AHIS 3550 GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Elizabeth Baynham  
Room: MCLG 19  
Ph: 02 49215232  
Fax: 02 43484075  
Email: Elizabeth.Baynham@newcastle.edu.au  
Consultation hours: TBA

Course Overview
Units 10  
Grading Basis Graded  
Field of Education 090305  
Industrial Experience No

Course Description.
Aims to provide students with an understanding of the myths and legends of the Greek and Roman civilisations. The course focuses on definitions of myth, at its most simple level as a story, as well as what it reveals of Greek and Roman society, religion, beliefs and values and the relevance of Greco-Roman myth for modern thought.

Course Rationale.
Much of Western heritage has its roots in the civilisations of Greece and Rome and both these societies needed to establish connections with divine and heroic origins as a key element in defining their identities. This course develops skills in using ancient source material, as well as a critical approach to modern studies. It especially complements the Classics Discipline’s courses on Greek and Roman history, society, art and literature in translation, but it also has much to offer on a broader canvas. The study of Greek and Roman mythology is a rich and complex area which intersects with aspects of many other humanities and scientific disciplines, including History, English, Religious Studies, Gender Studies, Sociology and Psychology. This course will contribute to the BA program objectives of
1. an appreciation of the depth and breadth of knowledge in the humanities  
2. a capacity to think critically and creatively about society  
3. high level oral and written communication skills; and  
4. responsiveness to the demands of the workplace and the broader community.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1 Semester 2 2006

CTS Download Date:
Course Objectives.
As a result of participating in this course, students should develop:
1. A sound knowledge and understanding of both Greek and Roman mythology and its context
2. Recognition of common themes and patterns in various myths and legends
3. A critical understanding of similarities and differences in myth cycles from various cultures, and of the main modern theories of the nature of myth.
4. Skills in using and evaluating ancient source material for gaining information, as well as using modern studies in conjunction with the ancient sources to establish, develop and support interpretations of myth.
5. The accurate and effective communication of the knowledge and understanding acquired.

Course Content.
Definitions of myth: creation myths (comparisons)
° The Pre-Olympians
° The Greek Pantheon
° The myth of Prometheus and Pandora
° Dionysus
° The concept of the hero: Heracles
° The concept of the warrior-woman: the Amazons and Athena
° The Underworld
° Roman Foundation Mythology: Aeneas and Romulus
° Modern approaches to myth

Assumed Knowledge.
20 units at any level in Ancient History or History

Course Evaluation.
Evaluation is both informal and formal. Informal evaluation includes assessing student feedback from internal school written questionnaires which are geared to detail specific to the course as well as casual chats. Formal procedures include University monitored surveys and peer review.

Contact Hours
CONVERSION: 2 hours per week + regular tutorial

Lectures: Tuesday 2-4 V02
Tutorials: Tuesday 11-12 V102
Tuesday 12-1 V103
Tuesday 4-5 V104

Assessment
Assessment is a combination of progressive course-work, class test and a major essay. Total: ca. 4,000 words
One tutorial paper or equivalent task = 30% ca. 1,000 words
The tutorial paper is a research and writing task which examines a set question, using ancient literary sources where appropriate and comparative examples. Class discussion is another important aspect, which encourages students to share findings and ideas and improve oral communication.

One Take-home test = 30% ca. 1,000 words
The test will consist of short answer questions and passages from ancient sources for discussion.

One major essay project or equivalent task = 40% ca. 2,000 words.
This is an individual research and writing assignment on a choice of topics.

Teaching Methods
Lecture and Tutorial

Modes of Delivery
Internal Mode

Programs
10435 - B Arts
10947 - B Teaching / B Arts

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
β Type your assignments: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
β Word length: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
β Proof read your work because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
β Staple the pages of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
β University coversheet: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentguide/index.html
β Assignments are to be deposited at any Student Focus. Focus are located at:
  o Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  o Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  o Ground Floor, University House, City
  o Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah
Any changes to this procedure will be announced during the semester.
Do not fax or email assignments: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.

Keep a copy of all assignments: All students must date stamp their own assignments using the machine provided. Mailed assignments to schools are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

° One tutorial paper: ca. 1,000 words
° One major essay: ca. 2,000 words.

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.

Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student Focus. http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:


Return of Assignments
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Focus during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Focus to go to and the earliest date assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignment; however, we will accept other conventions in referencing, provided that you are consistent in whatever the format you choose.
Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from: Infoskills: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorialsinfoskills/index.html

**Student Representatives**
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

**Student Communication**
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

**Essential Online Information for Students**
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>49% or less</strong></td>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>50% to 64%</strong></td>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>65% to 74%</strong></td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>75% to 84%</strong></td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>85% upwards</strong></td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Week beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>July 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>July 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>July 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>August 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>August 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>August 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>August 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>September 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>September 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>September 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mid-Semester Recess: Monday 2 October – Friday 14 October</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>October 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>October 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>October 31st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Examination period: Monday 6 November – Friday 24 November</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School of Humanities and Social Science
Note: The Take-home Test assignment is due in Wk 5, on TUESDAY, 15th August at 5pm

The Major Essay is due in Wk 15 on WEDNESDAY, 8th November at 5pm

TUTORIALS

There are no formal marks given for tutorial attendance or performance, BUT rolls will be kept and a student’s good record of attendance will count in his/her favour in cases where a final result is borderline; ie, regular tutorial participation might make a difference in going up a grade. A tutorial is not meant to be a mini-lecture from the tutor and it is important that all students do some preparatory reading. You will not be expected to read all the material listed (although obviously, the more you read, the more you will know); however, it is particularly important that everybody reads the relevant ancient sources. A lively and interesting tutorial discussion depends very much upon the people who make up the group, and every individual’s contribution helps.

You may write a paper on any one of the tutorial topics discussed. Whatever topic you choose, you must submit the assignment ONE WEEK (Tuesday 5pm) after the tutorial discussion; eg., if you wish to write on Topic 1, Creation Myth (tutorial in Wk4), the assignment will be due in Week 5. There will be no classes in Week 6, but the tutorial paper on Topic 2, Prometheus (if you choose to write on that topic) is still due.

As a general rule, since the assignment is only 1,000 words, do not feel that you have to cover all the points listed for discussion; instead focus on particular issue(s) which interest you, state your intentions clearly in your introduction, use evidence from the listed readings to support your case, and try to draw some firm conclusions. We do not insist that you present your work in a particular academic convention (eg Harvard, Chicago etc), but whatever format you choose, please be consistent. Please keep to the set word limit, although a margin of 10% over or under is acceptable. Footnotes and quotations from ancient material or modern scholars do not count in the overall total, but use the latter (especially quotes from modern writers) sparingly; “lots of quotes” do not make a good essay. Try to be critical, rather than derivative in your approach to research.

Please organise your commitments to allow enough time to research and write up your assignments, and allow some margin for electronic (or other) disasters. If you have any difficulties with approaching your assignment, or with making the due dates, please contact the Course Co-ordinator. Finally, we try to mark and return all assignments within a week to a fortnight after submission. However, should any delay occur, we ask that you show a little patience and understanding; your work will be returned as quickly as possible.

SET TEXTS

AHIS3550 Greek and Roman Mythology Course Workbook

Apollo[ dorus], The Library of Greek Mythology. Trans. R. Hard (Oxford, 1997)

Either:

Morford, M.P.O & Lenardon, R. Classical Mythology (Longman). Expensive but excellent

Or:

Harris, S.L. & Platzner, G. Classical Mythology: Images and Insights (3rd edit. Mayfield)
**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**


Dowden, Ken, *The Uses of Greek Mythology* (London)

**Some Useful Internet Sites**

The Web is a helpful research tool, but it does not replace books or academic journals, and you need to be aware that there are no quality controls. In general look for sites which have an institutional or educational (edu) affiliation:

- Perseus (one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of digital art, ancient texts in translation, etc)
  
  [http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/art&arch.html](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/art&arch.html)

- Diotima (concerned mainly with women and gender in the ancient world)
  
  [http://www.stoa.org/diotima/](http://www.stoa.org/diotima/)

- Myth Links
  

**TUTORIAL TOPICS**

There will be an Introductory meeting of all tutorial groups in Week 2. There is no set topic; instead there will be a general discussion based on some of the issues raised in the first lecture (eg definitions of myth, types and purpose of myth, etc). You might find chapters 1 in K. Dowden, *The Uses of Greek Mythology* and Harris and Plazner, *Classical Mythology*, helpful background. Formal tutorial topics will commence in Wk 4

*Note that the listed readings below are either all on Short Loan or Three Day Loan. If you are having any difficulties finding relevant research material, please consult the Course Coordinator.*

**Topic 1: Creation Myths: Week 4, 8/8/06**


Consider the following questions:

i. What do these accounts have in common and how do they differ?

ii. Are they "myth" or "history"?

iii. Why are such narratives important to their societies and what do they suggest about those societies?

