Undergraduate Certificate in Classical Studies

2021-2022

Course code: 2122CCR001

COURSE GUIDE
Welcome to the **Undergraduate Certificate in Classical Studies**, a University of Cambridge award offered by the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The Certificate is taught and awarded at FHEQ level 4 (i.e. first-year undergraduate level) and attracts 60 credits. The award is completed in one academic year. For further information about academic credit please see our website: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/info/academic-credits-cats-points](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/info/academic-credits-cats-points)

The course offers three termly units and a syllabus and reading and resource list for each of these units are included in this course guide.

The programme will be taught remotely, through pre-recorded lectures which students can access at times convenient to them in addition to scheduled live sessions where tutor and students will gather for discussion. While attendance at the live sessions is expected, all sessions will be recorded and will be accessible via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Discussion forums and suggestions for additional reading and resources will also be found on the VLE.

The programme aims to:

- introduce the literature of ancient Greece and Rome;
- introduce the history of ancient Greece and Rome;
- introduce methods for the analysis of ancient literature;
- introduce methods for the analysis of non-literary sources from the ancient world;
- improve students’ skills of interpretation and judgement;
- improve students’ skills of written and oral communication;
- introduce avenues for future study in the disciplines of Classics and the wider Arts and Humanities.

**Learning outcomes:**

- Demonstrate an awareness of the broad geographical and historical scope of what may be called the classical world.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the continuing relationship between modern and ancient cultures.
- Demonstrate an awareness of certain problems of analysing material from ancient society.
- Demonstrate an understanding of methods for the analysis of literary and non-literary sources.

**Transferable skills for further study and employability**

- The capacity for independent thought and judgement
- The development of independent learning, study and time management skills
- The deployment of skills in critical reasoning
- The development of competence in using IT to support one’s work
- The ability to work with others, productively and equitably
- The qualities necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and the demonstration of high levels of motivation and personal commitment through part-time study
- Problem solving, by locating appropriate evidence for analysis in response to posed questions
- Critical evaluation, in response to both literary and non-literary resources
- Complex argumentation, which draws comparisons and connections between evidence
- Written presentation, including referencing of both primary and secondary source material;
- Using libraries, online databases and other reference resources;
Study hours

The award of academic credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning and within the UK, one credit notionally represents 10 hours of learning\(^1\). Each of the units in this course attracts 20 credits so students should expect to need to study for approximately 200 hours in total to complete each unit successfully. However, it is recognised that students study at different paces and use a variety of approaches, so this is a recommendation, rather than a hard-and-fast calculation.


Teaching staff

Academic Director: Dr Gilly Carr

Dr Gilly Carr is a Senior Lecturer and Academic Director in Archaeology at the Institute of Continuing Education, a Fellow and Director of Studies in Archaeology of St Catharine's College and a Member of the McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research. She works in the field of Conflict Archaeology and post-conflict Heritage Studies. Her current research focuses on the European heritage of Holocaust sites and she is chairing a five-year international project on this subject. She is the author of seven monographs and six edited volumes; her most recent book is ‘Victims of Nazism in the Channel Islands: A legitimate heritage?’ (Bloomsbury 2019).

Tutors:

Dr Henry Tang

Dr Henry Tang is a Stipendiary Lecturer of Classics at Merton College, Oxford. He has received degrees from King's College London (BA), the University of Oxford (MSt), and the University of Cambridge (PhD). Henry's research focuses on the interactions of politics, culture, and poetics in early Latin imperial poetry (especially epic poetry). His articles have included subjects on the limits of literary freedom under the emperors and the narrative techniques behind literary descriptions of visual artworks (forthcoming). He is currently working on an article on the mirror as a metaphor for self-knowledge in epic poetry, and a book on humour in epic.

Henry has taught at a range of academic levels, from secondary schools to universities. He enjoys running dynamic and engaging classes with plenty of student participation.

Dr. Daniel Unruh

Originally from Canada, Daniel Unruh received his PhD in Classics from Cambridge in 2015. His research focusses on Greece from the seventh to the fourth centuries BCE. He is especially interested in kingship, tyranny and other forms of one-man rule in ancient Greece, and in ancient Greek diplomacy and communication. He is currently working on a book entitled "Talking to Tyrrants in Classical Greek Thought", which will be available from Liverpool University Press in spring of 2022.

Dr Martin Parker Dixon

Martin Parker Dixon originally trained as a composer at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland before moving into postgraduate research. His initial interests were in the history of music theory, and the shift in 1600 from the Renaissance paradigm of speculative harmony, to the empirical paradigm represented by Galileo. He came to Cambridge in 1994 and read for his PhD in modernist
philosophy and aesthetics at Wolfson College. He is currently a Bye-Fellow at Fitzwilliam College and an Affiliated Lecturer in Aesthetics at the Faculty of Music. He also teaches Classical Philosophy on the PGCert in Philosophy at ICE.

