

Basic Information for GNHU 285: Mythology: Sections 285-02, 285-07

Time/Place	ML 161	MWTH	9:00-9:50 (285-02), 1:00-1:50 (285-07)	
Instructor	Jean Alvares			
Communication Info.	Telephone:	655-5292		
	E-Mail:	ALVARESJ@mail.montclair.edu		
	The Web:	http://www.chss.montclair.edu/classics/alvares.shtml		
Office	DI-108			
Office Hours:	3:00-5:00 Monday, 8:00-8:50 Wednesday, 4:00-5:00 Thursday, or By Appointment or Drop in.			
Texts	Morford, M. P. O., Lenardon, R. J. <i>Classical Mythology</i> (Longman) , Course Packet (To be purchased in Class @ \$8.00)			
Grades	Homework			12 %
	Diagnostic Test		8%	
	Two 50-minute Tests			47%
	Final			33 %
Grade Scale	100-93	A	76-73	C
	92-90	A-	72-70	C-
	89-87	B+	69-67	D+
	86-83	B	66-63	D
	82-80	B-	62-60	D-
	79-77	C+	59-0	F

OBJECTIVES: Obviously, Greek and Roman myth is the study of a lifetime, and only can be barely sampled in a full semester. Thus this course must provide only an overview, a mythological sampler, so to speak. At the semester's end the student should know about the major Greco-Roman gods, demigods and heroes, their major myths, the great mythological cycles and some of the major literary works associated with them. But this course also aims at helping the student to see what myth does, and to appreciate all the varied forms it can take, some that are often neglected. Thus we shall also examine the great personal, religious, social and even philosophic issues the myths reflected and also some of the important ancient myths that fall outside the canonical tales of heroes and gods. Ideally, the student should see myth as more than just a collection of stories, but as a valuable part of a whole society, and come to some appreciation of the role of myth in our own society and history.

A POLEMIC But, as was scrawled on a desk (roughly), "What is the use of knowing who Athena was? How will it benefit me?" Obviously, unless you become a scholar, one who wants to understand the culture of the past or a participant in a game show ("Greek gods for \$200, please.....") knowing who Athena is will not directly benefit you. However, I will argue that understanding myth *will* benefit you, to the extent that it helps you understand how people and societies think, and thus, to some extent, how the world works; for mythical thinking is hardly dead in our place and time. You do not even have to take into account of the tens of thousands of followers of Santería living in the tri-state region, or the hundreds of

millions of followers of religions in Asia, South America and Africa which have multiple gods, systems of sacrifice and offerings that make them closer in many respects to worshippers of Greco-Roman religions than of Christianity, Judaism, Islam or Buddhism. As we shall see, the way late 20th century Americans think about and discuss many vital public and personal issues — the death penalty, justice, human rights, free will, the authority of society, etc. — reveal the same sort of thinking that went into creating Greco-Roman myth. For example, I suspect that the strong belief that many have in the death penalty arises from a feeling of what the ancients would have called the ‘pollution’ caused by murder, whether intentional or accidental, a sense that, once the evil of murder has been unleashed in the world — and how it was unleashed is irrelevant — it must be atoned for by blood or sacrifice, or it will continue to cause havoc in the world. Many violent conflicts in our world likewise have become so bloody precisely because of the myth-like beliefs held by certain peoples regarding, for example, their land or customs. And you, as a member of such a world, will have to deal with these issues. There is no avoiding it. Even on a less obviously critical level, advertisers who try to sell you something use the myths of society to manipulate potential buyers, that is, *you*. By learning some systems of mythical thought (Middle-Eastern, Greek, Roman) you will gain more insight into such ways of thinking. And remember, if you choose not to see, not to learn, not to understand, you are more likely to suffer disaster from wrong choices, or be manipulated by those who do understand. Knowledge is, after all, power, security and even freedom.

GRADING: The grading will be based on the components listed above. There will be a 12 % homework grade. I shall assign around ten homework assignments (at least one done on computer), and I shall drop the lowest homework grade. The open-book take-home Diagnostic test will have the same format as the regular one hour tests (although it may be a bit longer) and will both test your mastery of the material and let you know how I grade tests. The final will be about 75 % longer than a fifty-minute test. Extra Credit assignments will be offered, about which more later.