**Further Reading**

- S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia*, esp. pp.218-228 (Babylonian texts)
- P. Walcot, *Hesiod and the Near East*, pp1-54
M. L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony*. Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary. (Oxford, 1966). Note this is the Greek text but the commentary (in English) is helpful

**Topic 2 Prometheus: Week 5, 15/8/06**

Prometheus is regarded by some as an archetypal "Trickster" and also as a kindly benefactor to mankind. How do these characteristics fit in with the way in which Prometheus is presented in Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*? Why is he an important figure in Greek mythology? Is Prometheus' immortality significant in his myth cycle?

**Ancient Sources**

Class Workbook: *Prometheus*


Note that Aeschylus presents a different portrayal of Prometheus' defiance of Zeus

Apollodorus, *Library of History* (see Robin Hard trans)


**Modern Studies**


S. Harris and G. Platzner, *Classical Mythology*, Chapter 4


**Topic 3: Dionysus Week 7, 29/8/06**

Explore the ambivalent nature of Dionysus in Greek mythology. How is he different from other gods? Do you think the Greeks considered him to be more of a dangerous and destructive force than a benign one?

**Ancient Sources**

Class Workbook: *Dionysus*

Apollodorus, *Library of History* (see Robin Hard trans. p263 for references)

Modern Studies
R. J. Lenardon and M. Morford, Classical Mythology (New York, 1991)
S. Harris and G. Platzner, Classical Mythology, Chapters 8 and 18 (on Euripides’ play)
M. Détienne, Dionysos at Large
M. Détienne, Dionysos Slain
C. Kerenyi, Dionysos
T. H. Carpenter and C. Faraone (eds.) Masks of Dionysos
E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational
W. F. Otto, Dionysus: myth and cult (Bloomington, 1965)

Topic 4: Amazons: Adulation or Execration? Week 8, 5/9/06

With reference to specific myths about Greek heroes and Amazon women (e.g. Theseus’ Amazon, Heracles’ Amazon queen, Achilles and Penthesilea etc.) outline the main features of the legends and the way the ‘warrior-woman’ is portrayed. Do you think the myths are predominantly concerned with enforcing Greek patriarchy, or are they essentially an expression of fear of the Other?

Ancient Sources

Class Workbook: Amazons; for Achilles and Penthesilea, see the extracts from the poem by Quintus of Smyrna
Theseus’ Amazon; see Apollodorus, Library of History (Hard trans. p141ff)
Heracles and the Amazon queen; see Apollodorus, p78ff

Modern Studies
P. du Bois, Centaurs and Amazons (Ann Arbor, 1982)
J. Blok, The Early Amazons (Leiden, 1995)

Topic 5: Herakles: Week 10, 19/9/06

Analyse Herakles' links in Greek myth with the environment and particularly with animals, humanity and the divine. Why is he such a durable and popular hero for the Greeks?

Ancient Sources

Class Workbook: Heracles
Apollodorus, Library of History (see Robin Hard trans. use Index)

Modern Studies
G. K. Galinsky, The Herakles Theme
S. Harris and G. Platzner, Classical Mythology, pp213-220
L. R. Farnell, Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality, chs. 5-7
R. J. Lenardon and M. Morford, Classical Mythology, pp.457-484
W. Burkett, The Structure and History of Greek Mythology and Ritual (use with caution)

Topic 6: Demeter, Persephone and the Eleusinian Mysteries:
Week 12, 17/10/06

Discuss the narrative of the myth of Demeter and Persephone in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter. What is the nature and purpose of the Hymn? How does it relate to the Eleusinian Mysteries? What relation between death and fertility is suggested by the Hymn?

