

2006 – Spring – Professor John Van Sickle – *Classics 15.W & Religion 16.W: Mythology of Greece & Rome*

Office & hours: 2404 Boylan, Monday, Thursday 2:15-3:00 p.m. or by Appointment. E-mail: jvsickle@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Provisional Syllabus, to be developed at pace appropriate to special writing agenda of class.

<p>Date Work in class, J 26 T Brainstorm: myth? religion? reason? What do we think we are studying? Free write in class & sharing of written thoughts to spark conversation.</p>	<p>Assignment to prepare at home to bring to class Background: first, approximate outline of Burkert's thinking. When ever you write, keep in mind both content & practice: CONTENT that you describe – Who? Where? When? What? Why? PRACTICE you perform – to or for Whom? in what Way? METAPHORS that you/we employ: start keeping track (MR from hunt!!)</p>
<p>J 30 M To <i>Muses</i> – authorization of Hesiod, poetry's audience (kings) & themes – gods' order – divide wealth & power – how gods & earth first... [Read aloud & compare your assigned sketches prepared at home.]</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 1-115 (pp. 27-33): write at home a draft based on the 7 W's mentioned above & be prepared to read & discuss in class.</p>
<p>F 02 T 'First of all <i>Chaos...Gaia...Tartaros...Eros</i> [procreation]...terrible children their father hated...hide...[<i>Gaia's</i> plot – <i>Kronos...Aphrodite...Desire</i> Again read prepared sketches. Remark differences in emphasis. Rethink & rewrite to produce a version that reflects what you learned from others.</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 116-206 (pp. 33-40): again write using the 7 W's & prepare to present in class.</p>
<p>F 06 M "Logic of Cosmogony" – basic themes of cosmogonic myth described by Burkert: identify as they appear in Hesiod: e.g. 'all', 'every', 'ever', 'first', 'last', 'begat</p>	<p>Draft outlines of Burkert's argument & main themes for comparison & critique in class [bring two copies: one for critique by group members, the other to hand in to professor]</p>
<p>F 09 T <i>Titans...Perseus</i> (280)...<i>Herakles</i> (289, 315, 332)...<i>Zeus called all...</i> (386) [combat plot – ideology: power & honor shared, 385-452, cf. 79-91) Identify in Hesiod themes described by Burkert: techno/biomorphic? combat?</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 207-452 (pp. 40-52): write using your 7 W's * prepare to present & compare: how does content develop? Argument? Burkert's categories of thought & theme?</p>
<p>F 16 T <i>Rhea</i> lay with <i>Kronos</i>...[who] learned...but <i>Zeus...Rhea...Gaia...Ouranos</i>... thunder, lightning... Trace recurrence of Burkert's themes.</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 453-506 (pp. 52-56):keeping your 7Ws in mind, sketch how the plot thickens [MR] & themes unfold [MR]</p>
<p>F 21 Tu <i>Iapetos</i> (507).. [his problematic children–] <i>Epimetheus...Prometheus...Herakles</i> (526, 530) <i>Mekone</i> ... [woman] Do your sketches have to change here more than in previous sessions? If so, why & how? Trace recurrence of Burkert's themes.</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 507-616 (pp. 56-63):keeping your 7Ws in mind, sketch how the plot thickens [MR] & themes unfold [MR]: in what ways- does thematic development take a surprising turn? How fit Burkert's scheme?</p>
<p>F 23 T [battle... <i>Zeus</i> exhorts troops... (644)... fiery climax... <i>Tartarus</i> (721 ff)... <i>Styx</i> (775-805)... <i>Typhæus</i> (820-80) ...finished..divided honors... Compare not only your reports of CONTENT but also your developing sense of PRACTICE, how different types of plot intertwine, how beginning, middle, end, get redistributed, not necessarily put last or first.</p>	<p>Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> lines 617-929 (pp 64-79):keeping your 7Ws in mind, sketch how the plot thickens [MR] & themes unfold [MR] By now you should be noticing development in your own ability to sketch & report. Include self-evaluation in this week's sketch</p>
<p>F 27 M Compare & contrast: remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous story of origin of woman</p>	<p>Hesiod, <i>Works & Days</i> 1-201 (pp 105-110 in Caldwell's <i>Theogony</i>): your chance to compare & contrast two versions of a story</p>
<p>M 02 T Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of women. Place this story in relation to genealogical structure (divine family) as described by Hesiod): pick out types of plot & development.</p>	<p>Homeric hymn to Demeter01-280 : write two paragraphs in which you apply what you have learned by way of analysis, not only & W's, but also types of plot (e.g., bio-/technomorphic, & trickster, quest,combat,, origin =etiology or stories of how practices get started, where things come from, like rituals or names, et al); type so you can exchange & critique.</p>
<p>M 06 M Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of origin of religious rites commonly practiced in Greek society: remember how myths are supposed to issue from & reflect actual practices & conflicts: what social or political agendas can you detect here? Cf. kings in Hesiod.</p>	<p>Hh to Demeter 281-495: revise what you wrote the previous class, taking account of two things: critique from classmates & now your reading of the work as a whole.</p>
<p>M 09 T Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of origin: what types of plot predominate here & to what effect? Do any paradoxes or contradictions emerge (e.g. how does the issue of gender emerge?)</p>	<p>Hh to Apollo 1-178. Make reading notes to compare. Begin to plan how you might weave together into a coherent discussion some of your daily reports & reading notes, featuring also reports of any signs of your own development you may note (3 to five paragraphs, two pages maximum length).</p>
<p>M 13 M Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of origin: remember how myths are supposed to issue from & reflect actual practices & conflicts: what social or political agendas can you detect here?</p>	<p>Hh to Apollo 178-546. Make reading notes to compare. Pay special attention to patterns of plot & theme: how the poem hangs together yet divides into double focus.</p>