### Administrative staff

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### Institute of Continuing Education

The Institute of Continuing Education’s administrative headquarters are at Madingley Hall, an elegant country house built in the 16th century and set in gardens of about seven acres, designed in the 18th century by Capability Brown. Please visit [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) and [www.madingleyhall.co.uk](http://www.madingleyhall.co.uk) for further information.

### Contact details of ICE

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Please also refer to the ‘information for students’ section on ICE’s website [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students) and the 2021-22 Student Handbook for award-bearing courses for further information and guidance relating to all aspects of the course including study skills, assignments, assessment and moderation. The Course Information and Help and Guidance section of the ICE VLE will also contain valuable information specific to your course.

Information correct as at 13/08/2021
Syllabus for first unit
Michaelmas term 2021

Greek Literature: “Mythology and Storytelling: Homer and the Tragedians”

Start date 5 October 2021
End date 13 December 2021
Day Various (see session list below)
Time Various (see session list below)
Tutor(s) Dr Daniel Unruh
No of meetings 14

Aims
- To explore the intersection of myth and storytelling in Greek literature from Homer to 5th century BCE Athens
- To gain familiarity with the form and content of a wide variety of classical Greek genres, including oral epic (Homer, Hesiod, Epic Cycle), lyric (Pindar), tragedy (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides), historiography (Herodotus, Thucydides), comedy (Aristophanes) and philosophy (Plato, Aristotle).
- To examine how different Greek tragedians (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides) put myth—sometimes the same myth—to work in different ways.
- To discuss the intersection of religion, social history, and literature in Classical Athens.
- Introduce methods for the analysis of ancient literature

Content

This unit considers the relationship between myth and storytelling in Greek literature, reading Homer’s *Iliad* (8th/7th century BCE) alongside some of the most famous tragedies from classical Athens (5th century BCE) in English translation. Greek audiences were already familiar with the likely outcome of these stories – already ‘spoiled’ for their conclusions – so what was the appeal of this literature? How did storytellers create interest and why did ancient audiences come to value certain retellings over others? Students will not only examine the use made of myth in formal terms, but also question the role played by both myth and literature in classical Athenian society (5th/4th century BCE), gaining insight into one of the most fundamental dynamics of all ancient literature. All texts read in this course are in English translation, and this course requires no prior knowledge of ancient history, literature, or languages.

The course begins with earliest recorded ancient Greek literature: the poetry of Homer, the product of oral poetic cultures and mythical content that derived from across the Greek world and Near East. Following that session, which will provide an introduction to those poems and their works by way of a focus on particular and varied moments of mythic storytelling, we turn to themes that provide through-plots for a study of Greek literature from Homer through to the classical period of Athens. Each of these sessions begins with some myth recounted in Homer, and then shows how that same myth takes a wide variety of forms in subsequent literature and in a variety of genres.

Presentation of the unit
Teaching and learning will be delivered remotely through a combination of pre-recorded lectures (formal presentations often with slides) and live seminars (tutor-led talk combined with group exercises and discussion), as well as reading and assignments undertaken individually by students outside the course sessions. Teaching will include sessions that relate to the topics currently being addressed by students and tutor drop-ins that dedicate time for students to ask questions relating to course-work. Pre-recorded lectures will be released approximately one week in advance of the live seminar in order that students have the opportunity to watch at a time that suits them.

The unit will be presented as pre-recorded lectures, live discussion sessions attached to lectures, and live open social sessions to discuss outstanding questions and ideas, an introductory session. There will also be a pre-recorded 'close reading' lecture in order to model methods of close-reading for paper-writing.

Please also look at the VLE for each block’s dedicated discussions and forum activities, which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

**Provisional lecture list / Course Structure**

*Please note that all times are UK times (GMT).*

**Tuesday 5 October 2021**
Introduction (7-8 pm, live session)
Greek History in a Nutshell (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Tuesday 12 October 2021**
Greek History and Literature (7-8 pm, live session)
The *Iliad*: An Introduction (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Tuesday 19 October 2021**
The *Iliad* (7-8pm, live session)
The *Odyssey*: an introduction (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Saturday 23 October**
Saturday social (4-5pm, live session)

**Tuesday 26 October 2021**
The *Odyssey* (7-8pm, live session)
Close reading model (Homer) (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Tuesday 2 November 2021**
Close reading and essay writing (7-8pm, live session)
What is Myth? (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Tuesday 9 November 2021**
Mythology and Mythography (7-8pm, live session)
Greek Tragedy: an introduction (1 hour, pre-recorded)

