

Department of Ancient Studies Ancient Cultures 2/3 Modules 2019

Term 1: AK 211/311 “When on high no name was given” – *Mitologie van Wes-Asië / “Toe daarbo nog geen naam gegee is nie”* – *Mythology of Western Asia* (Prof. Sakkie Cornelius)

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. These include the search for the meaning of life, the reality of death in life and whether there is life in death, and the relationship of the divine or supernatural forces with political organisations. The myths communicate perspectives on these issues and questions through scenes that contain sex, violence and prejudice. This invites audiences to engage critically with the perspectives that are presented in the myths, but also to be critical of how their own views regarding “ultimate questions” are influenced and determined by their ideologies, biases and claims to various forms of power.

Van die oudste mites en eposse van die mensdom gaan terug na die kulture van ou Wes-Asië meer as vyf millennia gelede. Op hierdie wyse het die mense die ontstaan en werking van hulle wêreld “verstaan”. Mites en eposse is belangrik om enige kultuur en samelewing te verstaan omdat dit die oorsprong van die kosmos, die wêreldbeeld en heersende politieke ideologieë “verklaar”. ’n Versameling mites sal behandel word: mites oor die ontstaan van die kosmos, die onderwêreld, koningskap, asook die epos van Gilgamesh, een van die oudste en bekendste letterkundige werk in die wêreld. Deur die bestudering van hierdie antieke mites, sal ons kwessies en vrae ondersoek wat van blywende betekenis vir mense van alle tye is. Hierdie kwessies en vrae sluit in, die soek na die betekenis van die lewe, die realiteit van die dood in die lewe en of daar lewe in die dood is, asook die verhouding tussen goddelike of bonatuurlike magte en politieke organisasies. Die mites kommunikeer hul perspektiewe op hierdie kwessies en vrae deur tonele wat seks, geweld en vooroordele bevat. Dit bied gehore die geleentheid om krities oor die perspektiewe in die mites na te dink, maar ook om krities te wees oor die wyses waarop hul eie sienings aangaande die belangrike levensvraagstukke deur hul ideologieë, vooroordele en aansprake op mag beïnvloed of bepaal word.

Term 2: AK 221/321 *Die Hellenistiese Estetika / The Hellenistic Aesthetic* (Dr Samantha Masters)

The aesthetic choices of the expanded Greek world during the Hellenistic era are varied, far from coherent and definitely fascinating. The course will begin with Alexander the Great and the subsequent Hellenistic kingdoms as a means of establishing a context. The focus will turn to aesthetics where we will explore themes that range from technical virtuosity, nostalgia, innovation, beauty, the grotesque, realism, fantasy, measure and scale and the erotic. Our primary material will include the poetry of the era (e.g. Theocritus' *Idylls*, Meleager's epigrams, and extracts from Apollonius' mini-epic, *The Voyage of Argo*) as well as sculpture, painting and architecture.

Die estetiese moontlikhede van die uitgebreide Griekse wêreld gedurende die Hellenistiese periode is gevarieerd, allerminds koherent en beslis fassinerend. Ons begin met Aleksander die Grote en die daaropvolgende Hellenistiese koninkryke ten einde ’n konteks te vestig. Die fokus verskuif dan na estetika waar temas ondersoek sal word wat strek vanaf tegniese virtuositeit, nostalgie, vernuwing, skoonheid, die groteske, realisme, fantasie, matigheid en skaal en die erotiese. Die primêre materiaal

*sal die digkuns van die tydperk (bv. Teokritos se *Idilles*, Meleagros se epigramme en uittreksels van Apollonios se mini-epos, Die Vaart van die Argo), sowel as skulptuur, skilderkuns en argitektuur insluit.*

Term 3: AK 241/341 “Daughters of Isis”: Women of Kemet (Ancient Egypt)/ “Dogters van Isis”: Vroue van Kemet (Ou Egipte) (Prof. Sakkie Cornelius)

Egypt, the ancient culture of Africa, is well-known for famous women like Hatshepsut, Nefertete and Cleopatra, but ordinary women should also receive attention. This module focuses on social and legal position, occupations and professions, love and marriage, health and children, dress and adornment, domestic life and religion. Attention is also devoted to women of power (queens) and divine women (goddesses). Approaches which will be explored are Gender Studies and Post-Colonialism.

Egipte, die ou kultuur van Afrika is bekend vir sy beroemde vroue soos Hatshepsut, Nefertete en Kleopatra, maar die gewone vroue verdien ook aandag. Hierdie module fokus op hulle sosiale en regsposisie, beroepe en professies, liefde en huwelik, gesondheid en kinders, kleredrag en versiering, huislike lewe, godsdiens. Aandag word ook gegee aan vroue in magsposisies (koninginne) en goddelike vroue (godinne). Benaderinge wat verken sal word, is Gender Studie en post-kolonialisme.

Term 4: AK 251/351 Rome, Empire and Material Remains/ Rome, Ryk en Materiële Oorblyfsels (Dr Samantha Masters)

Regimes have used propagandistic images and building programmes in order to communicate messages for millennia. Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, for example, established a successful language of imagery to be taken up and used by emperors after him to propagate messages about themselves and their own versions of empire. These messages, sent out into the far-flung provinces of the empire, include promises for the future, continuity or a break with the past, and ideological statements about values, military strength, power and authority. Such messages are not unique to the ancient Roman project of empire; nor, of course, is the *visual* communication of propaganda. This course will investigate the power of images and material artefacts (coins, statues, buildings and monuments) during the Roman Empire as a starting point. Rome will then be used as a lens through which to examine more recent and contemporary examples of imperial and political propaganda. These examples will include British colonial and apartheid-era architecture and statuary in South Africa, as well as the use of statuary, architecture and imagery by other post-colonial African regimes as the continent continues its struggle to decolonise.

Regerings gebruik reeds vir millennia propagandistiese beelde en bouprogramme om boodskappe te kommunikeer. Byvoorbeeld, Augustus, die eerste keiser van Rome, het 'n suksesvolle taal van beeld gevestig wat deur die keisers ná hom opgeneem en gebruik is om boodskappe oor hulself en hul eie weergawes van die keiserryk te versprei. Hierdie boodskappe wat na die afgeleë provinsies van die ryk uitgestuur is, sluit beloftes in vir die toekoms, kontinuïteit of 'n breuk met die verlede, en ideologiese stellings oor waardes, militêre vermoë, mag en gesag. Sulke boodskappe is nie uniek tot die antieke Romeinse projek van die keiserryk nie; natuurlik ook nie die visuele kommunikasie van propaganda nie. Hierdie kursus sal, as 'n beginpunt, die mag van beeld en materiële artefakte (munte, standbeelde, geboue en monumente) gedurende die Romeinse Ryk ondersoek. Rome sal dan as 'n lens gebruik word waardeur meer onlangse en kontemporêre voorbeeld van imperiale en politieke propaganda ondersoek kan word. Hierdie voorbeeld sal Britse koloniale en apartheidsera argitektuur en standbeelde in Suid-Afrika insluit, sowel as die gebruik van standbeelde, argitektuur en beeld deur ander post-koloniale Afrika-regimes soos die kontinent sy stryd om te dekolonialiseer voortsit.