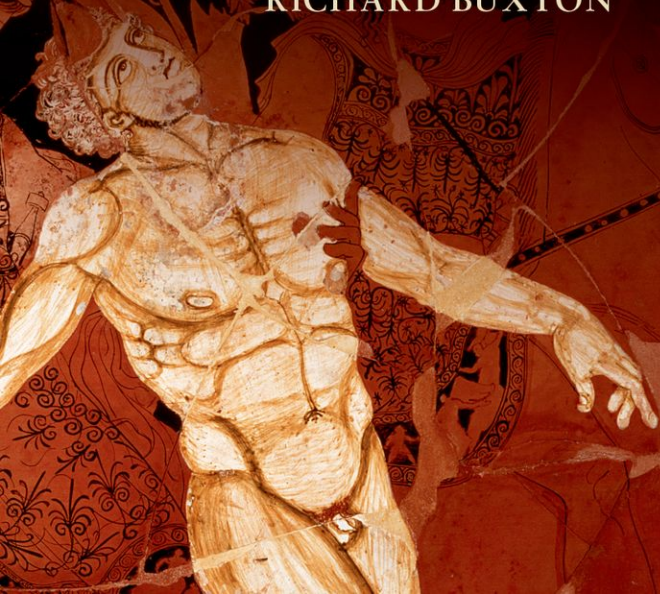


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MYTHS & TRAGEDIES

in their Ancient Greek Contexts

RICHARD BUXTON



MYTHS AND TRAGEDIES IN THEIR
ANCIENT GREEK CONTEXTS

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Myths and Tragedies in their Ancient Greek Contexts

RICHARD BUXTON

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For Mercedes

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Preface

The various intellectual and personal debts which I incurred while writing the original versions of these essays are registered chapter by chapter, usually in a concluding footnote. Here it is a pleasure to express gratitude on a more comprehensive scale.

The academic context within which I have worked during the whole of the relevant period has been the Department of Classics and Ancient History (formerly the Department of Classics and Archaeology) at the University of Bristol. My colleagues, and successive cohorts of postgraduate and undergraduate students at Bristol, have taught me more than I can put into words. Beyond that primary location, I am fortunate to have come to know many of the world's leading experts in the literature and mythology of ancient Greece. Their influence pervades the present book, and a list of their names could go on for pages. Instead I single out two only. Jan Bremmer and Pat Easterling have selflessly commented on the whole of this book in draft, saving me from many errors, pointing me towards bibliography which I had overlooked, and encouraging me at every turn. I could wish for no more than that the present book should merit the respect of these two outstanding scholars.

Three more expressions of gratitude are in order. The first is jointly to my OUP editor Hilary O'Shea, for her forbearance and consistently shrewd advice, and to the Press's eagle-eyed copy-editor Richard Mason, who saved me from many an embarrassment. The second is to Lisa Agate who, with superlative efficiency, chased up the images which I wanted to reproduce in this book and secured the permissions to reproduce them. The third is to Mercedes Aguirre, with whom I have talked over countless aspects of myth, tragedy, and much else, to my constant profit and delight.

RGAB

Autumn 2012

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Abbreviations

Authors and titles of ancient works are normally abbreviated according to the practice followed in the third edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (Oxford, 1996).

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
AC	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ArchEph</i>	<i>Archaiologikē Ephēmeris</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
Beazley ABV	J. D. Beazley, <i>Attic Black-figure Vase-painters</i> , Oxford, 1956
Beazley ARV ²	J. D. Beazley, <i>Attic Red-figure Vase-painters</i> ² , Oxford, 1963
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
BMCR	<i>Bryn Mawr Classical Review</i>
CA	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
CFC	<i>Cuadernos de Filología Clásica</i>
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i>
Daremberg/Saglio	C. Daremberg and E. Saglio, <i>Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines d'après les textes et les monuments</i> , Paris, 1877–1919
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 6th edn, Berlin, 1951–2
FGrH	F. Jacoby (ed.), <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , Berlin and Leiden, 1923–58
FHG	C. Müller (ed.), <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> , Paris, 1841–70
GGM	C. Müller (ed.), <i>Geographi Graeci Minores</i> , Paris, 1855–61
G&R	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
ICS	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
JDAI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>

JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
KRS	G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, <i>The Presocratic Philosophers</i> , 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1983
LfgrE	<i>Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos</i> , Göttingen, 1955–2010
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> , Zurich and Düsseldorf, 1981–2009
LSAM	F. Sokolowski, <i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure</i> , Paris, 1955
LSCG	F. Sokolowski, <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques</i> , Paris, 1969
LSJ	<i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> , compiled by H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, revised by H. S. Jones, 9th edn, Oxford, 1940; revised <i>Supplement</i> by P. G. W. Glare, 1996
MD	<i>Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici</i>
MDAI(A)	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
MH	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
OLD	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , ed. P. G. W. Glare, Oxford, 1982
PCG	R. Kassel and C. Austin (eds.), <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , Berlin, 1983–
PCPhS	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
PLF	E. Lobel and D. L. Page (eds.), <i>Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta</i> , Oxford, 1955
PMG	D. L. Page (ed.), <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> , Oxford, 1962
Praktika	<i>Praktika tēs en Athēnais Archaialogikēs Hetaireias</i>
QUCC	<i>Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica</i>
RA	<i>Revue Archéologique</i>
RE	G. Wissowa et al. (eds.), <i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart, 1894–1980
REA	<i>Revue des Études Anciennes</i>
REG	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
Roscher	W. H. Roscher (ed.), <i>Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie</i> , Leipzig, 1884–1937
TAPA	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association</i>
ThesCRA	<i>Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum</i> , Los Angeles, CA
TrGF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht, and S. Radt (eds.), <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , Göttingen, 1971–2004
WS	<i>Wiener Studien</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Introduction

