Instructions
Please choose one of the articles on this sheet, read it carefully a few times, and download and complete this worksheet to submit via SafeAssign by midnight on 10/19. All the articles are available online at JSTOR (www.jstor.org), freely accessible from any campus computer or through the KU Library’s website.

Goals
In this assignment you are asked to read a scholarly article on a topic of myth of ancient literature relevant to our class, and to summarize and analyze it. The articles are not particularly long, but they are rich with information and critical content. You will have to stretch – some articles include untranslated Greek or Latin, refer to texts we have not read, or use line numbers not analogous to our translations. You can do it!

The goals of this assignment are many, complex, and interrelated. The assignment focuses on reading and responding to the work of others, i.e., joining an intellectual conversation and formulating and supporting an argument and putting the work of others to new uses determined by the interests of the writer. By closely reading an article and analyzing its content and organization, we hope you will gain competence at the following:

- interrelating ideas, identifying the limits of the readings, naming, defining, and organizing phenomena (critical terms, parts of an argument, etc.), recognizing an author’s agenda,
- appreciating the purposeful use of quotations and effective framing of the quoted materials,
- understanding effective use of footnotes, acknowledging the contingency of myth (i.e., that meaning depends on the author and audience)

These relate to the following course goals as stated on the syllabus:
1) situate Greek and Roman myths in the cultural framework of the people who told them
2) compare these myths to myths from other ancient cultures, and to modern myths
3) recognize several genres of ancient literature (tragedy, epic, hymn) and read them with ease
4) discern among and evaluate competing claims or approaches to myths or to the problems they explore
5) read critical scholarly literature, identifying and assessing the shape and agenda of a scholarly argument and interrelating it to other texts/readings
6) build and articulate your own scholarly argument about an ancient myth or myths
7) understand the cultural and individual contingency of myth

Strategies
Get a good head start on this assignment. You might wish to read through the worksheet questions first, then read the article AT LEAST TWICE before starting to complete the worksheet. Sketch out an outline for the article – it will help. Please do all this enough in advance – a week before the due date – that we can have plenty of time to help you should you need help.
Articles – choose 1


*This one has 2 tough technical paragraphs (one on etymology, one on ancient commentaries), but the sense emerges clearly.


*This one is particularly difficult

Worksheet:

1. Describe: Please list the full bibliographic record for the article/chapter (how would you cite this article in a bibliography). Any standard format will do, but Chicago Manual of Style’s Name-Date method is easy (Author. Date. “Article title.” Journal title: issue number: page numbers.)

2. Describe: What portions or passages of the subject text does it cover? Please be descriptive rather than numerical. (e.g., not “Agamemnon lines 442-3” but rather “the choral ode on Helen”).
3a. Describe: What question or gap in our understanding is the author trying to answer or address?
Sometimes this is explicit; sometimes it is not.

3b. Describe: What is the author’s response to this question or gap? Put otherwise, what is the article’s thesis? Please give the sentence and page number, if possible. Sometimes, again, the thesis is explicit and sometimes it is not.

4. Describe: How is the article organized? Or, what are the major components of the argument? What we’d like is for you to reconstruct the major outline of the article. The sub-questions will help you discover the organization.

- Are there section headings? If not, you might wish to look at every paragraph to see its main point, and then list the out to reconstruct an outline.
- Does the 1st paragraph or page give a “road map” of the blocks of the argument?
- Does the argument follow in order the ancient text under scrutiny? Or theme-by-theme? Or compare-contrast?
- Do all sections of the argument seem to be of equal weight, or are some more important? If the latter, where do the more important parts appear – beginning, middle, or end?
- Does the article lead up to the big ideas, or start big then taper off with proof?
5. Describe: How does the author position the argument within the world of ideas?
5a. Describe: What are the footnotes like – are they mini-essays, or just citations, or both? Please give an example.

5b. Does the author offer solutions, or questions? Put differently, does the author present the thesis as the, or the only, or the right idea? Or is it presented as a possible solution among many? Find some phrases that support your observation, and give page numbers. (Some indicators of the latter approach are words such as “tension” and “ambiguity”).

5c. Is the author respectful toward other ideas or dismissive of them? Find an example.

6. Analyze: How does the author see this text operating in the world? Is it a text that can be best understood in the context of Greek civilization, or does its meaning transcend that context? Explain.
7. Describe: What conclusions does the author draw? Where does the author suggest as go next with this question? Where do you think this approach/argument might take us?

8. Analyze: How “portable” is the argument or method to other aspects of your study of Greek and Roman mythology? What questions or thoughts does this article raise for you about other texts or myths?