



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

classical myths in visual arts - 5216

Last update 05-03-2018

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: history of art

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Luba Freedman

Coordinator Email: lubafre@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday around the hours of the taught courses (#7708); by appointment via email; no messages from Thursday to Sunday.

Teaching Staff:

Prof Luba Freedman

Course/Module description:

We will discuss those works whose artists reflected on myths, or stories, about Greco-Roman gods and goddesses (not only about them) for their patrons who knew these stories from literary sources, though not the way these myths were first depicted in Greek and Roman art, as Greek vases were unknown, Roman reliefs were misunderstood, and Pompeian paintings began to be discovered after 1748. The emphasis is placed on works of art, not sources of knowledge about myths. Paintings, sculptures, and graphics are visual interpretations of stories, not illustrations to literary elaborations of familiar, hence classical, myths. The myths are considered in Roman elaboration, though Greek precedents are recalled whenever possible. Intention is to include mythical artists and poets, Orpheus, Pygmalion, Narcissus (jokingly called by Alberti), Prometheus, and Daedalus, as well as artistic and musical competitions, like that of Minerva with Arachne, Minerva with the Pierides, Apollo with Marsyas, and Apollo with Pan. Works of modern art are discussed when they offer significant interpretations, like Dali's Narcissus.

Course/Module aims:

To grant basic knowledge about the myths that became classical because they were recounted in texts and represented several times in different works of early modern art, mostly by Botticelli, Piero di Cosimo, Michelangelo, Giulio Romano, Titian, Poussin, Rembrandt, Rubens, Velasquez, and Boucher, to list several names. Another aim is to inquire about causes for attraction of certain myths for contemporary audience throughout the period, from classical antiquity to the French Revolution, and raise questions why certain, though no less fascinating, stories were represented sporadically, even if by most well-known artists. Let us note that in the Middle Ages myths were rarely depicted in monumental art and Ovid's Metamorphoses was illustrated in 5 out of 400 survived Latin codices, and from 1330 depictions of myths are found also in didactic, astrological, and universal history texts, but these are rarely discussed in this course; their medieval style lasted in early sixteenth-century woodcuts, the time of Raphael.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To recognize the established formulas in the representation of major myths; to distinguish between chief artistic styles, ancient Greek, Imperial Roman, medieval, Italian and Northern Renaissance, Northern and Southern Baroque, Classicist, and Rococo; to understand the direct relationship between visual interpretation of the myth, known only from texts, and their intended viewer, who knew also their allegorical meanings; to understand the minimal impact of illustrations, even when

they grace the most well-known text, such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, from 1330 known in French and Italian translations, on monumental art. Mythological representations illustrate Leo Steinberg's dictum, "art generates art," that is, Renaissance patron looked for models in ancient art as he knew from Greek and Latin sources, and seventeenth-century patron, enjoyed seeing in the commissioned work the impact of Italian artists.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: use of power point presentations which combine images and factual texts; illustrated frontal lectures; no need to memorize anything but persistent attendance of classes guarantees the comprehension of works and their subjects: to regard individual works of art as interpretative of myths, thus requiring individual approach; we ought to be always mindful of the fact that each work of art on a mythological subject was intended for an individual viewer who was familiar with various sources of knowledge about this represented myth and its interpretations; hence, the general study of literary sources is irrelevant in itself; classical sources are accessible on these websites: www.theoi.com and illustrations to Ovid are found on www.perseus.tufts.edu; Ovid and illustrations -- ovid.lib.virginia.edu

Course/Module Content:

The course consists of 9 large themes:

1. Eros; the birth of Centaur Chiron; Kronos/Saturn castrates Ouranos/Caelus and Saturn Devours His Children (the particularly unpleasant subjects); the nurture of Zeus/Jupiter; the birth of Athene; Gigantomachia (the battle with giants; Prometheus; Peleus and Thetis (the parents of Achilles who was educated by Chiron)
2. Loves of Jupiter: Europa; Danae; Perseus and Andromeda; Leda; Io; Mercury and Argus; Ganymede; Antiope
3. Charon; Pluto and Proserpina; Orpheus and Eurydice; the death of Orpheus
4. Poseidon/Neptune and Amphitrite; Tritons and Nereids; Neptune and Amymone; Polyphemus and Galatea
5. Athene and Poseidon; Minerva and Arachne; Minerva and Cupid; Minerva and Vulcan; Minerva and the Pierides; Minerva, Apollo, and the Muses; Euterpe; Calliope
6. Athene and Marsyas; Apollo and Marsyas; Apollo and Pan (the Judgment of Midas); Pan and Syrinx; Apollo and Daphne; Apollo and Phaethon
7. Leto and the Twins: Apollo and Diana; the Rape of Leto; Latona and the Lycian Farmers; Diana and Actaeon; Diana and Callisto; Jupiter and Callisto; Selene/Diana and Endymion
8. Zeus and Semele; the birth of Dionysos; Dionysos and the Pirates; Bacchus and Midas; the death of Pentheus; Bacchantes or Maenads; Triumphs of Bacchus;

