CHAPTER 1- WHAT IS MYTH

- Three main types of myth: divine myth, legend and folktale
- Definition of myth: a traditional story with collective importance
- Divine myths: supernatural beings are the main actors → generally explain why the world, or some aspect of it, is the way it is
- Legends: stories of the great deeds of human heroes/heroines → narrates the events of the human past → morally uplifting stories about Christian saints
- Folktales: are stories whose actors are ordinary people or animals → entertain the audience and teach or justify customary patterns of behaviour

CHAPTER 2- THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF CLASSICAL MYTH

- Myths reflect the society that produce them → hence they determine the nature of that society
- Greek geography: past-poor country, barren and dry/ now- supports 11 million people
- Males: dominate in both the public and private sphere → held authority over their wives and other members of their household → obligated to fight in war → had an education → athletic to prepare for war
- Need for slavery for ancient civilisation
- Christians, Jews and Muslims believe that there is one God who made the world

CHAPTER 3- THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSICAL MYTH

- Traditionally myths were oral tales
- Earliest Greek literature is the poems of HOMER, the ILLIAD and the ODYSSEY

CHAPTER 4- THE ORIGINS OF THE GODS

- HESIOD tells of the origin of the universe through succeeding generations of Gods
- Cosmogony-a story that explains the origin of the world = Theogony- a story that explains the origin of the gods and their rise to power –according to HESIOD it was the same
- HESIOD’S thousand line poem: THEOGONY → is an elaborate hymn to Zeus
- First came CHAOS (chasm) → GAEA (mother earth) → TARTARUS (underside) → EROS (sexual love)
- GAEA → produces URANUS asexually → PONTUS (sea) → then in a sexual union with her son URANUS/SKY, GAEA/ EARTH produced 6 male and 6 female TITANS → CRONUS (contends with URANUS for power) is the last born TITAN → two notable TITANS are OCEANUS and TETHYS – who both gave birth to all the gods
- GAEA + URANUS → 3 CYCLOPES- round eyes, mighty Hecatonchires and the hundred-handers
- The titan Hyperion (he who goes above) is a sun god, HELIUS / SELENE (moon) / EOS (the dawn)
- URANUS + GAEA bore many children, but none could come forth (stayed inside GAEA) into the light as URANUS hated his offsprings → locked in perpetual intercourse → sliced away URANUS genitals, CRONUS broke away from Sky, TARTARUS attached somewhere below, all around flows OCEANUS
- CRONUS overthrew URANUS and became king of the world → CRONUS was told he will fall victim to one of his children → to maintain his power he planned to swallow all children forth from his wife and sister RHEA → Cronus’ children were: HESTIA, DEMETER, HERA, HADES, POSEIDON & ZEUS
- RHEA went to her parents for advice → instructed her to journey to Crete and bear her youngest son, ZEUS → then hide him in a cave, where he will be bought up by nymphs on milk from goat Amalthea and honey from Melissa and ZEUS cries were drowned by whirlers → when CRONUS asked for his youngest child, RHEA gave him a stone wrapped in cloth → he gulped it down → ZEUS was saved and grew into manhood → ZEUS eventually forced CRONUS to vomit his children → ZEUS became king of Gods
- Omphalos (belly button): stone

CHAPTER 5- THE ORIGINS OF MORTALS

- PROMETHEUS-the Titan who took ZEUS’S side in the battle against his cousin TITANS – believed to be the creator → known for being clever
• Prometheus asked Zeus to choose between two offerings: beef hidden inside an ox's stomach or bones wrapped in glistening fat → origin of sacrifice
• Prometheus → punishment was giving humanity woman
• The folktale of Pandora, similar to Adam and Eve, is etiological to explain the origin of woman, marriage and suffering in the world
• METIS: Zeus first wife, she was clever, a desirable trait → fearing overpowering by his children, he swallows his pregnant wife → gets hit over the head, Athena, his daughter comes out of him → no more succession
• Zeus’ tree: oak
• OMACHY=battle
• MEKONE: Prometheus tricked Zeus → establishment between man and god

CHAPTER 6- ZEUS, HERA, POSEIDON AND HADES
• The Twelve Olympians made up the divine family → Zeus was the head-he could give in to flattery, charm and bribery
• HERA-Zeus’s sister and wife presides over the family
• Brother, Poseidon rules the sea → sister, Hestia watches the fire → sister Demeter brings fertility to the earth
• Aphrodite- probably ZEUS's daughter- synonymous with the power of sexual attraction
• Apollo, god of prophecy and healing
• The aegus “goat skin” was an emblem for Zeus’s power → it inspired terror in all who beheld him
• The thunder bolt is Zeus’s weapon, bull: immense power and fecundity- ritually sacrificed to him, eagle: lord of the sky
• Zeus presided over law and justice
• Xenia: guest friendship