The chapters of this book have their origins in eleven papers written over the past thirty years or so. During that time, approaches to Greek myth and Greek tragedy have undergone a number of shifts of emphasis—not, I think, ‘paradigm’ shifts, but shifts nonetheless. No one writes in a vacuum, and I have inevitably been affected by these successive interpretative trends, whether they have acted as stimuli to explore further where others have gone before, or as provocations to disagreement. Herein lies one reason why the corpus of work here presented is not entirely homogeneous: it reacts to developments in research over the past generation.

Yet the reader will soon discover certain recurrent features of my own approach, features which, while I hope they have not congealed into *idées fixes*, have characterized at least a considerable part of my writing. Whether such features constitute a distinctive contribution to the field is not for me to say, but it may in any case be worthwhile to spell out what, to their author at least, seem to be the central concerns addressed in these chapters.

1. The first concern is with *structure*. Given that several of the chapters deal with tragedy, it will be no surprise that occasionally I refer to aspects of *dramatic* structure; this is especially true in Chapter 11 on *Bakchai*. But that is far from being the predominant sense of ‘structure’ which I use. Rather, I work with an idea whose origin lies in the structuralist movement, and whose ramifications extend far beyond drama, and indeed beyond texts of any kind.

Although the impact of the structuralist habit of thought on Hellenic studies dates back well over a generation, that habit retains even now the propensity to generate powerful and fruitful interpretations of (among many other things) the stories, texts, and images surviving

from classical antiquity. Structuralism makes its presence felt most explicitly in Chapter 9, where I sketch out ways in which the opposition between blindness and sight works as a contrastive pair of terms within what I describe as the ‘language system’ of Greek myth. Chapter 1 is also concerned with structure; it seems to me incontrovertible that a mountain can be defined only in opposition to what it is not, whether that opposite be (for example) the plain or the *polis*. Indebted to structuralism also is the notion that boundary-crossing is a major aspect of Greek myths and tragedies. I examine this idea in Chapter 4, since the bronze giant Talos literally embodies the crossing of several different boundaries. Tragedy too generates countless instances of boundary-crossing: in Chapters 10 and 11 I discuss this point in relation to the boundaries between, respectively, inside/outside the house (*Alkestis*) and male/female (*Bakchai*).

One more leitmotiv in several of these studies may be traced back to structuralism, in the form of that movement associated with Claude Lévi-Strauss. The idea that an aspect of the empirical world around us may become a tool of thought—making it, in the overused but still valuable cliché, ‘good to think (with)’—is an idea I continue to regard as productive. It recurs in several places in Part I, notably in Chapters 2 and 3.

2. A second pervasive feature is a search for *context*, a perspective which I deliberately highlight in my title. Throughout the period when I was working on the original versions of these papers, one of the most influential trends in the study of classical antiquity involved the investigation and theorization of ‘reception’—that is, the taking-over/incorporation of the classical world by later cultures. While I recognize the enormous potential of this perspective, it has not been the driver of my own research. Rather, I have sought to replace the material which I am analysing *within its ancient Greek contexts*.

I take it as self-evident that we cannot begin to understand myths which relate in some way to, let us say, a part of the landscape, without considering not only other ‘non-mythical’ representations of landscape, but also the real ancient landscape itself. Such a deployment of the word ‘real’ used to be regarded by some as an intellectual solecism: the world of antiquity is (one sometimes heard it suggested) nothing but a text. But the tide has turned, and in any case I have no hesitation in regarding some awareness of ancient real-world contexts as an absolute prerequisite for the kind of research which interests me.

The landscape is one such context; another is the world of fauna, which I investigate in Chapter 2.

Context is relevant in other ways too: not just in real-world terms, but within representational media. To define 'genre' is an apparently simple but in fact fiendishly difficult task; nevertheless, appropriate reference to generic context is crucial if we are to gain access to the horizons of expectation shared by, on the one hand, artists working with words or images, and, on the other hand, their respective publics.¹ In Chapter 6 I isolate some of the features which distinguish tragic versions of myth from versions generated within other contexts. More generally, with tragedy as with myth, I aim to highlight the ancient contexts of the texts. I thus find entirely congenial a comment by Rush Rehm on modern attitudes to, and re-performances of, Greek tragedies: 'To reconnect with the radical nature of Greek tragedy . . . we must . . . engage with tragedy's differences from our own theatrical forms, aesthetic principles, and sociopolitical organisation. We must grapple with unfamiliar cultural assumptions and the peculiarities of foreign dramatic conventions, in order to see our own society and its artifices from a new perspective.'²

