

PACIFICA GRADUATE INSTITUTE

Mythological Studies Program
EI & GI Fall 2005

Approaches to the Study of Myth MS 620
Instructor: Dr. Christine Downing

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COURSE SYLLABUS

A. Course Description

The course will begin with an overview of the history of myth study. We will then focus on twentieth century anthropological and depth psychological approaches to the study of sacred narratives, stories derived from oral traditions, and cultural events that invite symbolic analysis. We will look at the trajectory that leads from James George Frazer and Jane Ellen Harrison to Claude Levi-Strauss and Jean-Pierre Vernant. In line with our program's emphasis on the depth psychological approach to myth study we will then turn to Sigmund Freud and also look at Otto Rank's and Thomas Mann's ways of carrying forward Freud's interpretation of myths. Finally, we will explore the ways in which Mann, Carl Kerényi, and Carl Jung deepened one another's ways of working with myth, and at James Hillman's post-Jungian approach to mythology.

Because this is a graduate course, many of the assigned readings are from primary texts. Some of you may find it works best to read these after the lecture in which they are discussed. The chapters by Fritz Graf, Wendy Doniger, and Joseph Campbell on Digital Course Reserve should help orient you, but you may also find it useful to look at the more fully developed discussions of the various theoretical approaches to mythology in William Doty's *Mythography: The Study of Myths and Rituals*. 2nd Edition. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: U of Alabama P, 2000.

To provide some unity I have where possible chosen essays which center around the myth of Oedipus. Thus it seems appropriate to ask you to begin your reading for this course with Sophocles' play. There will be an optional viewing of a filmed version of the play on the first Tuesday evening of the Quarter.

Course Objectives

1. To provide an overview of the history of myth study and of the most important contemporary approaches.
2. To give particular emphasis to the relevance of depth psychology to the study of myth.

Required Books

Fagles, Robert, trans. *The Three Theban Plays*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *Freud and Man's Soul*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984.

Kerényi, Carl, and James Hillman. *Oedipus Variations*. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1991.

Jung, C.G. and C. Kerényi. *Essays on a Science of Mythology*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969. 1-155.

(I have assigned one essay each from my *The Luxury of Afterwards* and *Preludes: Essays on the Ludic Imagination* and made them available on the Digital Course Reserve Reader. However most of the essays in these books will be assigned in other courses you will take with me later on, so you might want to purchase the books now.)

Digital Course Reserve Readings

Many of the required readings are listed as included in the Digital Course Reserve Reader for MS 620. You can read these materials online or print them.

To access these readings:

Login to the website: <http://www.online.pacifica.edu/dor>.

On the Digital Reserve Page, enter: Email Address: pacifica
Password: lumen.

Then click the link for MS620.

(If you have trouble accessing this site or downloading materials, please contact Mark Kelly or Richard Buchen at

reference@pacifica.edu or 805 969 3626 x 144

B. Class Schedule and Reading

Session I

THE BEGINNINGS OF MYTH STUDY

FRAZER and HARRISON; LEVI-STRAUSS and VERNANT

Required Reading

Fagles, Robert, trans. *The Three Theban Plays*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.

(Read "Oedipus the King")

Digital Course Reserve Reader:

Graf, Fritz. "A Provisional Definition." "The Rise of the Scientific Study of

Myth." and "New Approaches to the Interpretation of Myth in the Twentieth

- Century." *Greek Mythology: An Introduction*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1996. 1-56.
- O'Flaherty, Wendy Doniger. "Other Peoples' Lies: The Cave of Echoes." *Other Peoples' Myths*. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1995. 25-43.
- Campbell, Joseph. "At the Close of an Age." *Masks of God: Occidental Mythology*. New York: Viking P, 1964. 518-523.
- Frazer, James George. "Dying and Reviving Gods." *The New Golden Bough*. Ed. Theodore Gaster. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959. 339-362, 416-438.
- Harrison, Jane Ellen. "The Making of a Goddess." *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*. New York: Meridian Books, 1957. 257-321.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. "The Structural Study of Myth." *Structural Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books, 1963. 206-231.
- Vernant, Jean-Pierre and Pierre Vidal-Naquet. "Oedipus Without the Complex." *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. Trans. Janet Lloyd. New York: Zone Books, 1988. 85-111.
- Dodds, E. R. "On Misunderstanding the *Oedipus Rex*." in Erich Segal, ed., *Greek Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism*, Harper & Row, 1983. 177-188.
- Murray, Gilbert, "Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy," Robert Segal, ed. *The Myth and Ritual Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
- Propp, Vladimir. "Oedipus in the Light of Folklore Lowell Edmunds and Alan Dundes, eds. *Oedipus; a Folklore Casebook*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, 76-121. .

