

Anthropology 3G03 Comparative Mythology

Instructor: Dr. Colarusso, 532 CNH, extension 23902, <colaruss@mcmaster.ca>

Prerequisites: Anthropology 2G03 or permission of the instructor

Objectives:

- To provide the student with the skills to recognize material in one culture or myth that is historically related to material in another;
- To provide the student with the tools for peering back in time and retrieving the basic form of ancient myth and religious belief using “cognate” materials.

Texts:

Jaen Puhvel (1987) *Comparative Mythology*. The University of Chicago Press.

John Colarusso (2002) *Nart Sagas from the Caucasus*, Princeton.

John Colarusso (1998) *Readings in Comparative Mythology*, Custom Courseware “pack”

John Colarusso (2010) *Comparative Mythology Lecture Notes*

Grades: 33.3% first examination, 33.3% second examination, 33.3% final examination.

NOTE: **ALL** examinations are open book.

Topical Outline:

(1) Introduction: the study of myth, comparison of myths, the Indo-Europeans (coursepack)(1 week)

(2) India and Iran: Vedic India, Indian epics, Ancient (Zoroastrian) Iran, Iranian epics (Puhvel, chapters 3-7) (4 weeks)

first exam (early-February)

(3) Marginal traditions: Hittites, the Nart sagas of the Caucasus (*Comparative Mythology* course pack, and Colarusso (2002)) (2 weeks)

(4) Ancient Greece: Hellenic and Helladic components of Greek myth, (Puhvel, chapter 8) (1 week)

(5) Roman myth and history (Puhvel, chapter 9) (1 week)

second exam (early March)

(6) Celtic myth (Puhvel, chapter 10) (1 week)

- (7) Germanic myth (Puhvel, chapter 11) (1 week)
- (8) Baltic and Slavic Myth (Puhvel, chapter 12) (1 week)
- (9) The Storm God and review (1 week)

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes

aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link
(Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010.)

SUGGESTED PROTOCOLS, ETC.

Course guidelines

1. **Handing in assignments:** I do not accept assignments by e-mail. Written assignments must be handed in HARD COPY at the BEGINNING OF CLASS, on the assigned due date.
2. **Late policy:** Late assignments will only be accepted in extenuating circumstances.
3. **Email:** Please ask detailed questions about course material and assignments in person. I only use e-mail to answer administrative/organizational questions that can be answered in one sentence.

4. Laptop Policy:

Seminar: During the seminar portion of the course there is no reason to use a laptop or any electronic device since discussion is the primary form of instruction. Exceptions will be made in unique circumstances - please come and see me if this is an issue for you.

Lecture: In class lectures, laptops may only be used for taking notes. Students using laptops for other purposes will be asked to turn their laptops off for the remainder of the course. Students using laptops are asked to sit in the first three rows of the class.

Student Accessibility Services: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca> MUSC-B107 905-525-9140
x28652

NOTE: Disclosure of disability-related information is personal and confidential.

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. We work with full time and part time students. SAS provides or assists students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, Classroom Accommodations. Please inform the instructor if there are disability needs that are not being met.

McMaster University Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities & McMaster University Anti-Discrimination Policy

- <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

Student Success Centre: <http://studentssuccess.mcmaster.ca> GH-110 905-525-9140 x24254

Provides the following services: student orientation, academic skills, leadership, service-learning, volunteerism, educational planning, employment and career transition.

Student Wellness Centre <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/> MUSC-B101& B106 905-525-9140 x27700

Provides services in: Personal and Psychological Counselling, Mental Health Support, Medical and Health Services