But the search for context is not an enterprise that goes without saying. That the analysis of context is a gambit, which itself requires contextualization, has been demonstrated by Peter Burke, in an article that discovers ancestors for and exemplars of contextualizing approaches in scholars as diverse and formidable as Marc Bloch, Bruno Malinowski, Edward Evans-Pritchard, and Quentin Skinner.³ Burke also stresses the role of the interpreter as the ultimate arbiter of what, for any given phenomenon, should be taken to *count* as the context(s). In spite of reservations and qualifications, however, Burke suggests that there is nothing to be gained by rejecting the term 'context'; rather, we should retain it, while being sensitive to its multiple usage. I agree, and would simply reiterate an observation which I recently made in relation to Greek stories about metamorphosis: 'My aim throughout . . . has been always to take notice of the context, but to do so *appropriately*. It is for the reader to judge whether this objective has been reached.'⁴

¹ Genres and their complexity: Genette (1986); Conte (1994) 105–28; Fantuzzi (2004); Mastronarde (2010) 44–62.

² Rehm (2003) 37–8.

³ Burke (2002).

⁴ Buxton (2009) 251; italics in original.

3. If ‘structure’ and ‘context’ are slippery terms, a third feature common to several chapters is if anything even more elusive: ‘theme’. Indeed I am tempted to say that I don’t know what a thematic approach is, but I can recognize one when I see it. Within ancient Greece the kinds of themes I have in mind are cross-generic and evidenced from a wide range of historical periods; beyond Greece, they are trans-cultural, offering rich possibilities for comparative analysis—which, however, I hardly need add, needs to be drastically tempered by culture-specific, that is, context-specific considerations.⁵ Among earlier practitioners of a thematic approach to the Greek world I would mention R. B. Onians; among contemporaries, three scholars who come to mind are Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones on veiling, Silvia Montiglio on silence and wandering, and Jan Bremmer on numerous themes, though I think especially of his article on walking, standing, and sitting.⁶ If we range more widely, I have learnt much from such thematic analyses as those practised by Michel Pastoureau and Theodore Ziolkowski.⁷ In so far as I have been able to develop a style of thematic analysis myself, it can be found in any of the chapters in Part I (mountains, wolves, names, (in)vulnerability, movement/stillness), as well as in some chapters in Part II, for instance in the discussions of blindness in Chapter 9, veiling and silence in Chapter 10, and feminization in Chapter 11.

4. Another, related concern is with the *porosity* of myth. One of my main aims in *Imaginary Greece* was to show how the idea of ‘myth’ was, so far from being neatly circumscribed, in fact integrated in countless ways into the thought and practice of the ancient Greeks.⁸ The same objective underpins many of the chapters which follow. Data about the mountains and wolves of mythology must, I argue, be understood in the light of what we know about perceptions of these same themes in ‘non-mythical’ contexts; the same goes for blackness/whiteness (Chapter 3) and movement/stillness (Chapter 5). Some readers may occasionally feel that the paths I go down in search of the ‘non-mythical’ are digressive—when, for instance, I look to the

⁵ My angle of approach is thus to be sharply distinguished from that of, for instance, Mircea Eliade, whose concerns were above all with themes in their archetypal universality; e.g. Eliade (1954) and numerous other works.

⁶ Onians (1954); Bremmer (1991a); Llewellyn-Jones (2003); Montiglio (2000) and (2005).

⁷ See for example Pastoureau (2001), (2009a), and (2009b); Ziolkowski (1983).

⁸ Buxton (1994).

Hippokratic treatises for help with understanding Talos's vulnerable ankle. Yet I make no apology for such gambits, since, in the words of Louis Gernet: 'One tale leads to another; similarities exist which we should not dismiss because of some a priori fear that connections are arbitrary.'⁹

5. A less pervasive feature of the book, but one which surfaces now and then, might be called, through an appropriately teasing parenthesis, *the (un)certainty principle*. A major trend in research in the humanities over the past generation shelters under the umbrella of 'deconstruction'. To have been impervious to this intellectual movement would have been to adopt the politics of the ostrich. Nevertheless, I remained unpersuaded by the extreme 'infinite play of significance' view of meaning. Instead, it seems to me, we need to differentiate. In some cases, to be sure, we need to allow room for interpretative doubt, indecision, or even bafflement; but in other cases judicious research and reflection can help us reduce our uncertainty to such an extent that we can confidently express a view about probable meanings. These two strategies, apparently contrasting but in reality intertwined, underpin several chapters, but particularly two chapters devoted to tragedy. In Chapter 8 I stress that some elements of that genre—for instance, the causation of events—must remain, on the best evidence before us, simply inexplicable, indeed baffling; in such cases interpretative *aporia* is entirely appropriate. In Chapter 11, on the other hand, I argue that, if we take care to discriminate between the phenomena under review, we can *reduce* our uncertainties and thus understand some aspects of the drama more closely and accurately. In regard to the limits of interpretation, one size emphatically does not fit all.

