

This is a study of Greek mythology in relation to its original contexts. Part One deals with the contexts in which myths were narrated: the home, public festivals, the *leschē*. Part Two, the heart of the book, examines the relation between the realities of Greek life and the fantasies of mythology: the landscape, the family and religion are taken as case-studies. Part Three focuses on the function of myth-telling, both as seen by the Greeks themselves and as perceived by later observers. The author sees his role as that of a cultural historian trying to recover the contexts and horizons of expectation which simultaneously make possible and limit meaning. He seeks to demonstrate how the seemingly endless variations of Greek mythology are a product of *this* community, situated in *this* landscape, and with *these* institutions.

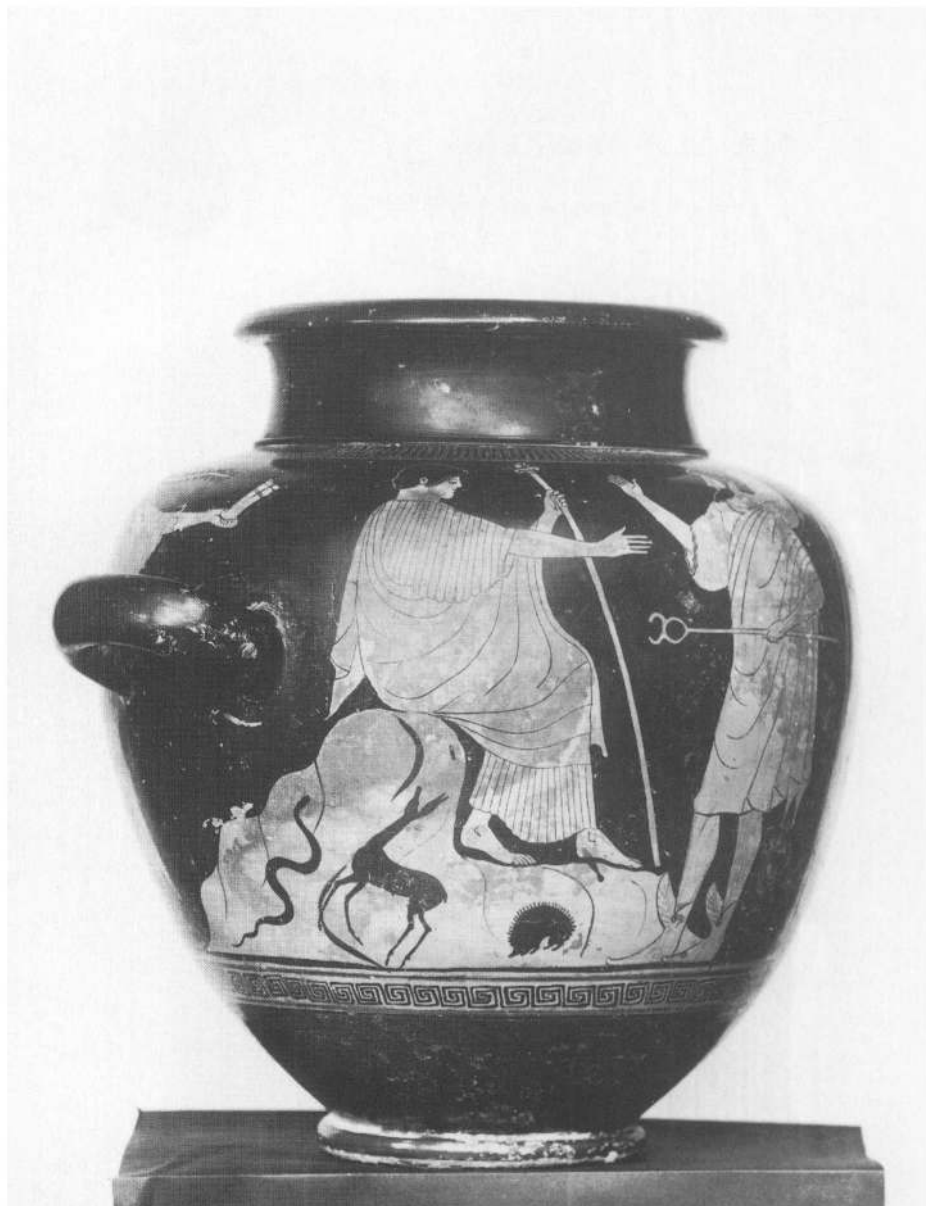
The book aims to engage with the latest work in this field (e.g. the structuralist and myth-and-ritual approaches developed by European scholars) in a style as free as possible from unnecessarily obscure terminology. All Greek is translated.

