BRIEF DESCRIPTION: A systematic study of important stories and figures of classical mythology, with emphasis on the reading and interpretation of primary Greek and Roman literary sources and on contributions of anthropology, religion, psychology, and feminist criticism to this study.

TEXTS: [*available at Bookstore CLS 242 shelf and also on Burling Reserve; others are assumed from HUM 101 syllabus]

* Harris and Platzner Classical Mythology: Images and Insights, 3rd edition
* Hesiod, Theogony, Works and Days, Shield of Heracles, trans. Athanassakis
* Euripides, Ten Plays, trans. Roche [We'll read Trojan Women, Bacchae, Hippolytus, Alcestis, Iphigenia at Aulis, and Electra.]
* Sophocles, The Women of Trachis, trans. Williams and Dickerson
* Vergil, Aeneid, trans. Fitzgerald; excerpt from Georgics 4, trans. Day Lewis (handout)
* Ovid, Metamorphoses, trans. Melville
* Apuleius, The Golden Ass, trans. Walsh
* Genesis 4, 6-9, 11 (hand-out; Genesis 1-3 include in HP)
* Homer, Iliad, trans. Lattimore or Lombardo; Odyssey, trans. Fitzgerald or Fagles

Greek Tragedies I and III (GT I, III) or Aeschylus I (AI) and Sophocles I (SI)

[Humanities 101 texts: we'll refer to Agamemnon in this series—and probably use the series for the first part of Libation Bearers, Oedipus the King, and Antigone.]

[Other tragedies to be read are contained in Harris and Platzner, (HP) or will be available on Burling reserve:

Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound (also in GT I), Libation Bearers, Eumenides;
Sophocles, Oedipus at Colonus (not in HP, but available in GT III or SI & on reserve), Antigone (may be read instead in GT I or SI);
Euripides, Helen (not in HP, but on reserve), Medea, and possibly Bacchae]

*Course Packet: articles and chapters from secondary sources

VIDEO SUPPLEMENTS:

CD-ROM and Videodisc: Perseus (a multimedia interactive database for the study of ancient Greek civilization—includes texts, maps, site plans, overview of Greek history, short articles and glossary entries on selected topics, and full-color images of art objects). Perseus is also available through link on course web site—as are many other useful resources.

Videocassettes:


Aeschylus, Oresteia: Agamemnon, Choephoroi, Eumenides
Sophocles, The Theban Plays: Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone
Euripides, The Trojan Women, Medea, Iphigenia at Aulis

(Classics "Pandora's Box: the Roles of Women in Ancient Greece", "The Greek Temple", "The Ancient Olympics: Athletes, Games, and Heroes", "Myth, Man, and Metal: Bronze Sculpture"
Note: Readings/videos designated 'suggested' are optional sources for further investigation. These are not regular class assignments and will not normally be discussed, or even mentioned, in class. They may prove useful for research topics or to enrich your understanding or to provide a different perspective for a myth or topic you find particularly interesting. Some, but not all, will be on reserve at Burling Library.

Readings labeled ‘supplement’ generally follow up on class sessions and are required readings; they will be available through hand-outs or on the course web page.

ASSIGNMENTS

I. Definition, Theory, and Interpretation

21 Jan.  *Iliad* 3, 6, 24; *Odyssey* 4, 15
*Agamemnon*, selected lines
Selected lyrics by Sappho & Alcaeus

23 Harris and Platzner (*HP*), 315-33; to supplement *HP*,
review the following passages in the *Iliad*, esp. those
underlined: Bk 1, lines 1-427 (*Lombardo*: -452); 6.119-231, 369-529 (*Lo*: 120-240, 388-558); 9.307-429 (*Lo*: 311-444);
12.307-30 (*Lo*: 317-44); 18.1-137 (*Lo*: -146), 165-242
(*Lo*:172-259); 22 (all); 24.525-51, 601-20 (*Lo*: 557-95, 650-71)

Supplement (course web page): Helen Summary

25 Frank Frost, *Greek Society*, "The Mycenaean
Prologue," pp. xi-16 (packet)
*HP*, Chapter 1: "Introduction to the Nature of Myth"
Sue Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece*, Chapter 1:


28 Quiz #1
*Iliad* 22.367-end (*Lo*: 407-end); 24.692-804 (*Lo*: 739-end)
*HP*, Chapter 13, pp. 485-97
Euripides, *The Trojan Women* (Roche)
Supplement (web page): Mycenaean Age

30 Euripides, *Helen* (reserve or shared 'loans')
*HP*, Chapter 2: "Ways of Interpreting Myth,"
pp. 34-41

Joseph Campbell, *Hero with a Thousand Faces.*
"The Monomyth" (shared 'loans' and reserve), pp. 1-40
(also Group Report)
Walter Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, "The Organization of
Myth," pp. 1-18 (packet) (also Group Report)

Suggested Viewing: Campbell, "The Hero's Journey"
II. Creation Myths

4 Feb.

Quiz #2

Supplement (web page): Theories of Myth origins of cosmos, gods, and evil; humankind?

HP, Ch. 3: pp. 57-75 (skipping over Genesis 'box' for now) Hesiod, *Theogony* (also Athanassakis' intro. thru p. 6 and notes) misogyny?

After you've read the poem, go back and finish HP 75-79 and rest of Athanassakis' intro.]

6

Hesiod, *Works and Days* 1-201 (tr. Athanassakis) humanity's status


(also Group Report)

8

HP, Chapter 4: "The Great Goddess . . .," pp. 97-107 the fragmented female--

Blundell, Chapter 2: "Creation Myth," pp.20-4 (packet) a cultural strategy?

Burkert, "The Organization of Myth," 18-34 (packet) (also Group Report)


Vernant, *Origins*, Chapter 7: "Cosmogonies and Myths of Sovereignty"

Marylin Arthur, "Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's *Theogony*: Law, Family, Society" (feminist reading)

11

Supplement (web page): Burkert Mesopotamian/Biblical parallels; Ovid's literary version

Quiz #3

Genesis 1-3 (HP, pp. 66-8, 184-5) (also Genesis 4, 6-9, 11?) [Focus on differences in processes of creation and conceptions of humanity.]

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, book 1, pp. 1-14

*Enuma Elish* (summary to be supplied) [Also 'Chicago series': lines 40-257, 351-474]

Suggested Video: Campbell, "The Message of the Myth"

III. The Society of Gods

13

*HP*, pp. 135-43, also 107-109 (Hera) Zeus, Hera, and the Olympian Family


(Lo: 4.1-82; 14.196-284; 16.408-24, 455-576)

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*: 1st 2 choral odes (HP, pp. 619-26 or 'Chicago series': lines 40-257, 351-474)

Ovid, pp. 18-23 (Io), 36-40 (Callisto), 49-51 (Europa), 58-66 (Semele), 86-91 (Ino), 190-93 (Baucis and Philemon) themes and variations


Martin Nilsson, *Mycenaean Origin*, "Olympus"


Blundell 25, 32-5 (packet) – use as a resource for Group Report on Hera

15

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* (HP, pp. 573-599) Zeus' tougher side;

*HP*, Chapter 14, pp. 565-72 revisiting Zeus' new

Vernant, *Myth & Society*, "The Society of the world order:

Gods" (packet) (also Group Report) progress or apocalypse
18 Feb. **Supplements** (web page): Prometheus and Vernant

Homer Hymn 3 (Apollo) — hand-out and *HP*, pp. 214-26, Apollo supplemented by the "Hymn to Delian Apollo" the "Son of God"

Pindar, *Pythian* 9 (to be supplied)

Ovid, pp. 13 (middle) – 18 (stories of Apollo with Python and Daphne)

*HP*, pp. 149-51 and Chapter 7, pp. 199-213

Aeschylus, *Eumenides*: *HP*, pp. 662-67 (lines 1-171) or *GT III* (or *AI*), lines 1-234 (*I*)

[Focus on Apollo's role with respect to the matricide Orestes.]