6. One last common thread is worth mentioning. As its title states, this book is about myths *and* tragedies. What does that 'and' mean? It should not be taken to imply a dichotomy. Virtually without exception, Greek tragedies are retellings of myths: in that sense they *are* myths, or at least versions of myths. So there is something artificial about my division of the book into two sections: 'Themes in Myth' and 'Myths in Tragedy'. Often in Part I the reader will find discussion of mythical themes as explored in tragedy (notably in my account of mountains, but in several other places too). Conversely, several

⁹ Gernet (1981) 78; cf. below 97.

chapters in Part II highlight themes found not just in tragedy but also elsewhere in Greek myth. What differentiates Parts I and II is no more than a change of focus, a change which the reader is free to downplay as appropriate.

A further comment about the ordering of the chapters might be useful. This ordering has nothing to do with the original dates of composition of the essays which lie behind each chapter (for the record, those dates are, in chapter order: 1992, 1987, 2010, 2002, 2010, 2007, 2002, 1988, 1980, 1985, 2009). Instead I have wanted to suggest, very broadly and loosely, a spectrum of interpretative emphases, ranging from the cross-contextual analysis of myths at one pole to the analysis of individual literary works at the other. Emblematic of this spectrum is the positioning of the opening and closing chapters. Chapter 1 analyses a mythical theme cross-contextually, yet it also incorporates an account of that theme in specific literary works; Chapter 11 takes as its main focus the dramatic/literary analysis of a single feature of a single tragedy, yet it also explores a mythical theme cross-contextually.

* * * * *

I hesitated for some time about whether or not to update these papers in the light of subsequent scholarship and my own second thoughts. In the event I decided that I *would* make revisions, above all, for obvious reasons, in the case of the less recent publications. Countless small modifications will be found in the footnotes and bibliography, and very many also in the main text. Nevertheless—doubtless under the delusion of vanity—I have seldom felt it necessary, even with the benefit of hindsight, to overhaul the main arguments. To this there are two main exceptions. First, Chapter 3 is, in the form in which it appears here, not so much a reworking of an existing paper as a new one: it is twice the length of the original, since I have added a section on the history of the onomastic interpretation of mythology. Second, I have rewritten some parts of Chapter 8 in order to try to remedy what I now believe to have been defects in the argument.

One final, more cosmetic change is worth mentioning. Since this book aspires to be of interest to non-Hellenists, I have almost entirely eliminated quotations in the Greek alphabet, and proportionately increased the quantity of transliterated (and translated) text. Greek myths and Greek tragedies are too important to be left exclusively in the hands of those able to read them in the original.

Part I

Themes in Myth

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Imaginary Greek Mountains

My first case study of mythical contexts, structures, and themes concerns a landscape feature which, as any traveller in Greece knows, habitually constitutes the limit to a viewer's line of sight. 'Horizons of expectation' is a metaphor which offers rich possibilities to the cultural historian; in the present instance, literal and metaphorical aspects of those horizons are inextricably interwoven.

One aspect of the mental world of the ancient Greeks relates to their perception of the various elements of the landscape within which they lived: rivers, plains, cities, caves, springs, meadows, mountains. In this first chapter I attempt to show how Greek perceptions of one such feature of the landscape point towards a structure of thought common to many contexts. However, to soften and complicate this sense of structure, I emphasize also several major differences between one context and another, concentrating especially on the distinctive portrayal of mountains in tragedy. Above all, I investigate—with, I hope, due awareness of the pitfalls—the distance between the 'imaginary' world of myth and the 'real' world of life, including that particular form of life which is dramatized in ritual.

1. WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN?

At the outset we have a terminological problem. A mountain is in the eye of the beholder.¹ The Greeks were agreed that, for example,

¹ On the ineradicable role of human perceptions in constructing our idea of even the most 'natural' of landscapes, see the brilliant study by Schama (1995).

Olympos, Cretan Ida, Parnassos, Helikon, Pelion, Kithairon, and Lykaion—which on our reckoning range from about 2,900 metres to about 1,400 metres—were *orē* (plural of *oros*, the Greek word conventionally translated as ‘mountain’). But so, according for instance to Strabo, was ‘Mount’ Kynthos on Delos—a stiff walk if you have a ferry to catch on a hot day, but with the best will in the world only 113 metres above sea level; while at Olympia *to oros to Kronion* (‘the *oros* of Kronos’), as Pausanias calls it, can manage a mere 123 metres.² An *oros* is not, then, to be defined simply in terms of physical height. Instead we should look to what, in our sources, is contrasted with an *oros*.³ An *oros* is not the plain (where you grow corn and fight in phalanx), nor is it the city or the village (where you live). The oppositions between *oros* and plain, and *oros* and city, are found in Greek thought of many periods and many contexts. Take the words spoken by Arrian’s Alexander to his troops: ‘Philip gave you cloaks to wear instead of hides, brought you down from the mountains to the plains . . . made you into *polis*-dwellers, and equipped you with good laws and customs.’⁴ But if an *oros* is not a plain and not a city, neither is it an acropolis, that fortified height, often also religious centre and symbol of political power, *within* the city.⁵ An *oros* is a height outside inhabited and cultivated space—outside the *polis*, the *astu* (town), and

‘Terminology’ of Greek mountains: Langdon (2000); Accorinti (2010) 23–5. Although Spencer (2010) focuses on the Roman landscape, the discussions of landscape theory there also have wider relevance, including to Greece.