ABSENCES. Because there is a close correlation between class attendance and satisfactory performance, the student is expected to come to class. Being present means *being on time* for class. Not only will coming to class late hurt you, but late entries are a distraction for other students and the professor. I will take roll each day, and, after the first three days of class, **absences will count**. The first five absences will be not count, but thereafter each absence will cause the deduction of one point from your overall semester score. And remember, being present **means being on time**. I have had a considerable problem in some years with students filtering in throughout the class period and disrupting the proceedings. Thus, if you are not present when I finish calling the roll, you are absent. If you come up after class and tell me were present, I will count it as only half an absence. Exceptions made for illness with a doctor's excuse, a major car accident or **extraordinary** snow conditions. But otherwise, it is the student's responsibility to take the necessary measures to be in class on time. Also, if by some chance you are too ill to take a test, you must (**I mean must**) see a doctor or some sort of medical specialist to confirm this condition. **Also, you must tell me** about the absence and schedule a make up within two days. You **must** leave a message with me, either at my office (655-5292) or with the Classics secretary at 655-4419. **Do not come to me days or weeks after such an absence and expect me to allow a make up for a test.**

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours are listed above. I am more than willing to make special appointments. Further, I tend to spend a lot of time around the department and in my office, and I do not mind drop-ins. If I am too busy, I will gladly arrange another time. For those who are computer savvy, do not hesitate to send e-mail questions to me.

FACING UP TO LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. Face it, college life is often tough, and even the brightest students have problems. The essential point to remember is IF YOU ARE HAVING A PROBLEM, DO

SOMETHING ABOUT IT AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. Meeting with me during office hours or during a special appointment, obtaining help from your peers, or even hiring a tutor are available solutions. Do not sit still and assume you will figure out the problem by yourself. We often are the last ones to know just what our problems really are and what to do about them.

ANOTHER POLEMIC Some students question why they have to know so much material. After all, few will major in Classics or even Liberal Arts. As one student said (and I hope he was simply wrong), “Your class has me read more material than my major!” I have two answers. To accomplish the task I have outlined above, I think that this is not an unreasonable amount of reading. But there is another good justification. As you probably have heard, we are now in the Information Age. The gap in wages between the educated and skilled and those without either is increasingly widening, as companies adjust their pay scales to reflect the ability to produce. Because the sheer amount of knowledge is constantly increasing, and the methods of bringing that information to any part of the world at any time are becoming better and better, it is becoming evermore necessary to be able to gather, learn, process and disseminate large amounts of information quickly and competently. There is much more competition both nationally and internationally than ever, and not only from humans, but from machines as well. By compelling you to process large amounts of information about a subject that is alien to you (and perhaps one that you are not all that interested in) this course helps you increase your general information processing skills. It is a bit like football and weightlifting and exercises. Football players when they train not only play football and do drills, but also lift weights and do other exercises, because weightlifting and exercises builds up abilities (strength, flexibility, etc.) that comes in useful during the game. The more you train (at least to a point) the more you gain. The same holds true in education. Plus, you have the benefit of gaining the insights mentioned above.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY in any and all of its forms will not be tolerated. If caught cheating, the best that can happen to you is that you will fail the course.

Tentative Schedule of Class Meetings

During the semester, there will be interruptions, digressions, *etc.* and I may fall behind. This schedule tells you what we shall discuss on a given day and what you will be responsible for on that day. But this is an ideal schedule, subject to modification. If I fall behind, you can tell what I will do next by the order of topics and readings on the schedule below. **It is the student's responsibility to make sure what will be covered in class.** If you are absent, you should call or e-mail me to find out what will be covered during the next class period. You can find a Web version of this syllabus at <http://www.chss.montclair.edu/classics/S99MYTH.HTML>

This chart show what you should have read when you come into class that day.