Session II FREUD

Required Reading

Bettelheim, Bruno. *Freud and Man's Soul*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984.

Digital Course Reserve Reader:

Freud, Sigmund. "Typical Dreams." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. IV. Ed. James Strachey. London: Hogarth P, 1953-1974. 260-266.

Freud, Sigmund. "The Theme of the Three Caskets." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. XII. Ed. James Strachey. London: Hogarth P, 1953-1974. 291-301.

Freud, Sigmund. "The Return of Totemism in Childhood." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. XIII. Ed. James Strachey. London: Hogarth P, 1953-1974. 140-161.

Mann, Thomas. "Freud and the Future." *Essays of Three Decades*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947. 411-428.

Downing, Christine. "Sigmund Freud and the Greek Mythological Tradition." *Preludes: Essays on the Ludic Imagination, 1961-1981*. New York: iUniverse, 2005, 155-169.

Downing, Christine. "Freud's Mythology of Soul." *The Luxury of Afterwards*. New York: iUniverse, 2004, 55-66.

Supplementary Reading:

Rank, Otto. "The Myth of the Birth of the Hero." *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero and Other Writings*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1959. 1-11, 61-94.

Caldwell, Richard. "The Psychoanalytical Interpretation of Greek Myth." *Approaches to Greek Myth*. Ed. Lowell Edmunds. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1990. 342-389.

Slater, Philip. *The Glory of Hera*. Boston: Beacon P, 1971.

Session III

MANN and KERENYI; KERENYI, JUNG, and HILLMAN

Required Reading

Hillman, James. "Oedipus Revisited." In Kerényi, Carl, and James Hillman. *Oedipus Variations*. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1991. 87-169.

Kerényi, Carl. "Kore." In Jung, C.G. and C. Kerényi. *Essays on a Science of Mythology*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969. 1-155.

Jung, C.G. "The Psychology of the Child Archetype." In Jung, C.G. and C. Kerényi. *Essays on a Science of Mythology*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969. 70-100.

Digital Course Reserve Reader:

Mann, Thomas. *Joseph and His Brothers*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983. 279-292, 1015-1042.

Supplementary Reading:

Gelley, Alexander, trans. *Mythology and Humanism: The Correspondence of Thomas Mann and Karl Kerényi*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell UP, 1975.

Maidenbaum, Aryeh and Stephen R. Martin. *Lingering Shadows: Jungians, Freudians, and Anti-Semitism*. Boston: Shambhala, 1991.

Segal, Robert, ed. *Jung on Mythology*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1998.

C. Course Requirement and Evaluation

Three short (3-5 pages) papers, one due at the beginning of both the second and third meetings of the class, the last on the due date for term papers. The format and topic of these papers will be explained at our first class meeting.

Please include the course and group number on the paper *and* on the outside of the envelope (MS 620 EI or GI).

• **E student papers (or Incomplete Forms) must be postmarked on or before January 5, 2006**

• **G student papers (or Incomplete Forms) must be postmarked on or before January 12, 2006**

Mail Papers (or Incomplete Forms) to:

Christine Downing
11 Discovery Way
Eastsound, WA 98245

Incompletes:

Students are allowed four Incompletes per academic year. Should you choose to take an Incomplete in this class, the completed paper would need to be postmarked by March 20, 2006 for E students and March 27, 2006 for G students. When you complete the paper send it directly to the faculty *and include a Grade Change Form*. All assignments are due on the date specified. No credit will be given for late papers.

Mail Incompletes to:

Christine Downing
11 Discovery Way
Eastsound, WA 98245