² Kynthos: Strabo 10.5.2. Kronion: Paus. 5.21.2; 6.20.1 (altitudes taken from Philippson (1950–9) iv. 111 and iii. 2.340). Fluid meaning of *oros*: Buck (1949) 23; Pritchett (1965) 66. For an apparently anomalous, Argive use of *oros*, see Vollgraff (1914) 333; Caskey and Amandry (1952) 218. For *oros* in Strabo, see Baladié (1980) 124–35.

³ Langdon (2000) 461–2 describes my contrastive definition as ‘probably the best approach’. Langdon’s article is the most comprehensive analysis of mountains in Greek religion to have appeared since the original publication of my own article; I am pleased to say that it echoes my account in many places, and elsewhere helpfully complements it.

⁴ Arr. *Anab.* 7.9.2. For the plain/*oros* opposition, see Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 1.8.1 and 3.11.2. For plain/non-plain contrasted in warfare, see Osborne (1987) 144, with reference to Polyb. 18.31. ‘Plainsmen’ and ‘men from beyond the hills’ form two political constituencies in the time of Peisistratos: Hdt. 1.59; Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 13.4 (with Rhodes (1981) ad loc.); cf. Plut. *Sol.* 13 on the political division between Hillmen, Plainsmen, and Shoremen.

⁵ Cf. Martin (1974) 32. Like the *oros*, the acropolis may be contrasted with the plain: Arist. *Pol.* 1330^b (an acropolis is ‘oligarchic’ and ‘monarchical’; level ground is ‘democratic’).

the *kōmai* (villages).⁶ We might add that, in a specifically Egyptian context, *oros* may signify the desert (near or far) in contrast with the fertile and cultivable Nile valley.⁷ Height is once again only part of the story: a contrast with the area of cultivation is equally important.

2. USING MOUNTAINS

What was an *oros* used for?⁸ Firstly, for pasturage, particularly (bearing in mind the practice of transhumance) during the summer heat.⁹ The inscriptional evidence, meagre enough,¹⁰ tends to concern either the avoidance of damage by flocks to religious property, or disputes between cities over pasturage rights¹¹—in other words, cases where the affairs of herdsmen impinged on the wider community. The authentic voice of the herdsman himself is occasionally heard—we have, for instance, a goatherd's votive inscription found on the slopes of Mount Elias on Aigina, and a dedication by another goatherd in the cave at Vari on Hymettos¹²—but such cases are exceptional. Nevertheless, herding was clearly of greater significance than the evidence of our city-oriented sources implies, and will have been the principal activity which drew men to stay in the mountains for long periods.¹³

Mountains were a source of raw materials. Sometimes this is stone or metal (Hymettos and Pentelikon; Pangaion); usually it is wood. Scholars have differed over just how much afforestation of mountains there was in ancient times,¹⁴ but that one of the reasons for going to

⁶ One of the referees for the original publication of this chapter made the interesting comment that 'in English the nearest corresponding word [sc. to *oros*] is probably not "mountain" or "hill" but "moor"'. But the connotations of 'moor' are essentially non-Mediterranean; the same goes for 'heath'.

⁷ Cf. Cadell and Rémondon (1967).

⁸ See Pease (1961); Fehling (1974) ch. 2 ('Fernsicht').

⁹ See Georgoudi (1974); Skydsgaard (1988).

¹⁰ The data are reviewed in Robert (1949), (1955), and (1966) 383–4; see also Whittaker (1988).

¹¹ Cf. Georgoudi (1974) 180–1; Sartre (1979).

¹² Aigina: *IG* IV 127, with Robert (1949) 154–5. Hymettos: *AJA* 7 (1903) 292–3 = *IG* I² 778. Although in both cases some scholars have read a proper name instead of 'goatherd'—*Αἰπόλου* for *αἰπόλου* (Aigina) and *ἡΑίπολος* for *ἡαιπόλος* (Vari)—the locations of the finds are at the very least consistent with the sense 'goatherd'.

¹³ On herding, see now the excellent article by Berman (2005).

¹⁴ See e.g. Georgoudi (1974); Halstead (1987) 79–81; O. Rackham (1990).