Bacchanalia; Theseus and Ariadne; Daedalus and Icarus; Bacchus and Ariadne
9. *Two Venuses; the birth of the Celestial Venus; the Three Graces; Venus and Cupid; the birth of Adonis; Venus and Adonis; the death of Adonis; Pygmalion and "Galatea"; Venus and Mars; Venus and Vulcan; Venus and Mars with Vulcan; Narcissus; Venus and Anchises*

Required Reading:

Reference:

Grafton, A., Most, G. W., and Settis, S., eds. *The Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, MA, 2010) DE 60 C55 2010 – 7 days

Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC) (Zurich, 1981-1999)
N 7760 A1 L4 – Art Reference

Reid, J. D. *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts, 1300-1990s* (Oxford, 1993), 2 vols. NX 650 M9 R45 – Circulation desk

Basic Reading:

Barolsky, P. *Ovid and the Metamorphoses of Modern Art from Botticelli to Picasso* (New Haven and London, 2014) N 8224 M46 B37 2014 – 7 days

Bober, P. P. and Rubinstein, R. O. *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture* (London, 1986) NB 85 B62 – Not for loan The 2010 edition: NB 85 B62 2010 - Not for loan

Bull, M. *The Mirror of the Gods: How Renaissance Artists Rediscovered the Pagan Gods* (Oxford, 2005) N 7760 B86 2005 - Not for loan

Carpenter, T. H. *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece: A Handbook* (London, 1991)
N 5633 C26 – 7 days (4 copies)

Freedman, L. *Classical Myths in Italian Renaissance Painting* (Cambridge, 2011)
ND 1422 I8 F74 2011 - 7 days

Kilinsky, K. II. *Greek Myth and Western Art: The Presence of the Past* (Cambridge, 2013) N 7760 K555 2013 - 7 days

Mayerson, P. *Classical Mythology in Literature, Art, and Music* (New York, 1971) NX 650 M9 M39 - Not for loan

Panofsky E. and Saxl, F. "Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art," *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 4/2 (1933), 228-80 (JSTOR)

Rose, H. J. *A Handbook of Greek Mythology* (New York, 1959) BL 781 R65 1959 - 7 days (4 copies)

Seznec, J. *The Survival of the Pagan Gods; The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art* (New York, 1953) N 6370 S52 1961 - 7 days (5 copies)

Additional Reading Material:

Recommended Reading:

Barkan, L. *The Gods Made Flesh; Metamorphosis & the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven and London, 1986) PN 56 M53 B27 - 7 days

Panofsky, E. *Studies in Iconology; Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York, 1972) N 6370 P3 - 7 days (5 copies)

Verheyen, E. "Correggio's *Amori di Giove*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 29 (1966), 160-92 (JSTOR).

Wind, E. *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New York, 1958) N 6915 W53 - 7 days (2 copies) 1967 edition: N 6915 W53 1967 (6 copies)

Recommended Viewing:

Bailey, C. B. *The Loves of the Gods: Mythological Painting from Watteau to David* (Fort Worth, TX, 1992). ND 1422 F84 B35 - Not for loan

Friedlaender, W. F. *Nicolas Poussin: A New Approach* (New York, 1966) ND 553 P868 F78 - Not for loan

Himmelfmann, N. *Antike Götter der Mittelalter* (Mainz, 1985) N 5975 H54 - 7 days

Koortbojian, M. *Myth, Meaning and Memory on Roman Sarcophagi* (Berkeley and Los Angeles and London, 1995) NB 133.5 S46 K66 - Not for loan

Martin, J. R. *The Farnese Gallery* (Princeton, 1965) ND 623 C233 M36 - Not for loan

Woodford, S. *Images of Myths in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2003) N 7760 W66 2003 - Not for loan

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 100 %
written paper

Additional information:

Course requirements and their impact on the final grade:

100 % – written paper – up to 10 pages, including pages of notes and bibliography. Please choose one classical myth; find its scene depicted in two works of art which were created in two different periods (for example, Roman and Renaissance, Middle Ages and Early Renaissance, Late Renaissance and Baroque, Late Renaissance and Rococo, Baroque and Rococo); cite original texts that relate to the represented scene in each major work; explain iconographic differences with the aim to understand the message of the classical myth in each chosen work; and, of course, use research literature (books and articles) that help both in deciphering those two major art works and better explaining of what is represented on the surface. It is possible to recall other art works only if they aid to explain those two major works, which depict the same scene from the chosen myth.

The University administration demands attendance all classes. According to their instructions, the class attendance is the necessary condition for accepting the written paper and its final evaluation. Saying that I hope you would participate in the lessons out of interest in the subject of the lesson that you take vivid part in class discussions. I ask you to find way to inform me about the forced absence or late coming (always enter the classroom).

The printed out double-spaced papers with font 12 should be submitted to the secretariat no later than 30 September (30.9.2018). No paper will be accepted for evaluation after this date.

Reception hour: on Tuesdays and Wednesdays around the scheduled courses in my office (#7708); appointment through electronic communication. Please do not write from Thursday to Sunday. You can reach me by sending messages to lubafre@mail.huji.ac.il. The office phone number is 5883864. It is always possible to leave messages with the department secretary.

Good luck and thanks for cooperation!