HUMANITIES SEMINARS PROGRAM, Spring 2015
ANCIENT GREEK MYTHOLOGY
Taught by Dr. BELLA VIVANTE, Professor Emerita of Classics
bvivante@email.arizona.edu http://classics.arizona.edu/node/109

WELCOME to an exciting exploration of the ever fascinating Ancient Greek Mythology! The aim is to appreciate the enlightening diversity of the mythological tales about gods and mortals. While the mythic events and characters may appear overwhelmingly numerous, they actually fall into a coherent order that begins with creation tales and stories about the gods, and then proceeds to hero tales and human circumstances. Not just entertaining, the stories offer insights into ancient Greek ideas on profound human issues, which in turn illuminate our contemporary values and beliefs.


Syllabus: Read selection for date listed. Page numbers differ by edition. “Perspective” insets may be skipped, but they and the Interpretations are often valuable. Note: b = bottom, m = mid, t = top

Key Names & Terms and Further Readings are at the end of each chapter.
Maps are inside front & back covers; for others, see Maps list.
Reference Charts—Chronology and Greek & Roman Pantheons—follow text, pp. 713-15

Jan. 27 Introduction to the course: Ch. 1, What is Myth? pp. 2-3, 6-12 top
Ch. 3, Near Eastern Mythic Influences: 59-67; Greek Sources: 67-78

Feb. 3 Creation Tales of Gods: Ch. 4, Greek: Hesiod, Theogony: Children of Chaos, of Gaea, 82-85; Cronus, Uranus, Aphrodite, 88-89; Zeus, Titans, Giants, 94-95, 100-101; “Homeric Hymn to Gaia”, Rdg.; Zeus’ matings, from the Theogony, Rdg
Near Eastern, “Enuma Elish,” Genesis 1, 104m-109m; 112-113t
Creation of Mortals: Ch. 5, Prometheus and Pandora, 115-18, 122m-25; Five Races, 131-34m; Lycoan, Deucalion, Pyrrha, 136b-141t

Feb. 10 Goddesses of Sexuality, Growth, & Fertility: Ch. 9, Intro, Aphrodite, 211-14 [may skip Venus in art]; Aphrodite & Anchises, 218-24t; & Adonis, 265m-66
Artemis, Athena, 224-34
Ch. 10, Demeter, Persephone, Eleusinian Mysteries, 236-45, 248-54; Inanna, Dumuzi, 255-58; Cybele, Attis, 262-5

Feb. 17 Male Dieties—Elemental Power to Institutional Authority: Ch. 11, Dionysos, 271-5, 277-97, 300-301t
Death, the Underworld, Ch. 12, 303-6; Orpheus, 318m-25
Ch. 6, Zeus, 144-151m [may skip Zeus in art], 155-57m; Poseidon, Hades, 160-2

Feb. 24 Younger Gods: Ch. 7, Apollo, 167-85; Ch. 8, Hermes, Pan, 187-201
Hephaestus, Ares, 203-9

Mar. 3 Heroic Myth: Ch 13, Intro, 336-8t; Ch. 15, Heracles, 375-400, 402b-12; fr. Euripides, Rdg
Ch. 16, Theseus, 428m-36t, on Amazons: fr. Aes. Furies +, Rdg; text: 443m-47, 452m-65m
Ch. 14, Perseus, 351-3, 359m-73 [skipping insets]

Mar. 10 Ch. 19, Jason, the Argo, Medea, 502-29m [skipping inset]
Ch. 18, Oedipus, 475-500

Mar. 17 Spring Break—No Class

Mar. 24 Ch. 20, The Trojan War, 539-74

Mar. 31 Ch. 21, Fall of Troy & Aftermath, 576-97 [skipping insets]; Ch. 22, Odysseus, 601-26

Apr. 7 Ch. 23, Trojan Refugee Aeneas & Founding of Rome, 631-57: Concluding discussion