

Classical mythology: a very short introduction

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This ingenious and thought-provoking book of Helen Morales is not only a plain narrating of the tales to examine the remarkable history and varied and wide-ranging readings of Greek myths. This essay argues that the book is a comprehensive interpretation, exploring how Greek myths are interpreted and applied in ancient times and the contemporary period. The author carries the readers from the shrines of Crete to high-rise buildings in modern cities, and discovering Greek myths in various unanticipated domains, such as the Bible, psychoanalytic accounts, Arabic literature, and so on. Basically, the book is an animated and comprehensive examination, focusing on interpreting the myths instead of merely narrating them, and explores how Greek myths have been applied over time across the globe to discuss and understand issues of conflict, sexuality, politics, and historical origins.

The author explores the literary history and tradition of Greek mythology by means of wide-ranging interpretations of original sources of Greek myths. Such far-reaching and easily understandable introduction to classical mythology integrates a lively mixture of informative explanation and poetic accounts to make Greek myths more interesting. The author's perceptive interpretations of Greek myths within their cultural and historical contexts, and their continued presence in film, music, art, and literature, are still unmatched. Greek mythology is the most difficult, complicated, and influential narratives ever made and retold. The author merges a retelling of Greek myths with a wide-ranging discussion of the period and context wherein they emerged—their themes, their connection to the setting, and their importance to Greek society and religion.

As shown in the book, language is possibly the feature of Western culture that has been greatly influenced by Greek mythology. The author presents <https://assignbuster.com/classical-mythology-a-very-short-introduction/>

various examples of the adoptions of terms used for gods, goddesses, and myths. For instance, the expression ‘herculean task’ originated from the achievements attained by the popular demigod; when a person encounters something especially complicated or elaborate, the word ‘labyrinthine’ could be used to refer to the scene (Morales 73-75). However, the myths themselves are quite graphic interpretations suggestive of a commentary on a specific tale instead of a retelling. It is obvious that the author performed a rigidly comprehensive research and examination on the subject yet was very resolved to integrate every other interpretation when drafting the stories. The author may have researched comprehensively but perhaps discriminatingly and definitely not analytically. Even though the author uses archaeological, historic, and ethnographic references in examining Greek mythology they all seem to have already been outdated when she wrote the book. Moreover, so as to be scholarly every character is presented with their very long lineage which becomes tedious. Still, the Greek myths are vital, and will remain as is in the future. The author, although apparently struggled in terms of writing technicalities (e. g. use of sources, presentation of characters, etc.), has provided a vivid and thorough rendition of Greek mythology as it was used in ancient times and applied to the contemporary period, especially in popular culture.

Work Cited

Morales, Helen. *Classical Mythology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.