20 *HP*, pp. 143-4 (Poseidon), 145-6 (Hades), 152-6 (Hermes, Hephaestus), 158-9 (Ares)

Homer Hymn 4 (Hermes), *HP*, pp. 165-7

(plus possible additional short hymns to be supplied)

**Group Reports** on Poseidon, Hephaestus, and Ares

22 Homer Hymns 5, 6, 10 (Aphrodite – to be supplied)

Sappho 1 and 2 (to be supplied)

*HP*, pp. 109-12, 156-7, 162-4 (from *Odyssey* 8)

Blundell, pp. 35-40 (packet)

**Review:** *Theogony* 176-206

25 Euripides, *Hippolytus* (Roche)

*HP* 290 (*I* paragraph)

**Suggested Readings:** Rabbinowitz, "Female Speech and Female Sexuality: Euripides' *Hippolytus* as Model"

(in Skinner, ed., *Rescuing Creusa*)

Dover, "Classical Greek Attitudes to Sexual Behavior" (in Peradotto 1978/1984)

**Suggested Video:** Campbell, *Love and the Goddess*

27 Homer Hymns 9, 11, 24, 27-9 (to Artemis, Athena, Hestia) the virgin goddesses (to be supplied)

*HP*, pp. 107, 146-49 (Hestia & Athena); 112-14, 151-2 (Hecate & Artemis)

*Odyssey* 6:110-18 (Fitzg.) or 6:112-21 (Fagles)—Nausicaa as Artemis

Aeschylus, *Eumenides* line 172-end (*HP*, 667-683 — for Athena's role in resolving Orestes' problem)

Ovid, pp. 36-49, 55-8, 121-30 (stories involving Minerva and Diana),


**Group Reports** on Artemis and Athena (*Use Blundell "The Olympian Goddesses," pp.26-32 in packet as one of your resources.*)

1 March **Supplement** (web page): the Virgin Goddesses

Homer Hymn 2 (to Demeter), *HP*, pp. 123-34

*HP*, pp. 115-22, 144-45

Blundell, pp. 40-3 (packet)

**Suggested Readings:** H. Foley, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, pp. 79-97, 103-18

M. Lefkowitz, *Women in Greek Myth*, "Women without Men"

**Class Viewing:** "The Sacred Way" (Michael Woods) [time TBA: Sun., 3 March?]

4 Excerpt from Pausanias' *Guide to Greece* (handout) Eleusinian Mysteries

*HP*, pp. 247-55 (*The Land of No Return," first part)

Blundell, "Olympian Goddesses" (conclusion), pp. 43-6

"Women in Religion," pp. 160-5 (both in packet)
Homeric Hymns 7 (HP, pp. 242-6), 1, and 26 (to be supplied)  Dionysus: women, HP, pp. 159-60, 227-41, and (after re-reading the play) 497-509 madness, ritual

Euripides, Bacchae (Roche or HP – also in GT III or Euripides V)

Blundell 165-9 (packet)

Suggested Readings: C. Segal, "Sex Roles and Reversal in Euripides' Bacchae"
F. Zeitlin, "Cultic Models of the Female: Rites of Dionysus and Demeter"
(in Arethusa 15 [1982])

EXAMINATION 1

IV. Heroic Women & Men

Sun. 10 (?) Class Viewing: Clash of the Titans (?) Perseus and Heracles

11 HP, pp. 265-85, 294-302 (Argos, Tiryns, Thebes)

Euripides, Alcestis (Roche)

Suggested Reading: Philip Slater, The Glory of Hera, "The Multiple Defenses of Heracles"
Kirk, Chapter 8: "The Mythical Life of Heracles"
Burkert, Chapter 4: "Heracles and the Master of Animals"

13 Sophocles, Women of Trachis (Williams/Dickerson) marriage

"Shield of Heracles" (in Hesiod, Theogony, trans. Athanassakis)
Ovid, book 9, pp. 199-209

15 HP, pp. 291-4, 792-802 Jason and Medea

Euripides, Medea (HP, 803-41) (Iolcus, Colchis, Corinth);


1 April HP, pp. 285-90 (a re-reading) and 303 Theseus and Athens

W.B. Tyrrell and F.S. Brown, Athenian Myths and Institutions, "Theseus and the Parthenon as Mythic Propaganda" (packet) – also group report
Ovid, books 7-8 (Jason/Medea's story 'fades' into Theseus' story, intertwined with a number of familiar and unfamiliar myths, until Theseus' story 'fades' into Hercules' at the beginning of book 9.)

