<sup>9</sup>

It is disturbing to realize that our faith in absolutes and factual truth can be easily shattered. "Facts" change in all the sciences; textbooks in chemistry, physics, and medicine are sadly (or happily, for progress) soon out of date. It is