an *oros* was to get timber is not in doubt. A man mentioned in one of Demosthenes' private orations had a farm in an outlying deme and kept six donkeys permanently busy sending wood down to the city.¹⁵ We hear occasionally of woodcutters, whom Theophrastos calls 'mountain-smitters' (*oreotupoi*).¹⁶ Like shepherds, they are usually silent men; though a funerary inscription from classical Athens records the proud boast of a Phrygian: 'By Zeus, I never saw a better woodcutter than myself.'¹⁷ Wood, hence charcoal: like shepherds, charcoal-burners might, from the city-dweller's perspective, be felt to be outsiders. Such an attitude is implicit in a fragment of Andokides: 'May we never again see the charcoal-burners and their wagons arriving in the city [of Athens] from the mountains'—apparently a reference to the consequences of the occupation of Attica during the Archidamian war.¹⁸ Obviously, charcoal-burners came into the city now and again to sell their fuel; it was the *permanent* residence of these outsiders that rankled. As always, of course, the coin of marginality has another side to it, and we glimpse this in the nostalgia of Dikaiopolis in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (33–6), when the comic hero, 'hating the *astu* (town)', longs to be back in his own 'charcoal' village, which did not cry 'Buy charcoal!' because it had no need to, since it produced everything itself. Indeed so vigorous is the comic portrait of the Acharnians, with their splendid 'Muse of Flame' (665), that charcoal seems to dominate not just their own community but the wider Athenian state too. This is Aristophanic exaggeration; but the play serves as a reminder that the central/marginal distinction has to be used with discretion and elasticity.

Shepherds, woodcutters, and charcoal-burners dwelt on or regularly visited mountains out of economic necessity. Others visited the *oros* more occasionally, in order to hunt. Not all hunting was done on mountains, but most of it was.¹⁹ Xenophon notes that traps for deer

¹⁵ Dem. 42.5–7; Gow (1952) on Theoc. *Id.* 13.25f.

¹⁶ Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 3.3.7; 3.12.4, etc. For woodcutting on Mount Ida, see Theoc. *Id.* 17.9–10, with Gow (1952) ad loc.

¹⁷ IG I² 1084 = P. A. Hansen (1983) no. 87; cf. Himmelmann (1980) 62.

¹⁸ Andoc. fr. 4 Blass. See further Lacey (1968) 53 with 256 n. 13. For a modern example of the charcoal-burner's marginality one may compare the dissident, radical charcoal-burners of the Mount Pelion area in 1921–2. I owe this information to M. Llewellyn Smith. Note also the clandestine movement in 19th-century Italy whose members styled themselves *i carbonari*.

¹⁹ On the question of the 'space' in which hunting was conducted, see Schnapp (1973).

and boar are set in the mountains; up there, as opposed to in the plain, you can catch deer by day as well as by night.²⁰ According to Pausanias, 'The whole of Taygetos provides excellent hunting for [wild] goats and for boar, and an ample supply of deer and bear.'²¹ We do know of a case where circumstances imposed hunting as a full-time necessity, as with Dio Chrysostom's story about shepherds working for a rich Euboian, who were forced to resort to hunting when the Romans killed the man's beasts.²² But as a rule hunting was part-time. The *oros* was where groups of men went out to pit themselves against beasts, and then return to the city.

Another use of mountains was for travel. In spite of steep gradients and narrow passes, mountain paths were used by both individuals and armies. In a famous article on Greek mountain terrain, A. R. Burn concluded: 'I have shown, I hope, how the chief significance of Helikon in history is as a *route*.'²³ Pausanias tells us often enough of routes that take a direct line across mountains: from Lilaia to Delphi you cut across Parnassos; one road from Mantinea to Orchomenos went via Mount Anchisia; there were two paths over Oita; and so on.²⁴ It might be risky. A simile in the *Iliad* begins:

As when upon the peaks of a mountain the South Wind
scatters thick mist, no friend to the shepherd, but better than night for
the robber

A millennium later Lucian reports the story of a wealthy Theban murdered by brigands on Kithairon.²⁵

Mountains played various roles in warfare. In time of extreme need the *oros* could function as a kind of temporary acropolis, a refuge for those with no prospect of winning a pitched battle and no safe settlement to which to withdraw. Thus the Phokians fled the Persians by climbing Parnassos; the Messenians sheltered from the Lakonians on Eira and Ithome.²⁶ We hear occasionally about reconnaissance

²⁰ Xen. *Cyn.* 9.11; 9.17; 10.22.

²¹ Paus. 3.20.4.

²² Dio Chrys. *Or.* 7.11–20.

²³ Burn (1949) 322 (*italics* in original). This and Burn (1951) are described by Pritchett (1982, 207) as 'the two best articles ever published on Greek mountain terrain'.

²⁴ Paus. 10.33.3; 8.12.8; 10.22.8.

²⁵ *Il.* 3.10–11; Lucian *Dial. mort.* 22.2.

²⁶ Hdt. 8.32, cf. 8.27; Paus. 4.17.10; 4.24.6. On the remote location of places of asylum, see in general Sinn (2000).

ascents, as when Philip V of Macedon went up Haimos.²⁷ Fire-signalling from beacons on the *oros* was developed with enormous ingenuity.²⁸ Clearly, though, this is all peripheral to the main issue: fighting. The *oros* was a territory which could be exploited by light-armed troops, but which was wholly unsuited to the hoplite phalanx. It was a place for deception, for ambush, for night combat—witness the tactics of Thracian and other peltasts.²⁹ Given the strong ideological component in the divide between hoplite and non-hoplite,³⁰ and given the pervasive rules of appropriateness underpinning Greek warfare,³¹ it is surely comprehensible that mountain warfare is as relatively infrequent as it is.³² It is comprehensible, too—indeed, it is part of the same framework of ideas—that the *oros*, a space which is simultaneously not the city and not the plain, should in some parts of Greece form the backdrop to the military education of the adolescent male, at the stage when he was neither (yet) a full member of the community nor (yet) a hoplite.³³ The *oros* could be an initiatory space (one may compare the wolf-men of Lykaion).³⁴