3 Sophocles, Oedipus the King (GT I or SI) Oedipus, Antigone, and Thebes;

HP, pp. 687-97 (top) theories of myth (revisited)

Charles Segal, "Some Modern Interpretations of the Oedipus Myth" (packet)

4, Thurs, (?) Class Viewing: Sophocles, Oedipus at Colonus (text available if you prefer to read it)

5 Supplement: Levi-Strauss and Vernant Athens/Thebes

HP, pp. 697-99

8 Sophocles, Antigone (GT I or Sophocles I) Suggested Video: Antigone

HP, pp. 699-705
[9 April (?)] **Optional Class Viewing:** *Iphigenia at Aulis* (Cacoyannis and Papas – 82 min.)

10  
Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* (Roche)  
*House of Atreus (Mycenae/Argos)*  
Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* (*HP*, pp. 649-61supplemented)

12  
Euripides, *Electra* (Roche)  
[Suggested Reading: *Sophocles, Electra*]

[14 (?)] **Optional Class Viewing:** *Electra* (Euripides, Cacoyannis, and Papas)

15  
*HP*, pp. 611-17; Aeschylus, *Eumenides* (*HP*, pp. 662-86)  
[Suggested Reading: Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris* (*GT II*)]

17  
Homer, *Odyssey*, books 5-12; *HP*, pp. 403-12  
Odysseus and Penelope (Ithaca)

19  
*Odyssey* 1, 2, 13, 18-19, 23-4  
*HP*, pp. 412-20, 308-11 ("Victorious Heroines": Nausicca, Penelope)  
Sheila Murnaghan, "Penelope's Agnoia: Knowledge, Power, and Gender in the *Odyssey*" (packet; also Group Report)

**EXAMINATION 2**

**V. Roman Myths**

24  
*HP*, pp. 845-64 (middle)  
Vergil, *Aeneid*, bks 1-2  
Roman imperial myth and the remnant from Troy; the Trojan War from the other perspective

26  
*Aeneid*, bks. 4, 6  
*HP*, pp. 256-64, 871-2 (top)  
Odyssean journey; Dido's tragedy; the hero's descent to the Underworld  
[Suggested Reading: Christine Perkell: "On Creusa, Dido, and the Quality of Victory in Virgil's *Aeneid*" (in Foley, *Reflections*)]

29  
*Aeneid*, bks. 7 (skim the catalog at the end of 7) and 8  
[interpretive and analytic papers due]  
Juno and war; Tr.War II; the numinous site and a new golden age

1 May  
*Aeneid*, bks. 10, 12  
*HP*, pp. 864-75  
Suggested Reading: Fitzgerald's "Postscript," pp. 403-17  
Aeneas' victory--reversal or replay of *Iliad* 22?

3  
Ovid, pp 14-18 (Daphne), 23-36 Phaethon, 40-4 (Coronis), 134-42 (Tereus/Philomela), 314-43 (Aeneas), 354-66 (Pythagoras)  
Apollo's stories (reviewed)  
myth as entertainment: wit, parody, Ovid's *Aeneid*

6  
Ovid, pp. 225-52  
Vergil, *Georgics* 4 (to be supplied)  
*HP*, pp. 875-7  
Orpheus; story-tellers

8  
mythic allusions; Isis; monomyth revisited

10  
Apuleius, pp. 71-119; *HP*, 311-14  
Cupid and Psyche

16 (Thurs.) **FINAL EXAMINATION** (9:00 a.m.)
FULL DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

