

DEPARTMENT OF ANCIENT STUDIES
ANCIENT CULTURES/ ANTIEKE KULTURE 2nd and 3rd year modules 2024

- **AK 211/311 "Kush and Meroe": an African Culture of the Sudan (Prof I Cornelius)**



The Sudan is the home of great ancient cultures. Two periods will be studied – Kush (ca. 880-300 BCE) and Meroe (ca. 300 BCE-300 CE). This region was Egypt's "rival" in Africa in many ways. Egypt conquered the Sudan, but in certain periods they ruled over Egypt as *pharaohs*. They built more pyramids than the Egyptians and until much later in history. The

cultures of this region should be valued in their own right and not only in the light of or as a mere "copy" of Egypt. Some have argued that the culture is more "African" in character than that of Egypt. Attention will be devoted to the role of women, identity, Kush as an African culture and transcultural studies.

- **AK 221/321 Greek Drama (Dr S Masters)**

Of all the genres in ancient Athens, drama had the most public face: it was written to be enacted, and up to 15 000 spectators attended a production. Drama was not only entertainment but considered an important religious and social duty. In this course we will study several ancient plays in order to explore themes of relevance to the city: these range from duty to family and the state, war, 'disruptive' women and fate.



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- **AK 241/341 Roman Women (Ms A Daniels; Ms K Kara; Dr S Masters)**



From the average Roman matrona to mistresses, mothers or wives of emperors and mythical exempla, this course focuses on the powerful women of ancient Rome from the Republican to the Imperial ages. Through literary, poetic and visual representations, we aim to deconstruct how Roman authors depicted women and provide a holistic view of women's lives and roles in the Roman world.

- **AK 251/351 Mythology of Ancient Western Asia (Dr R. Van Dijk-Coombes)**

Some of the oldest myths and epics originated in ancient Western Asia more than five millennia ago. Myths and epics allowed people to make sense of how the world came into being and how it works. These types of literature help people to “understand” their world. They are important for an understanding of any culture, because they “explain” the origin of the cosmos, worldview and political ideologies. In this module, we shall focus on a selection of ancient Western Asian myths: myths concerning the origin of the



cosmos, the underworld, kingship, as well as the epic of Gilgamesh, one of the oldest and most famous literary works in the world. Through the investigation of these ancient myths, we shall explore issues and questions that continue to be relevant to people in all ages: such as the search for the meaning of life, the reality of death, life after death, and the relationship of the divine or supernatural forces with political organisations.

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