We hear sometimes of what may be described as touristic ascents: at Etna visitors (at any rate in the time of Pausanias) threw valuable objects into the crater, the aim being to be lucky enough to have the gift accepted.³⁵ Then there were those bent on 'enquiry'. Pliny the Elder writes of people who, in order to do research on plants, 'scoured also pathless mountain peaks, remote deserts, and all the bowels of the earth'.³⁶ Theophrastos and Philo preserve accounts of persons

²⁷ Livy 40.21–2. ²⁸ Polyb. 10.43–7.

²⁹ See Pritchett (1971–91), Part II, 170.

³⁰ Cf. Ducrey (1985) 110–14.

³¹ This has been repeatedly shown by Pritchett in his great study (1971–91).

³² The absence of a developed mountain strategy in Greek warfare is discussed by Gomme (1945) 10–15.

³³ Cf. Vidal-Naquet (1986a) 108, with particular reference to Crete.

³⁴ Cf. my remarks at 45–8 below.

³⁵ Paus. 3.23.9. In his commentary (1898 ad loc.) Frazer's comparatist approach is at its most beguiling: he turns up the propitiatory flinging of tufts of grass (amongst the Masai) and the hurling of 'vast numbers of hogs' (Hawaii) into the relevant volcano. One may compare the anecdotal 'death' of Empedokles, who plunged into the crater of Etna (Diog. Laert. 8.69). For fascinating observations on this story, see Kingsley (1995), index s.v. 'Etna'.

³⁶ Plin. *HN* 25.1. Much plant-gathering, however, will have had more to do with everyday needs than with 'research': Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 9.10.2–4 (black hellebore best from Helikon, white from Oita).

who observed the heavens from mountains. One such, according to Philostratos' *Life of Apollonios of Tyana*, was the philosopher Anaxagoras, and we have similar reports about Eudoxos and Pythagoras.³⁷ But to the average Greek village- or city-dweller such eccentricity was irrelevant. What was far more important was the final use of mountains which I want to mention: their role as locations for sanctuaries of the gods.

Zeus was pre-eminent. In A. B. Cook's monumental study of the god there are references to nearly one hundred mountain cults.³⁸ In a review of the evidence for mountain-*tops* as locations for sanctuaries of Zeus, Merle K. Langdon concluded that, while occasionally these are explicitly dedicated to Zeus as god of rain (e.g. Zeus Ombrios on Hymettos), in most cases no specific divine function of this or any other kind can be identified with certainty.³⁹ Nevertheless the association between Zeus and the *peak* is worth noting as an example of differentiation in the religious topography of the *oros*.⁴⁰ May one go on from this to posit a structuralizing opposition between Zeus, god of the summit of the *oros*, and Athene, goddess of the acropolis, Athene as Polias or Poliouchos, in which role she appears in many cities?⁴¹ I think the answer is 'yes', provided we acknowledge certain facts which soften the rigidity of the schema. For example, Athene herself may be worshipped on an *oros*—on Pentelikon, on Pontinos near Lerna, on a mountain above Kleitor in Arkadia.⁴² Nor is Zeus a stranger to the acropolis: he had temples on the citadels of Argos and Akragas, and an altar at the highest point of the Athenian acropolis.⁴³ Again, Zeus is not the dominant power on every *oros*: Helios, Artemis, Dionysos, Demeter, Pan, Apollo, Hermes, and the variously named 'Mother' goddess of Asia Minor all have mountain sanctuaries.⁴⁴

³⁷ Theophr. *Sign.* 4; Philo *Prov.* 2.27; Philostr. *VA* 2.5; Petron. *Sat.* 88 (Eudoxos); Iambl. *VP* 3.14–15 (Pythagoras). NB also Hadrian's ascent of Etna 'in order to see the sunrise, which is, so they say, multicoloured like the rainbow' (SHA *Hadr.* 13.3).

³⁸ A. B. Cook (1914–40) i. 165.

³⁹ Langdon (1976), esp. 81, to be looked at in conjunction with Lauter (1985), esp. 134–6.

⁴⁰ Cf. also Graf (1985) 202–3 on Zeus Ὑπατος.

⁴¹ Cf. Burkert (1985) 140.

⁴² Paus. 1.32.2; 2.36.8; 8.21.4.

⁴³ Paus. 2.24.3; Polyaeus, *Strat.* 5.1.1 (see Cook 1914–40, i. 122–3); Burkert (1983) 136 with n. 2.

⁴⁴ Some examples noted by Pausanias: 3.20.4 (Helios); 2.24.5, 2.25.3, 8.13.1 (Artemis); 3.22.2 (Dionysos); 8.10.1 (Demeter); 8.24.4, 8.36.8 (Pan); 9.23.6 (Apollo); 8.17.1

However, notwithstanding these qualifications, Zeus' statistical pre-eminence on the *oros* looks unchallengeable.

