

Call for Papers: “Mythical and Mythographical Spectra: Exploring Oppositional Tendencies”
9th Celtic Conference in Classics, University College Dublin (22–25 June 2016)

A joint Polymnia/NARGAMM panel.

Greek and Roman myth is a remarkably flexible intellectual endeavor, one that can be mapped onto a number of what might be called “mythical spectra,” that is, somewhere along a continuum between two opposing poles. These binary opposites—we mean here not binary oppositions of the Lévi-Straussian variety—can be viewed in isolation or multiple instances of them can be viewed simultaneously as forming a latticework of possibilities in which writers and collectors of myth could organize and present their mythical stories. For instance, a poet or mythographer could choose to present either a conventional version of a myth or a rare variant. A writer like Pausanias could choose to present a local variant or look to a Pan-Hellenic poetic source. A commentator on a poem like Vergil’s *Aeneid* might simply recount a myth or provide an interpretation of it, be it through rationalization or allegory. A Roman poet could choose to present a Greek myth in Greek dress, or he could Romanize it in some way. Thus, each time a mythical story was narrated or alluded to, an author could be pulled in multiple directions, that is, toward or further away from one of these putative poles. This panel seeks to use the framework of “spectra” to explore the ways in which we can view these choices and strategies and to discuss how aware ancient authors were of them while incorporating mythical narratives and allusions into their work.

To that end, we call for papers on any aspect of ancient myth or mythography dealing with oppositional tendencies. We offer some possible polar opposites as food for thought:

- Pan-Hellenic/local
- Greek/Roman
- conventional/rare
- genealogical/episodic

- order/disorder

- oral/literary
- narrative/interpretative

- educational/epideictic

- living/fossilized
- traditional/innovative

Presenters may choose to treat a whole spectrum (e.g., conventional vs. rare), a specific author’s or work’s place along one or more of these spectra or at one of the two poles. We also invite contributions that consider how conscious ancient authors were of the existence of these oppositions and how cognizant they were of making choices about where to position themselves.

Papers will be allotted 40 minutes followed by 10 minutes of discussion. The languages of the CCC are English and French. Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words, along

with a brief *curriculum vitae* to Scott.Smith@unh.edu. Deadline for submission is December 15, 2015, and a decision will be made shortly thereafter.

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