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CLASSICS 102 (GS03) - Greek and Roman Mythology
Term Exam : October 22, 2020

Weight: 30% of final grade

Instructor: Isabelle Donald, PhD

A. In the space provided, identify the main character(s) described in each of the following quotes (2 marks each):

(10)

1. The youngest Titan, "growing bold" answered, "Mother, I undertake to do the deed; I do not care for my unspeakable father. He spoke and, glad of heart, She set him hidden in ambush and put the sharp-toothed sickle in his hand."

2. Released from their dreadful bondage, "they remembered gratitude and gave him the thunder and the blazing bolt and the flash of the lightning and trusting in these, Zeus rules over both gods and men."

3. He is like the deathless "gods, riding his chariot of horses, he shines down upon all things, on mortals and on immortal gods the same. . . [and] beneath his golden helmet bright rays flash from him brilliantly."

4. "They were not far from the border of the world above; here frightened that she might not be well and yearning to see her with his own eyes, through love he turned and looked, and with his gaze she slipped away and down."

5. This goddess became an ally of Zeus in the Titanomachy and because she "came to Olympus first, . . . as her father advised, Zeus gave her honour and unparalleled gifts: for [he] made her the Great Oath of the Gods."

B. Question on the **aetiological** theory of myth (5 marks):
(5)

1. The **aetiological** theory of myth states that the purpose of myth is to explain the existence of certain insects, animals or birds. Briefly tell one aetiological myth and clearly state the reason for why the transformation of a person into another creature took place.

(please go to p. 2)

C. Answer each of the following questions by identifying the characters and/or telling me about the important role they played in the myths (5 marks each):
(20)

1. Before Odysseus left the Underworld he saw the shades of two characters from the past, **Orion** and **Sisyphos**. Briefly tell me what you know about both characters and whether or not either of them was being punished and why and what was the punishment?

2. "On his shoulders grew a hundred snaky heads, strange dragon heads . . . His eyes flashed fire beneath the brows upon those heads and fire blazed out from every head when he looked around". Identify the character described in this passage and explain why he was important to the story told in the *Theogony*.

3. Explain the role of **Tartaros** in Greek myth. For example, what was he on his first appearance at the beginning of the *Theogony*? How did his role change throughout the rule of the First, Second and Third Generations of gods and, finally, what did Tartaros become in Greek religion?

4. Tell me about the Gigantomachy? What was it? Who were the opposing forces? Who won and how was victory finally achieved?

D. Answer the following questions on the *Homeric Hymns to Hermes* and Euripides' *Bacchae*:
(10)

1. What did Hermes make from the shell of the tortoise? (1 mark)

2. Give a detailed description of the sandals Hermes made so he could disguise his footsteps.
(3 marks)

3. When Apollo saw a "bird of omen with long wings" he knew immediately that the thief was a child of Zeus. What was the bird? (1 mark)

4. How does the *Bacchae* tell us about the powers of Dionysos and the control he exercised over his worshippers (5 marks):

E. Write an essay about **1 1/2 pages** in length, **double-spaced**, on ONE of the following questions:
(10)

1. The epithets of the gods reveal their distinctive characteristics and powers. For example, Zeus was the "Loud Thunderer", Poseidon was the "Earthshaker", and Hades was "Invisible". Discuss what these epithets tell us about the powers of Zeus and his brothers and how their powers are shown in the myths.

2. According to Homer, Aphrodite and Ares, were lovers, a relationship which questions why would a goddess whose primary concern was the procreation of life be attracted to a god whose sole function is its destruction? Discuss how the theory of structuralism might be used to interpret this odd attraction.

3. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* we learn that the goddess was "the bringer of goodly gifts in season" and yet she "would have destroyed utterly the mortal race of human beings, . . . and deprived those who live on Olympus of the glorious honour of gifts and sacrifices." Discuss by explaining the reason for what appears to be an inconsistency in her powers.

(please use the next two pages to write the essay)