Ancient Sources
N. J. Richardson, The Homeric Hymn to Demeter (Oxford, 1979) introduction to p.30. 883.1P/54
Apollodorus, Library of History (see Robin Hard trans., p263)

Modern Studies
G. S. Kirk, The Nature of Greek Myths, p.249ff
W. Burkett, The Structure and History of Greek Mythology and Ritual, chapter 6 (use with caution)
W. Burkett, Homo Necans, chapter 5. 292.08/23B
G.E. Mylonas, Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries (New Jersey, 1961) 292.65/1
R. Parker, 'The Homeric Hymn to Demeter', Greece and Rome 38 (1991) 1-17
N. J. Richardson, 'Early Greek Views about Death' in P. E. Easterling and J. V. Minor (eds.) Greek Religion and Society (Cambridge, 1985)
TAKE-HOME TEST

Date due: Week 5, 15th August
Length: ca. 1,000 words
Assessment weighting 30%

SECTION A: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (15 marks)

i. Briefly define the following terms:
   a. anthropomorphism (in relation to the portrayal of the Greek gods)___________________
   
   b. etiology____________________________________________________________
   
   c. archetype _____________________________________________________________
   
   d. saga__________________________________________________________
   
   e. heros/theos_____________________________________________________________
   
ii. Identify or describe the following:
   a. Tartarus________________________
   b. Gaia_________________________________________________________________
   c. Chiron_____________________________________________________________
   d. Metis_____________________________________________________________
   e. Maia___________________________________________________________
   f. Tiamat____________________________________________________________
   g. Silenus__________________________________________________________
   h. Ouranos__________________________________________

iii. Give two other names of Dionysus_______________________________________
iv. Who are the parents of Heracles?__________________________________________

v. What animals and/or plants are associated with:
   (a). Athena ____________________________
   (b). Poseidon____________________________
   (c). Artemis_____________________________
   (d) Persephone__________________________
   (vi). Name at least two rivers of the
   Underworld________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

School of Humanities and Social Science
This is as much a research exercise as a trivia quiz, so you can make use of a range of information. Some of these terms and characters will be covered in lectures; you can also obtain information from the set text books (Morford and Lenardon or Harris and Platzner), or the Web. In addition to your lecture notes, you might also find standard references like the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Simon Hornblower et al. eds.) or the *Penguin Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Pierre Grimal) helpful.

**SECTION B: GOBBETS (15 marks)**

Write critical notes on TWO of the following passages. You can comment on aspects like the passage’s context and the historical context of the author and particular literary genre (if relevant to the content), what the passage reveals about myth in general or a particular myth. Also refer to supporting or contradictory ancient versions (where you can find them), and modern thought (where relevant). Be sure to keep your focus on the passage’s content - don’t go off on tangents! It will strengthen your commentary to include references to other ancient sources. We are primarily interested in your critical opinions, but if you do use modern scholars, make sure that you include formal references.

(1) The Amazons

**EITHER:**

a. Now in the country along the Thermodon river, as the account goes, the sovereignty was in the hands of a people along whom the women held supreme power, and its women performed the services of war just as did the men. Of these women one, who possessed the royal authority, was remarkable for her prowess in war and her bodily strength, and gathering together an army of women she drilled it in the use of arms and subdued in war some of the neighbouring peoples. And since her valour and fame increased, she made war upon people after people of neighbouring lands, and as the tide of her fortune continued favourable, she was so filled with pride that she gave herself the appellation of Daughter of Ares: but to the men she assigned the spinning of wool and such other domestic duties as belong to women. Laws also were established by her, by virtue of which she led forth the women to the contests of war, but upon the men she fastened humiliation and slavery. And as for their children, they mutilated both the legs and arms of the males, incapacitating them in this way for the demands of war, and in the case of the females they seared the right breast that it might not project when their bodies matured and be in the way; and it is for this reason that the nation of the Amazons received the appellation it bears.

Diodorus Siculus. 2. 45.