M & L = Classical Mythology.
PK = Packet

Jan. 14	Orientation of class — what is myth and why do we study it?
Jan 18	MLK Day No Class
Jan 20	Approaches to Myth II. The Historical background Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 1-27, Questions and Comments: What is Myth? Ways to interpret myth. The Historical Background. Two African Myths. (<i>PK</i> 2-5)

Jan 21	Approaches to Greek myth III. The Near Eastern Antecedents Have read for this period: My notes on Middle Eastern myth PK 5-6, extra notes on the <i>Epic of Gilgamesh</i> (PK 182).
Jan 25	The near Eastern Antecedents: II <i>The Babylonian Creation</i> = (<i>The Emu Elish</i>), a Hittite Succession Myth. Have read for this period: PK 7-22 (Babylonian Creation Myth, Hittite Succession Myth)
Jan 27	Greek Origin Myths — Hesiod. Have read for this period: M & L 35-56, Outline of Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> , A selection from the <i>Book of Daniel</i> . PK 24-25, Zeus puts his finishing touches on Creation (PK 22-26)
Jan 28	Prometheus, the Evolving Zeus, and the last Creation legends. Have read for this period: M & L 56-69, 72-76, 87-89, Selection from Hesiod's <i>Works and Days</i> , Cleanthes' <i>Hymn to Zeus</i> (PK 26-28).
Feb. 1	More Origins. The Twelve Olympians. Have read for this period: M & L 70-84.
Feb. 3	Hera and Mother Goddesses. Poseidon and the Sea Divinities. Athena. Have read for this period: PK 28-32, M & L 98-115.
Feb. 4	Aphrodite, Eros. Philosophical Views of Aphrodite. Have read for this period: M & L 116-140. PK 32 (Illustration about Platonic Love) Turn in Diagnostic Test.
Feb. 8	Artemis, Apollo and Hermes. Have read for this period: M & L 141-203.
Feb. 10	Introduction to Greek Religion Have read for this period: My essay on Greek Religion (PK 35—41) The oracle of Amphiraus, the Oracle of Trophonius, Healing and Miracles from Epidaurus, a Magical Curse Tablet, Selection from Aristophanes' <i>Frogs</i> (PK 41-2).
Feb. 11	Finish off Greek Religion. Introduction to Dionysos. <i>The Bacchae</i> Have read for this period: M & L 204-221
Feb. 15	Dionysos, Pan, Echo and Narcissus. Have read for this period: M & L 221-232, A Selection from the <i>Acharnians</i> (PK 42)
Feb. 17	Demeter and the Eleusinian Mysteries. Have read for this period: M & L 233-249.
Feb. 18	Test 1
Feb. 22	Classical and Philosophical Views of Hades and Afterlife. Orphism. Have read for this period: M & L 271-272, 255-262, 273-281, The Orphic Gold Plates, Orphic Hymns, diagrams of Hades and of the Orphic Creation story. PK 43 - 48.
Feb. 24	The Theban Saga Have read for this period: M & L 289--316
Feb. 25	Special Lecture or Catch-up Day

Mar. 1	The Mycenaean Saga Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 317-328, essay on the Mycenaean Saga (PK 48-49)
Mar. 3	The <i>Oresteia</i> I. Have read for this period: Notes on the <i>Oresteia</i> , Overview of Agamemnon, Libation Bearers (PK 49-57), <i>M & L</i> 328-332 .
Mar. 4	The <i>Oresteia</i> II . <i>The Eumenides</i> Have read for this period: <i>The Eumenides</i> (PK 57-83.)
Mar. 8-14	Spring Recess.
Mar. 15	The Trojan Saga and its Background. — <i>The Iliad</i> Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 348- 379. Essay on Themes in the <i>Iliad</i> , Outline of the <i>Iliad</i> . PK 84-87.
Mar. 17	More Trojan Saga. The Fall of Troy. Have read for this period: <i>ML</i> 379-387
Mar. 18	The Returns. The <i>Odyssey</i> . I Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 388-397, Essay on themes in <i>Odyssey</i> (PK 87-90).
Mar. 22	The Returns. The <i>Odyssey</i> . II Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 397-405, 250-255 (Odysseus in Hades) .
Mar. 24	The Hero. Perseus and Legends of Argos. Introduction to Heracles. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 406-415.
Mar. 25	University Day. No Class.
Mar 29	Heracles. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 416-441
Mar. 31	Theseus and the Legends of Attica. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 442-463.
April 1	Test 2
April 5	Local Legends of Greece Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 480-499.
April 7	Jason and the Argonauts I Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 465-470, <i>Voyage of the Argo</i> (PK 91-99)
April 8	Jason and the Argonauts II Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 470-479, <i>Voyage of the Argo</i> (PK 99-114)
April 12	The Myths of Alexander the Great. Have read for this period: Selections from the <i>Alexander Romance</i> (PK 114-131)
April 14	The Euripidean Hero. Have read for this period: Euripides' <i>Orestes</i> (PK 184-200)
April 15	More Euripides' <i>Orestes</i> Have read for this period: Euripides' <i>Orestes</i> (PK 200-220)
April 19	Nature of Roman Mythology and Religion. The Basic Roman Gods I Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 503-515, Notes on Dumézil's interpretation of Archaic Roman Religion (PK 183)