M 16 T	Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of origin: remember how myths are supposed to issue from & reflect actual practices & conflicts: what social or political agendas can you detect here?	Hh to Hermes 1-280. Make careful reading notes on patterns of plot & theme, what you recognize & what may surprise.
M 20 M	Remark SIMilarity & DIFFerence between this & previous treatments of origin:remember how myths are supposed to issue from & reflect actual practices & conflicts: what social or political agendas can you detect here?	Hh to Hermes 281-580. Final set of reading notes to utilize in preparing first essay
M 23 T	Bring first draft of essay – a coherent discussion some of your daily reports & reading notes, featuring also reports of any signs of your own development you may note (3 to five paragraphs, two pages maximum length).	exchange essay with a fellow group member & comment. Then you will take home to revise & hand in the following class.
M 27 M	Hand in assigned essay, Discuss process of rewriting.	
M 30 T	Write a paragraph or two on each of the assigned sections (Part I & Part III) in the introductory essays by Esposito: Assuming that mythology reflects ideologies & conflicts in a society, how do the patterns found in Hesiod & Homeric hymns differ from what you find here in Athenian drama? In particular, how does Esposito's concept of "safety net" in monotheistic systems of belief as opposed to polytheism fit our concept of social modeling of myth? How do the analytical categories (plot types, themes) introduced by Burkert come into play here? Situating tragic conflict in context of Athenian democracy, e.g. <i>Antigone</i> . Compare & contrast female roles in polytheistic versus monotheistic belief systems Note how chorus serves to pick out & underline crucial themes. [in class exchange, read, offer critique of written paragraphs]	Read <i>Euripides</i> , Introduction by S. Esposito with critical eye– PART I (pp. 2-5) POLYTHEISTIC WORLD VIEW VS MONOTHEISTIC VIEW BUT check & evaluate evidence for polytheistic views in early Jewish tradition before monotheistic (male-dominant, patriarchal) ideology imposed:. http://www.matrifocus.com/LAM04/spotlight.htm http://www.theology.bham.ac.uk/guest/Ancient%20Israel/asherah.htm PART III (pp 7-9) WHAT IS GREEK TRAGEDY? also tragedy & tragic theater in Athens.
A 03 M	Rescue plot: write & exchange, comment on a paragraph or two sketching conflict (themes at issue, e.g. Greek vs barbarian, male vs female). How does play handle the force of <i>Eros</i> ? <i>Aphrodite</i> ? (remember him, & her back in Hesiod).. [in class exchange, read, offer critique of written paragraphs]	PART IV <i>MEDEA</i> (Introductory pp 9-17) <i>MEDEA</i> lines 1-445 (pp 35-53)
A 06 T	Revenge plot: write & exchange comment on a paragraph or two, sketching tragic dilemma dramatized.	Euripid, es <i>MEDEA</i> lines 446-975 (pp 53-74)
A 10 M	Revenge plot & rescue plot: write & exchange comment on a paragraph or two with respect to following questions. How does dramatic irony build? What part does force of <i>Eros</i> play in deforming character? Political implications for Athens.	Euripides, <i>MEDEA</i> lines 976-1419 (pp 74-92) Choose one main, or two related threads from drafts & discussions of these last four sessions (M 30, A 03, 06, 10) & write five to seven paragraphs, three pages maximum length, to hand in after vacation (on A 24).
A 24 M	Hand in essays, exchange, read & discuss how prior class discussion of drafts affected your rewriting & the version you are handing in.	
A 27 T	Again, assuming that mythology reflects ideologies & conflicts in a society, how do the patterns found in Hesiod & Homeric hymns differ from those found here & how do they suit their function as a LAST WORK?	<i>Part IV. Euripides' Bacchae</i> (pp 18-27) Euripides, <i>BACCHAE</i> lines 1-575
M 01 M	Continue & complete analytical discussion. How	Euripides, <i>BACCHAE</i> lines 576-1392
M 04 T	How do the plots & themes found in your prior readings resemble those found here? Do they differ in ways that reflect different historical situation & circumstances?	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> book 1. [as you read & compare, gather notes for a final essay, no longer than five to seven paragraphs, three pages, on the questions posed in the left column]
M 08 M	How do the plots & themes found in your prior readings resemble those found here? Do they differ in ways that reflect different historical situation & circumstances?	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , book 3
M 11 T	Reports, describing the sequence chosen & explaining: (1) how it relates to prior readings & illustrates theoretical concepts we have used; (2) how it seems to fit into any general plan of the whole work, e.g. can you discern a progression from beginning, through middle, to end?.	Scan the table of contents (pp i-iv) & choose a story or set of stories that catches your interest & that you can relate to what you have read in the course thus far.
M 15 M	Choose another sequence & explain: (1) how it relates to prior readings & illustrates theoretical concepts we have used; (2) how it seems to fit into any general plan of the whole work, e.g. can you discern a progression from beginning, through middle, to end?.	Scan the table of contents (pp i-iv) & choose a story or set of stories that catches your interest & that you can relate to what you have read in the course thus far.

