

PAPER #2: ORIGINS: MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY. DUE FRIDAY, 20 FEBRUARY.

CONTEXT FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT

Another feature of the Annales School is the reliance on the earliest histories as formative of culture. Consider, for example, how the *Iliad* is fundamental to our understanding of what makes Greek culture distinctive, and how this story forms part of what is known as *mentalité*, or a common cultural history.

PREPARATION

For this paper, you will search out the foundation myths or quasi-fictional stories that describe the earliest history of the region. For instance, if your region is central Italy, you would study the story of the Etruscans and Romulus and Remus. Locate an artistic representation of the story.

KEY QUESTION

What does this early foundation story (myth or otherwise) suggest about “national” and cultural identity?

TOPICS TO CONSIDER

Analyze this story in terms of genre (folktale? epic poem? chronicle? hagiography?), authorship (who wrote it, or wrote it down? when was it first written down?). Are there any artistic depictions (contemporary or later) of this story?

The first paper was a study in inference. This paper is a study in analysis, particularly of the primary sources that blend non-documentable events (otherwise known as myth or fiction) and documentable events (things that left traces, such as physical remains or a written record). You will examine two ways a foundation myth is transmitted to people (narrative and visual) and analyze the messages they conveyed. Your paper asks you to do five things:

1. Briefly summarize the foundation story, or stories, of the region you've chosen to study. You don't have to track down all the stories, just the one that is (or several that are) most important to the formation of national identity. Search out the most recent (or the most authoritative) edition and translation of the original primary source, and provide a range of high-quality pertinent secondary sources that use this source.
2. Analyze this story in terms of genre (folktale? epic poem? chronicle? saint's life?) and authorship (who wrote it, or wrote it down? when was it first written down?). Because the story will no doubt contain many fanciful elements, the point of this paper is not to consider veracity or credibility. The point of this paper is to analyze this story as way to understand the shared cultural values of this town/city or region.
3. Include a discussion of artistic representations of this story. Look for representations on coins, sculpture, paintings, mosaics, jewelry, textiles, city seals, heraldic emblems (on shields or family crests), and in manuscript illumination. Is this image a faithful representation of the story, or does it modify it in some way? Include a copy of this image with your paper.
4. Formulate provocative thesis-seeking research questions that would require additional research into primary sources for you to be able to answer them.
5. Cite and properly format high quality source references (reputable author or editor, recently published, reputable publisher).

	Superior = A	Very Good = B	Good = C	Poor = D	Unacceptable = F
Briefly (one or two pages) summarize the story	Detailed, vividly written clear narrative of the story based on primary source(s) with minimal direct quotation of the source	Ample narrative of the story based on primary source(s), with some quoted material	General narrative of the story based on primary and secondary source(s), overly reliant on direct quotation	General narrative of the story based largely on secondary material, largely quoted material	Brief overview of the story based on secondary material
Analyze the story in terms of authorship and genre	Cogent analysis of the genre and authorship, and perceptive discussion of how this story exemplifies the shared cultural values of the town or region	Clear analysis of the genre and authorship, and logical discussion of how this story exemplifies the shared cultural values of the town or region	Discusses genre and authorship, but does not say anything perceptive about how this story exemplifies the shared cultural values of the town or region	Draws obvious conclusions between genre and authorship but says little about the shared cultural values of the town or region	Does not contain analysis
Discuss artistic representations of this story	Perceptive and insightful analysis of how visual and written depictions function to convey shared cultural values	Sound, clear analysis of how visual and written depictions function to convey shared cultural values	Discusses in general terms how visual and written depictions work to convey shared cultural values	Brief discussion of how shared cultural values are conveyed but does not analyze the material	Says very little about how shared cultural values are conveyed to people
Formulate research questions	Poses at least three provocative or original thesis-seeking questions	Poses one or two thesis-seeking questions	Poses one or two thoughtful questions that can be answered by delving further into primary sources	Poses one or two questions that can readily be answered by minimal research into primary sources	Does not pose any questions for further research
Cite and format paper in accordance with the <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i>	Cites and flawlessly formats the most recent (or the most authoritative) edition and translation of the original source, plus a range of high-quality pertinent secondary sources	Cites and flawlessly formats the most recent (or the most authoritative) edition and translation of the original source, plus a range of pertinent secondary sources	Cites and flawlessly formats the most recent (or the most authoritative) edition and translation of the original source, plus limited range of high-quality sources	Cites a recent edition and translation of the primary source and secondary sources of variable quality, flawlessly formatted	Cites an inadequate edition and translation of the primary source and range of sources, and/or contains errors in formatting