April 21	Nature of Roman Mythology and Religion. The Basic Roman Gods II. The Mythical History of Rome. The prelude to the <i>Aeneid</i> . Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 515-525												
April 22	The Legends of the Founding of Rome. Aeneas and the <i>Aeneid</i> . Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 525-533, 262-270 (Aeneas in the Underworld) Themes in Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i> , Overview of <i>Aeneid</i> , Longer Overview of <i>Aeneid</i> . (Through Book VI) <i>PK</i> 132-147												
April 26	<i>Aeneid</i> II. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 525-533, Longer Overview of <i>Aeneid</i> (<i>PK</i> 147-158)												
April 28	Legends of Earliest Rome. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 532-541.												
April 29	Exotic Religion in the Roman Empire. Have read for this period: <i>M & L</i> 281-284, essay on Exotic religions of the Roman Empire, Divine honors given to Demetrius, <i>Hymn to Demetrius Poliorcetes</i> , Reference to the Taurobolium, Prudentius Description of the Taurobolium, The Praises and Titles of Isis, Initiation of Mythaic Mystae, The Description of an Initiation, The piety of Initiates, <i>Life of Plotinus</i> , Porphyry's description of Plotinus as a Mystic, Hymns of Proclus, Selections Aelius Aristides' <i>Sacred Tales</i> , Lucian's <i>Alexander of Abunoteichos</i> . (<i>PK</i> 159-176.)												
May 3	Last Day of Class Christian Mythology, Gnosticism. Have read for this period: My essay on Christianity, Christian Myth, Gnosticism, Selections from Acts of Matthew and Andreas in Land of Cannibals , the Sacred Dance of Jesus, a selection from The <i>Gospel According to Mary</i> . (<i>PK</i> 176-183)												
<h2>Finals.</h2> <p>All Finals will be in the room in which the class is held.</p> <table> <tr> <td>Mythology (9 AM)</td> <td>May 12 Wednesday</td> <td>8:00-10:00 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mythology (1 PM)</td> <td>May 10 Monday</td> <td>12:45-2:45 PM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Humanities</td> <td>May 7 Friday</td> <td>10:15 AM - 12:15 PM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Beginning Greek II</td> <td>May 10 Monday</td> <td>10:15 AM - 12:15 PM</td> </tr> </table>		Mythology (9 AM)	May 12 Wednesday	8:00-10:00 AM	Mythology (1 PM)	May 10 Monday	12:45-2:45 PM	Humanities	May 7 Friday	10:15 AM - 12:15 PM	Beginning Greek II	May 10 Monday	10:15 AM - 12:15 PM
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Lectures and Extra Credit Opportunities! The Department of Classics and General Humanities is sponsoring various lectures of the American Archaeological Association. For extra credit, attend the lecture, write up about a half page or so about the lecture and what you got out of it, with some specific detail to let me know you were there and awake. I shall provide information later about when these lectures will be held. They are usually in Brantl Lecture Hall, (Dickson) on a Tuesday evening, starting either 7 or 8 PM.