

ANT2800 (Classical Mythology): Exam, Spring 2019 (31 May 2018)
Sensorveiledning

Course description: <https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ifikk/ANT2800/index-eng.html>

Course content: The course offers an introduction to the mythology of the Graeco-Roman world through an examination of its divinities and heroes as they are presented in the numerous textual and iconographic sources of Greek and Roman culture. The course looks at the role of mythology in the cultural and religious milieu of antiquity, the relationship between humanity and the supernatural/divine, the moral questions posed by these stories, and the reception of classical mythology in post-ancient media (literature, art, film, etc.). The course also looks into the historical development of the study of mythology and gives an overview of the most influential theories of myth.

In Spring 2018 the course was taught by Prof. Silvio Bär. A combination of lecture format (10 lectures) and seminar format (3 seminars) was chosen. In addition to this, a guest lecture was also scheduled (by Prof. Jens Braarvig, IKOS, on 25.03.2019). The textbooks used were Jenny March, *The Penguin Book of Classical Myths* (London 2009), and Fritz Graf, *Greek Mythology: An Introduction* (Baltimore 1996). This principal reading was supplemented by several pieces of primary and secondary reading (e.g. excerpts from texts such as the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Theogony*, Livy's *Ab urbe condita*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; and some research articles and chapters from introductory volumes such as *A Companion to Greek Mythology*, ed. by Ken Dowden and Niall Livingstone, Malden 2011). For all lessons, a PPP was produced, and all lectures (but not the seminars) were podcasted (audio recording). All lecture material was made available on Canvas and was relevant to the examination (except for some extra further reading that was explicitly marked as optional).

The teaching language was English (for two reasons: because all available reading is in English, and because a course taught in English enables international students to participate). The students could choose between English and Norwegian for their mid-term assignments (*obligatoriske innleveringer*) and for the final examination.

The exam consists of three parts that count 33% each. The first part is a multiple choice test (15 items) in which the students' knowledge of names, stories, facts, dates, etc. is tested. There is only right or wrong in this part. The second and third part is an essay on myths, texts, topics and aspects of classical mythology and its reception that were discussed in class and/or were part of the reading assignments. Here the focus is not so much on right or wrong, but on the consistency of the argument and independent thinking (see below).

A separate character is given for each part (A–F). The final grading is based on the average of the three separate characters.

Key to part I (see the exam for the questions): 1 Demeter – Diana; 2 Eteokles; 3 Homer, *Iliad*; 4 Xenophanes; 5 Medea; 6 seven years; 7 Skylla; 8 The Amazons are not mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*; 9 James G. Frazer; 10 Lavinia – Silvius; 11 some sort of divine spirit; 12 The gods do not have the power to make humans immortal; 13 Kronos and Rheia; 14 Janus; 15 Centaur.

Grading: 15–13 correct: A; 12–10 correct: B; 9–7 correct: C; 6–4 correct: D; 3–1 correct: E; 0 correct: F.

For parts II and III, three essay questions are offered, wherefrom the students must choose two to write about (if someone writes on all three, the last essay is ignored):

- a) Write an essay on the nature and characteristics of the gods in classical mythology (also in relation to society and religion).
- b) Write an essay on the cultural significance of the Trojan War in the Graeco-Roman world and beyond (reception).
- c) Write an essay on the cultural significance of Herakles/Hercules in the Graeco-Roman world and beyond (reception).

Each essay must be at least 600 words long (there is no upper word limit). Students should use concrete examples for the sake of illustration, but it is important that the essay goes beyond a mere collection of examples and shows an overarching plan/argument. It must be discursive in nature, viz., students need to show their ability to argue their point by way of an analytic and consistent argument. The analytic concepts and terms as they were introduced in class should be used and applied. A very good essay does not just reproduce the arguments and ideas presented in class, but instead displays the student's ability to develop his/her own argument and line of thought.

The following hard and fast parameters need to be fulfilled (lack thereof will pull down the final character, irrespective of the quality of the argument as such):

- correct length (viz., a minimum of 600 words);
- full and coherent sentences (not only keywords or lists);
- correct and appropriate language;
- factual correctness of facts and data (while a good essay does more than just reproduce facts a data, an essay that is well-written and discursive in nature but is erroneous regarding facts and data will naturally be pulled down in grading).

Prof. Silvio Bär
14.06.2019