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[Frontispiece] Paris, on a rock, greeted by Hermes.

# IMAGINARY GREECE

*The contexts of mythology*

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*For George*

*May you always find time for stories*

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## PREFACE

This book has been several years in the writing. During that time the author has accumulated personal and intellectual debts too numerous to mention. But a few exceptions must be made, and I am happy to make them.

Successive groups of final-year and post-graduate students in the University of Bristol have listened to and modified my ideas with good humour and appropriate scepticism. Participants in the research seminars which I gave in the University of Strasbourg during 1991–2 opened up new perspectives for me and offered much valuable criticism of detail; in addition, my Strasbourg colleague Gérard Siebert gave me help well beyond the call of duty. It is a real pleasure to thank Jan Bremmer, Frank Shaw and Thomas Wiedemann for many years of friendship, during which they have given unstintingly of their knowledge of matters mythological; indeed Professor Bremmer read and commented on a draft of the present book. Conversations with Fritz Graf, and more recently with Claude Calame and Philippe Borgeaud, have confirmed the impression which I had formed from my reading, that Switzerland has become the focus of much of the best work in this field. Throughout, Pauline Hire of Cambridge University Press has been a wise and tactful guide. I hope she feels that her patience has in some measure been rewarded.

RGAB  
June 1993

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Part of Chapter 6 is adapted from my article entitled ‘Imaginary Greek mountains’, published in *JHS* for 1992. I am grateful to the Council of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies for granting me permission to reuse this material.

Passages from Homer are usually cited in the translations by Richmond Lattimore (*The Iliad*: University of Chicago Press, © 1951 by The University of Chicago; *The Odyssey*: Harper & Row, © 1965, 1967 by Richmond Lattimore). For Pindar, I have drawn on the versions by (p. 118) C. M. Bowra (Penguin Books, © C. M. Bowra 1969), and, again (pp. 149 and 176), Richmond Lattimore (University of Chicago Press, © 1947 by the University of Chicago Press). For other authors, in cases where I have taken over or adapted existing translations, I have tried always to acknowledge the fact. Otherwise, the version given is my own.

For acknowledgements relating to illustrations, see under list of plates above.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AAntHung</i>	<i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>ABSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ARV<sup>2</sup></i>	J. D. Beazley, <i>Attic Red-figure Vase-painters</i> <sup>2</sup> , Oxford, 1963
<i>ASNP</i>	<i>Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Cl. di Lettere e Filosofia</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London</i>
<i>CPh</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>DK</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> <sup>6</sup> , edd. H. Diels and W. Kranz, Berlin, 1951–2
<i>FGrH</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , ed. F. Jacoby, Berlin, 1923–
<i>FHG</i>	<i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> , ed. C. Müller, Paris, 1841–70
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HThR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JAPA</i>	<i>Journal of the American Psychoanalytical Association</i>
<i>JDAI</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>

xvi      *Abbreviations*

<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> , Zurich, 1981–
<i>MAL</i>	<i>Memorie della Classe di Scienze morali e storiche dell'Accademia dei Lincei</i>
<i>MDAI(A)</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Ath. Abt.)</i>
<i>MDAI(R)</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Röm. Abt.)</i>
<i>MH</i>	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
<i>OCT</i>	Oxford Classical Text
<i>OJA</i>	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>PCG</i>	<i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , edd. R. Kassel and C. Austin, Berlin, 1983–
<i>PMG</i>	<i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> , ed. D. L. Page, Oxford, 1962
<i>QUCC</i>	<i>Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura classica</i>
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue Archéologique</i>
<i>RE</i>	Pauly/Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart, 1894–
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des Etudes Grecques</i>
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
<i>RPh</i>	<i>Revue de Philologie</i>
<i>SAWW</i>	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaft in Wien, Philos.-Hist. Klasse</i>
<i>SIFC</i>	<i>Studi Italiani di Filologia classica</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses</i>
<i>SSR</i>	<i>Studi Storico-Religiosi</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>TrGF</i>	<i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , Göttingen, 1971–
<i>WSt</i>	<i>Wiener Studien</i>
<i>WüJbb</i>	<i>Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Although in the main text I have in general preferred transliterations which give a 'Greek' rather than a 'Romanised' impression (thus 'Herakles', not 'Hercules'), for *abbreviations* of names of authors and titles of works I have followed the widely accepted system adopted in the standard *Greek-English Lexicon* of Liddell, Scott and Jones.