**OR:**

b. When Alexander returned to Hyrcania, there came to him the queen of the Amazons named Thalestris, who ruled all the country between the rivers Phasis and Thermodon. She was remarkable for beauty and for bodily strength, and was admired by her countrypersons for bravery. She had left the bulk of her army on the frontier of Hyrcania and had arrived with an escort of three hundred Amazons in full armour. The king marvelled at the unexpected arrival and dignity of the women. When he asked Thalestris why she had come, she replied it was for the purpose of getting a child. He had shown himself the greatest of all men in his achievements, and she was superior to all women in strength and courage, so that presumably the offspring of such outstanding parents would surpass all other mortals in excellence. At this the king was delighted and granted her request and consorted with her for thirteen days, after which he honoured her with fine gifts and sent her home.

Diodorus Siculus. 17. 77. 1-3.

**OR:**

---

School of Humanities and Social Science
c.
It was for that reason that the Amazons marched against Athens and after they had pitched camp by the Areiopagus, they were defeated by Theseus and the Athenians. Although he had a son, Hippolytus, by the Amazon, he afterwards accepted Phaedra, daughter of Minos, as a wife from Deucalion, putting an end to their previous hostility. During the wedding celebrations, the Amazon who had been formerly married to him arrived fully armed with her fellow Amazons, and was on the point of killing the guests; but they closed the doors with all speed, and killed her. Or, according to some, she was killed in battle by Theseus.


(2). The Birth of Athena

Zeus had intercourse with Metis, although she changed into many different forms in the hope of escaping it. While she was pregnant, Zeus forestalled future developments by swallowing her; for Ge declared that after having the girl who was due to be born to her, Metis would give birth to a son who would become the ruler of heaven. It was for fear of this that he swallowed her down. When the time arrived for the child to be born, Prometheus, or according to others, Hephaistos, struck the head of Zeus with an axe and from the top of his head, near the river Triton, leapt Athene, fully armed.


(3). Pandora’s Jar (pithos)

The deep and total trap was now complete;
The Father sent the gods’ fast messenger
To bring the gift to Epimetheus.
And Epimetheus forgot the words
His brother said, to take no gift from Zeus,
But send it back, lest it should injure men.
He took the gift, and understood, too late.

Before this time men lived upon the earth
Apart from sorrow and from painful work,
Free from disease, which brings the Death-gods in.
But now the woman opened up the cask,
And scattered pains and evils among men.
Inside the cask’s hard walls remained one thing,
Hope, only, which did not fly through the door.

Hesiod, Works and Days, 83-96

(4). Socrates discusses the Gods
EUTHYPHRO: These and still more wonderful things, Socrates, of which the ordinary people do not know.

SOCRATES: Then do you think there is really civil war among the gods, and fearful hostility and battles, and many other such things as are both related by the poets and depicted by fine artists upon various holy artefacts:
c
not least upon the Robe at the Great Panathenaea which is brought up to the Acropolis full of such embroidery? Are we to say that it’s all true, Euthyphro?

EUTHYPHRO: Not merely that, Socrates, but it’s as I said just now; there’s much more besides that I shall relate to you about things divine if you like; I know that you’ll be stunned by it.

SOCRATES: I shouldn’t be surprised. But you shall tell me that another time when we have leisure

Plato: Euthyphro 6b-c.

(5). Dionysus and the Pirates

Now I swear to you by that god himself- for there is no god greater than he - that what I tell you is as surely true as it seems past belief. The ship stood still in the water, as if held in dry dock. The sailors, in surprise, kept on plying their oars and spread their sails, trying to run on with the help of both; but their oars were hampered with ivy, which twined up the blades in curling tendrils, and adorned the sails with heavy clusters. The god himself wreathed his head with bunches of grapes, while in his hand he flourished a wand draped with vineleaves. Around him lay phantom shapes of wild beasts, tigers and lynxes and panthers with dappled skins. The sailors leaped overboard, whether in madness or fear I cannot tell. Medon’s body was the first to darken in colour, and his spine arched into a well-marked curve. Lycabas began to say to him: “What kind of monster are you turning into?” But even as he spoke, his own mouth widened, his nostrils became hooked, and his skin hardened into scales.

Ovid, Metamorphoses, 3. 660-74.

MAJOR ESSAY TOPICS

Date Due: WEDNESDAY, 8/11/06

School of Humanities and Social Science
Length: ca. 2,000 words.

Choose any one essay topic from the following sections.