BOOKS & Guides to Reading & Writing You may want to check out guides to assigned works on my web site for Core Studies 1 –
<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/classics/jvsickle/cslinks.htm>

Books available for purchase at Shakespeare & Co., Hillel Place.

Hesiod's *Theogony* editor: Richard Caldwell,)Focus 1987 0-941051-00-5 paperback 137pp

The Homeric Hymns editors: Susan C. Shelmerdine, Focus • Revised 2000 • 1-58510-019-6 • Paper • 180pp • 5½ x 8½ • \$10.95

Euripides: *Four Plays: Medea, Bacchae, Heracles, Hippolytus* 1-58510-048-X • Paper • 2002 • 304 pages • 6 x 9 • \$18.95

Ovid *Metamorphoses* Z. Philip Ambrose, 2004 • Paperback • 464 pages • 6 x 9 • 1-58510-103-6 • \$14.95

Homer, *Odyssey*, translated by Richmond Lattimore

Book available on reserve at Brooklyn College Library, also through NetLibrary On-line:

Chapter 4, "The Logic of Cosmogony" (pp. 87-106) by Walter Burkert, in book. *From Myth to Reason?* by R. G. A. Buxton.

We will analyze & absorb & apply this reading throughout our work in this course.

Writing Intensive Course – in practice what does this mean?

The General Education Outcomes Assessment Task Force has identified the goals and objectives below as appropriate for writing-intensive courses. For our course, given the goal & the materials we read, all of the learning objectives listed might apply to our work.

Goal: effective writing.

Learning objectives: Enhance ability to express ideas clearly in writing, which includes:

1. use writing to reflect on one's learning and to understand difficult material
2. move from low stakes [ungraded] writing to more formal pieces
3. draft and revise written material
4. the ability to organize according to a pattern that is appropriate to the discipline
5. the ability to develop ideas by using supportive evidence appropriate to the discipline
6. the ability to edit one's work so that grammar and syntax are correct
7. the ability to write a research paper that uses quotations, paraphrases, and appropriate documentation
8. the ability to write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

ASSESSMENT: Specify which assessment tools (e.g., assignments, exercises, lab reports, portfolios, and essay questions on exams) will be used to meet your objectives.

Our present course: in one semester, we may reasonably expect to work towards the first three objectives, which really to me look like one inseparable & seamless process. We shall begin by learning from each other what we now suppose myth to be & how we think it works. We shall explore this through conversation in the first instance & through so-called low stakes writing.

Gradually we shall acquire analytical tools by reading & discussing, writing about the categories of mythic thought described by Burkert.

We shall refine these categories as we seek to apply them to the analysis of diverse traditional tales from Greek & Roman tradition. By refining, I mean going back to rethink & rewrite our initial definitions & descriptions. This process of going back, otherwise known as recursive thinking, fulfills the third objective proposed.

We shall assess our achievement by looking back to compare our first versions with what we learn to produce. An appropriate test would be to look at a previously unseen example of a cosmogonic story & to be able to identify in it themes & topics that we have learned are typical of such tales. Learning to recognize underlying patterns or structures in narrative can be an extremely valuable cognitive tool.
