

CLASSICS (CLSC)

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CLSC 1000 Greek and Roman Mythology

Myths are traditional stories that have endured many years. Some of them have to do with events of great importance, such as the founding of a nation. Others tell the stories of great heroes and heroines and their exploits and courage in the face of adversity. Still others are simple tales about otherwise unremarkable people who get into trouble or do some great deed. What are we to make of all these tales, and why do people seem to like to hear them? This course will focus on the myths of ancient Greece and Rome, as well as a few contemporary American ones, as a way of exploring the nature of myth and the function it plays for individuals, societies, and nations. We will also pay some attention to the way the Greeks and Romans themselves understood their own myths. Are myths subtle codes that contain some universal truth? Are they a window on the deep recesses of a particular culture? Are they entertaining stories that people like to tell over and over? Are they a set of blinders that all of us wear, though we do not realize it? We investigate these questions through a variety of topics creation of the universe between gods and mortals, religion and family, sex, love, madness, and death.

1 Course Unit

CLSC 1200 Archaeology of Greece and Rome

The monuments and material remains of ancient Mediterranean civilizations have shaped a discourse about western civilization for centuries. From the so-called Tomb of Atreus at Mycenae to the colosseum in Rome, the physical remains of the past have been seen as signs of social sophistication, of overweening hubris, of imperial exploitation, of lost greatness. This course introduces you to the material remains of the ancient Mediterranean and their contested significance today. Chronologically organized, it will explore both great monuments and humble dwellings, using material remains to examine the religions, economies and social structure of the Bronze Age through the late Roman empire. In doing so, it will challenge the notion of "western" civilization by probing the constant connections between the Mediterranean and the east, and the myriad of ways that ancient social practices, as evident through archaeology, challenge our own values and assumptions. The course will also ask how archaeology has been itself shaped by national politics and national identity, and how these monuments continue to exert a powerful impact today - as economic drivers, as contested symbols, and as part of a fragile heritage increasingly under threat.

1 Course Unit

CLSC 2500 Ancient Cities

The Greco-Roman world was a world of cities. From the ancient Greek city-states (or poleis), to the cosmopolitan cities that appeared in the era of Alexander the Great and his successors, and to the imperial city-projects of the Roman Empire. This course examines the architectural and urban developments of Greek and Roman cities together with central political institutions and religious and social practices that were associated with them. In studying a diversity of visual, material and textual evidence—such as urban form, architectural and sculptural monuments, as well as literary sources and epigraphic evidence—the course addresses both the structure of the urban fabric and the socio-political situation of ancient Greek and Roman cities.

1 Course Unit