SECTION A: GREEK MYTHOLOGY

(1) Zeus and Myths of Succession
Discuss accounts of the passing of control from Heaven (Uranos), to Kronos, and subsequently to Zeus. Does this myth demonstrate that violent overthrow of fathers by sons was seen as normal in Greece? Why does this sequence of violent revolution end with Zeus?

Suggested Reading

Ancient Sources
Hesiod, Theogony and Works and Days in Hesiod and Theogony, trans. D. Wender (Penguin, 1973)
M. L. West, Hesiod: Theogony. Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary. (Oxford, 1966). Note this the Greek text but the commentary (in English) is helpful.

Modern Studies
K. Kerenyi, Zeus and Hera: archetypal image of father, husband, wife (Princeton, 1975)
R. Mondi, “Greek mythic thought in the light of the Near East”, in L. Edmunds, Approaches to Greek Myth (Baltimore, 1990) ch. 3
P. Walcot, Hesiod and the Near East (Cardiff, 1966)1-54
C. Penglase, Greek Myths and Mesopotamia (London, 1994)

(2). Pandora
Examine the myth of Pandora. What does it set out to explain? Is Pandora more “statue” than woman?

Suggested Reading

Ancient Sources
Hesiod, Theogony, lines 572-601, Works and Days, lines 58-102.

Modern Studies
Note that the bibliography on Pandora is considerable. A selection of the following (perhaps 4-5) readings will be sufficient:

*M. Arthur, “Early Greece: origins of the western attitude towards women”, Arethusa 6 (1973) 7-58
*W. Berg, “Pandora: the Pathology of a Creation Myth” Fabula 17 (1976) 1-25
F. Brenk, “Hesiod; how Much a Male Chauvanist?” Classical Bulletin 49 (1973) 73-76
R. M. Frazer, “Pandora’s Diseases, Erga 102-104” Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies 13 (1972) 235-38
J. Glenn, “Pandora and Eve: Sex as the Root of all Evils” Classical World (1977/78) 179-85.
M. R. Lefkowitz, Women in Greek Myth (London, 1986) 112ff

(3). Athena
Examine the role of Athena in Greek Mythology. Can one explain the paradox of her apparent early associations with fertility and “mother” of chthonic figures (like Erectheus), and her identity as a virgin warrior goddess and patron of arts and technology?

Ancient Sources
Note that there are several translations available of the Homeric Hymns.

Modern Studies
W. Burket, Greek Religion (Cambridge, Mass. 1985) 139-143
S. L. Harris and G. Platzer, Classical Mythology (California, 1995) 102, 131
W. Brede Kristensen, Life Out of Death (Louvain, 1992) 131-161
M. Morford and R. Lenardon Classical Mythology (New York, 1991) 131-138
C. Penglase, Greek Myths and Mesopotamia (London, 1994) ch. 10

SECTION B: ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

(4) . Romulus and Remus
The foundation myth involving Romulus and Remus seems to have many hostile strands. Account for these and explain whether they provide a suitable backdrop for subsequent Roman history.

Suggested reading:
(5). Aeneas
Trace the development of Aeneas from Trojan hero to Roman founder figure. How different is the Romanised Aeneas, and what factors had shaped the myth by the age of Augustus?

Suggested reading:
Ancient sources

Modern views
E. Gruen, Culture and national identity in Republican Rome, Cornell, 1992 [937 GRUE] 6-51

SECTION C: THE FUNCTION, USES AND THEORY OF MYTH

(6). EITHER:

(a) Discuss the breadth of the role that myth would have played in the lives of ordinary citizens of fifth-century Greek states. Are there clear reasons why that role should have narrowed in subsequent centuries?

OR:

(b) Taking any myth or recognisable group of myths of your choosing, show how it can result in radically different interpretations from scholars trained in different disciplines (e.g. comparative religion, anthropology, psychology, ancient history).

Suggested Reading
L. Edmunds, Approaches to Greek Myth (Baltimore, 1990)
S. L. Harris and G. Plattner, Classical Mythology (London, 1995) Ch. 2
G. S. Kirk, Myth: its meaning and functions in ancient and other cultures (Cambridge, 1970)

The Nature of Greek Myths (Harmondsworth, 1970)
Veyne, P. Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths (Chicago, 1988)