This course is in part a survey of the best-told stories and best-remembered figures in classical mythology; the first major aim of the course, then, is a close familiarity with about twenty major classical myths and their primary Greek and Roman literary sources, and the course should function as a path toward 'cultural literacy' in the Western humanistic tradition. We will be particularly interested in recurrent narrative patterns and thematic issues which we find in these traditional stories—the so-called 'universals' which help to explain why the same old classical myths continue to fascinate the human imagination and to stimulate and inform European/American art, literature, and speculative discourse even today. Some of the recurring issues that I hope will provide continuity and a 'center' for the course include 1) the concern with 'origins' (beginnings of the cosmos, gods, humans, sexuality, customs), 2) the defining of the individual self (alienation and identity; disguise and recognition; the heroic individual's path of withdrawal, trial or initiation, and return), 3) patterns of differentiation, polarity, or opposition (e.g., between god and human, nature and culture, female and male, family and state, love and strife). At the center of the course, then, is a limited selection of myths, encountered in (for the most part) Greek and Roman poetry, and sharing persistent narrative and thematic elements.

But you will find, I think, that the course rightly resists any attempt to settle into a 'center.' The variables are too many, too powerful, and too interesting. To begin with, 'classical mythology' spans an ancient cultural time line of at least 2000 years and an ancient literary time line of nearly 1000 years. Within those millennia we have a diversity of cultures (Greek/Roman civilizations, Mycenaean/Archaic/Classical/Hellenistic/Roman periods, Athenian/Theban/Trojan/Mycenaean/Roman 'civic centers,' etc.) and a diversity of genres (epic, lyric, didactic, dramatic, mock-epic, novel)—each with their own conventional uses of myth. In the area of 'origins,' we have the definite, but indefinable, influences of Cretan, Egyptian, Middle-Eastern, Mesopotamian, Indo-European, and other cultures. In the area of 'meanings,' we have a labyrinth or a thicket of modern theories explaining (each of them differently) the origins, structures, and purposes of 'myth' and of specific myths. Finally and perhaps most importantly, we have the inherent (though frequently ignored) fluidity of the myths themselves. There is almost no single authoritative version of any classical myth; the myths changed every time they were re-told—or, for that matter, re-heard. And everyone who hears or reads a classical myth most likely hears or reads it differently; there is no single 'right' interpretation of a myth, for every reading is a new reading or re-reading. (This is not to suggest that any interpretation at all of a particular piece of ancient literature is valid.) So this is a course that resists having a stable 'center.' And its second major aim (complementary, I hope, to the acquisition of knowledge of and about the myths) is thus the experience of these myths as 'living presences' which continue to evolve and continue to insist 'on their meaning even when they [have] eluded adequate explanations of that meaning' (Norman Austin, Meaning and Being in Myth 1-2).

There are several ways in which the course will encourage the experience of myth as a living, mutable, centrifugal phenomenon. Diverse definitions of 'myth' will appear in readings, and you will as individuals be developing your own definitions to be incorporated at the end into your final essay exam. As a class we will encounter multiple versions and different interpretations of the same myth. We will discuss a variety of theoretical approaches to myths, including a variety of feminist approaches—exposing and opposing patriarchal structures, uncovering and affirming proto-feminist sympathies, reappropriating and rewriting myths from women's perspectives. In the writing you do for the course, you may be engaged in some creative rewriting yourselves. Or you may be studying a major post-classical rewriting of a classical myth, such as H.D.'s Helen and Achilles in Helen in Egypt or Christa Wolf's Troy and Mycenaean in Kassandra, or John Updike's Prometheus and Chiron in The Centaur. I want you to experience the 'after-life' of some myths—their post-classical lives.

From all of this it should be clear that a third major aim of the course is for you to meditate upon the nature of myth itself, and to confront a number of theories about the nature(s) and function(s) of myth. The course is thus part literary, part (ancient) cultural, part comparative and multi-cultural, part theoretical, part experiential.
EVALUATION in the course will be based on the following areas:

A. Class Participation (including group reports)  20%

There will be a large quantity of reading in this class. It is important that you maintain the pace of the course so that you can regularly contribute to class discussion and be prepared for comprehensive exam essays.