It should be mentioned finally that, in addition to divinities who were *associated* with a mountain, there were others who were apparently *identified* with one. But in spite of Korinna's poetical evocation of the song contest between Helikon and Kithairon,⁴⁵ and in spite of Wilamowitz's speculations about Atlas and other potential mountain-Giants/Titans,⁴⁶ Greek belief (as opposed, for example, to Cappadocian)⁴⁷ preferred the model of association to that of identification.

3. IMAGINARY MOUNTAINS

This is not the place to argue in detail the heuristic merits of various definitions of 'myth'. I simply set out baldly two working assumptions. (1) By 'a Greek myth' I shall mean one of the stories related by (some) Greeks about the deeds of the gods and heroes and their interrelations with mortals. (2) The territory of Greek mythology is not hermetically sealed. Many kinds of story ('historical' anecdote, comic plot, etc.) may incorporate patterns of thought analogous to those present in tales about gods and heroes; this material will be raided where appropriate.

To begin with a partial truth: myth 'reflects'. Mythical herdsmen, like real ones, live on mountains. The Euripidean Cyclops had his home on Etna; Paris and Anchises dwelt on Trojan Ida; Apollo was out on the slopes of Pieria when Hermes came to rustle.⁴⁸ Herdsmen in myth practise transhumance, like the two in *Oidipous Tyrannos*: 'We herded as neighbours three times', recalls the Corinthian, 'for six months from spring to the rise of Arktouros'.⁴⁹ A myth ascribed by

(Hermes). For the 'Mother', cf. Hdt. 1.80, Paus. 5.13.7; *Der Kleine Pauly* (1964–75) iii. 383–9, s.v. 'Kybele' (W. Fauth).

⁴⁵ The text is very fragmentary, see Page (1953) 19–22 and D. A. Campbell (1992) fr. 654, but Huxley (1978, 71–2) seems to be right in observing that Korinna 'comes close to identifying [the god Helikon] with the mountain'.

⁴⁶ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1931–2) i. 93–5.

⁴⁷ See Huxley (1978).

⁴⁸ Eur. *Cyc.* 114; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.5; *Hymn. Hom. Aphr.* 53–5; *Hymn. Hom. Herm.* 69–70.

⁴⁹ Soph. *OT* 1133–7.

Antoninus Liberalis to Nikandros tells of a herdsman who, when helpfully advised by Pan to take his flocks down from Mount Othrys on account of the impending onset of a harsh winter, declined the advice, and for good measure insulted the Nymphs. The flock disappeared in the snow, and the rash herdsman turned into a beetle.⁵⁰

Mythical mountains are a source of wood: again myth reflects the real world. Timber for the *Argo* came from Pelion; the Trojan horse is of mountain pine; wood for Patroklos' pyre came from the spurs of Ida.⁵¹ Lykos sent servants out from Thebes to gather wood on Helikon and even Parnassos in order to incinerate Herakles' family.⁵² Woodcutters put in rare appearances in myths, as in the oracle recorded by Eusebios about nine woodcutters who were stunned 'on the wooded mountains' near Miletos when they heard Pan singing.⁵³

As in life, so in myth, men hunt on mountains. Teiresias was hunting on Kithairon when he saw Athene; so was Aktaion when he made an analogous mistake; Endymion hunted by moonlight on Latmos, and was loved by Selene; Peleus and Akastos hunted on Pelion.⁵⁴ In Bion's *Lament for Adonis*, the crying of the young man's hounds was echoed by the Oreads (18–19).

Mythical mountains could be used for travel, as when one of Ida's shepherds describes the march of Rhesos.⁵⁵ Where there are lonely travellers, there you find robbers: the mythical brigand Autolykos lived on Parnassos.⁵⁶ Mythical mountains also provided a refuge. Megaros escaped Deukalion's flood by taking refuge on Mount Germania; the better-known refuge on the same occasion was Parnassos.⁵⁷ In Aratos' *Phainomena*, when Dike abandoned humanity after rebuking it during the Silver Age, she too sought refuge in the mountains.⁵⁸

Even the use of fire-beacons is reflected in myth, in the famous account of the mountain-to-mountain relaying of signifying flame from Troy to Argos in Aischylos' *Agamemnon* (281–316).

⁵⁰ Ant. Lib. *Met.* 22; cf. Borgeaud (1988) 61–2.

⁵¹ Eur. *Med.* 3–4; Eur. *Tro.* 534; Hom. *Il.* 23.117.

⁵² Eur. *HF* 240–2.

⁵³ Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 5.6.1; cf. Lane Fox (1986) 131–2.

⁵⁴ Callim. *Hymn* 5.74–6 (Teiresias); Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.4.4 (Aktaion); schol. Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.57–8 Wendel (Endymion); Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.13.3 (Peleus, Akastos).

⁵⁵ Eur. *Rhes.* 282–316.

⁵⁶ Paus. 8.4.6.

⁵⁷ Paus. 1.40.1 (Megaros); Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.7.2, Paus. 10.6.2 (Parnassos); cf. Paus. 4.34.10 *re* Asine.

⁵⁸ Arat. *Phaen.* 127.