

RELS 212/3.0

Mythology of the Ancient Near East

This course investigates the religious, cultural and literary environments of the ancient Near East that provide a backdrop to the narratives of the Hebrew Bible and early Jewish Midrash. It examines similarities and differences in the myths and legends of ancient Egypt, the Levant, and Mesopotamia using material artifacts, architecture (e.g. the pyramids and temple remains), and preserved texts like the epic of Gilgamesh. It investigates the continuities and discontinuities between ancient Near Eastern and Hebrew/Jewish religious traditions. The course takes a multi-faceted approach using archaeology, art history, textual and mytho-poetic literary analysis, anthropology and history to explore the ancient Near East's religious cultures.