1. Outside of Class: careful and critical reading of assignments. It is not enough simply to have read the material; reflection is an important part of completing assignments; prepare yourself each day to initiate class discussion. Take notes from which you can speak to the issues raised in the readings. Notice parallels with earlier readings. Formulate questions. A useful device might be to keep a journal of your reading, in which you record ideas, themes, critical reactions —perhaps a synopsis of each work, and a review of each day's reading. These notes will help you come to class with something to talk about and help you not get confused over time as the myths accumulate. The journal would also be a valuable resource as you review for exams. By all means, place reminders in your texts so that you remember passages you want to talk about in class, and bring appropriate texts to class each day.

2. Inside Class: class meetings MWF 1:15-2:05: energetic and thoughtful participation in class discussion, lectures, small-group work, and presentations. Class time is your primary opportunity to ask questions. Don't be shy! We all have responsibilities for making the class a communal learning experience and for contributing to each other our time, attention, questions, thoughts, and interest. Remember, too, that these texts are ancient and have been discussed and interpreted for centuries. We won't necessarily be coming up with original or definitive answers or interpretations in a 50-minute class, but we will explore and articulate new ideas. You should not be afraid to disagree with the instructor or another student; take an unpopular position if you think it is valuable. Be sure to address comments to each other, rather than only to the instructor, when you speak in class.

B. Examinations

1. 3 quizzes (beginning of weeks 2, 3, and 4)  10%

2. Two hour-exams (Friday, March 8 and Monday, April 22)  30%
   (Exams will include both short-answer and essay questions; i.e., they will test both your knowledge of details and your ability to synthesize and interpret)

3. Final examination (Thursday, May 16, 9 a.m.)  20%

C. Analytic or Creative Work (various due dates; see web page)  20%

Here you have a number of options to make use of a text, theory, or idea from the course. Information about these options will be distributed separately and is available on the course website. You should make a choice early in the semester, and send me a note regarding your choice.

Note: A substantial re-working of a topic on which you have written for another course may be an acceptable fulfillment of the written assignment for this course, but you must consult with me first, your handling of the topic must be essentially new, and you must submit the earlier version with the new one and cite it as source. I call your attention to the section on "Honesty in Academic Work" in the Student Handbook, pp. 50-3 (particularly p. 51-2 on "Ideas and Data").
Short Bibliography

(articles/chapters from some of the following are assigned on the syllabus)

[+Burling Reserve]

[boldface entries--especially useful for reports and projects]

Norman Austin, *Meaning and Being in Myth*

+Walter Burkert, Greek Religion* (useful for reports on deities and rites) +________________, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*

Richard Buxton, *Imaginary Greece: the Contexts of Mythology*

__________, *Oxford Readings in Greek Religion*

Joseph Campbell, *Hero with a Thousand Faces*


Marcel Detienne, *The Creation of Mythology*

Lowell Edmunds, ed., *Approaches to Greek Myth*

Lillian Feder, *Ancient Myth and Modern Theory*

Helene P. Foley, ed., *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*

__________, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

Erich Fromm, *The Forgotten Language: an Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales, and Myths*

+Timothy Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: a Guide to its Literary and Artistic Sources*

+Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (most chapters on individual myths include at the end a short review of modern literary, musical, artistic adaptations)

Mary Lefkowitz, *Women in Greek Myth*

Martin Kallich, et al., *Oedipus: Myth and Drama*

Eva Keuls, *The Reign of Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens*

G.S. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myths*

Reinhold Meyer, *Past and Present: Continuity in Classical Myth*

Patrick Mullahy, *Oedipus Myth and Complex: a Review of Psychoanalytic Theory*

Martin P. Nilsson, *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Myth*


+Thomas Sebeok, ed., *Myth: a Symposium*

Philip Slater, *The Glory of Hera*

Marilyn Skinner, ed. *Rescuing Creusa: New Methodological Approaches to Women in Antiquity* (special issue of the journal Helios 13.2)

Wm. Blake Tyrrell and Frieda Brown, *Athenian Myths and Institutions: Words in Action*

Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*

__________, *The Origins of Greek Thought*

__________ and Pierre Vidal-Naguet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*