**Assignment 1 due 12 November 2021**

**Saturday 13 November 2021**
Saturday social (4-5pm, live session)

**Tuesday 16 November 2021**
Greek Tragedy (7-8pm, live session)
Aeschylus: an introduction (1 hour pre-recorded)
Tuesday 23 November 2021
Justice and Vengeance in *The Oresteia* (7-8pm, live session)
Sophocles: an introduction (1 hour, pre-recorded)

Tuesday 30 November 2020
Family and Fate in Sophocles (7-8pm, live session)
Euripides: an introduction (1 hour, pre-recorded)

Saturday 4 December 2021
Saturday social (4-5pm)

Tuesday 6 December
Dionysus in Tragedy: Euripides’ *Bacchae* (7-8pm, live session)
Aristophanes and Comedy: an introduction (1 hour pre-recorded)

Tuesday 13 December
Dionysus in Comedy: Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (live session, 7-8pm)
Wrapping up and additional questions (live session, 8pm+ - optional)

Learning outcomes
As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:
- Demonstrate an awareness of major literary conventions in archaic Greek epic and Attic tragedy
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the uses made of myth by Homer and the Attic tragedians
- Demonstrate a capacity to interpret individual passages of the Homeric poems and Greek tragedy, both on their own terms and in the context of the broader works of which they are a part
- Demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between Greek literature and the social settings in which it emerged.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the methods of literary and historical analysis.
- Demonstrate some understanding of the broad outlines of Greek history in the 5th-century BCE.

Student assessment
The unit requires a commitment to reading and pre-class preparation. Coursework will be in the form of two assignments that together will come to a total of 3,000–4,000 words. The two assignments are weighted as follows: the first assignment (‘Close Reading’) of 1000–1500 words counts for 40% of the total grade, the second assignment (‘Essay Question’) of 2000–2500 words counts for 60% of the total grade.

Close Reading Assignment
The first writing assignment is a 1000-1500 word close-reading of a single passage of at least 24 lines of your choice from the course readings of Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. For details concerning the ‘Close Reading Assignment’, please see VLE. This assignment will be due on 12 November 2021 by 12:00 noon GMT* (*Greenwich Mean Time). Close-reading strategies will be discussed throughout the course lectures and discussions, and an example of close-reading methods will be provided in a dedicated course lecture. This assignment is designed to demonstrate that you have developed analytical skills appropriate for a literary critic.

Essay Assignment
The second writing assignment is a 2000–2500 word essay. Please choose your essay from the list below:

1. How do individual characters (gods or humans) use myths in Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and to what extent do they do so in distinctive ways?

   Guidance: take inspiration from lectures and discussions about the definition of “myth” as well as from our classes and your reading of Homer. Rather than speaking only in generalities, it would be wise to choose several concrete examples of myth-telling within these poems. Be attentive to the narrative contexts in which myth-telling appears: how do you define myths, who is telling these myths and to whom, how are they telling them, and how does their manner of telling and their content set them apart from other forms of myth-telling that you have identified. It might be useful to choose myth-tellings that are different from one another, but that have enough significant features in common that they can be usefully compared.

2. What is the role of sacred space in Greek tragedy?

   Guidance: take inspiration from the lectures and class discussions regarding the physical settings of Greek tragedy, regarding Greek religion, as well as regarding Greek tragedy. Define what you mean by “sacred space,” and choose two to three plays that will allow you to both look in-depth at how sacred space is used in a given play, and compare that to how sacred space is used in a different play, perhaps to different ends.

3. How do Homer and the Greek tragedians conceptualize Justice in different ways?

   Guidance: take inspiration from the lectures and discussion of Homer, of Greek religion, as well as of the tragedians. Consider how you define “Justice” and how the authors under your consideration define the concept in different ways. Choose particular moments in Homer’s poems and in one or two plays that you can analyse closely, rather than only addressing the question in the abstract.

4. How do tragedians reframe myths to suit their ends?

   Guidance: fly close to the ground, choosing one or two myths told in either or both of Homer’s poems that also find expression in two to three of the tragedians we have studied. Pay attention to the words, but also to the structures of the myths, to how they are told, by whom, and to what ends. Sometimes, the narrative frame of a myth can be as important as its telling.

This assignment is designed to demonstrate that you have developed analytical skills and a knowledge base appropriate for a literary critic and historian at this stage.

The assignment will be submitted through the ICE VLE. For further information, including details about electronic submission and a rubric, please see VLE.

**Closing date for the submission of assignments: Wednesday 5 January 2022 by 12 noon GMT** (*Greenwich Mean Time*)

**Reading and resource list (all available through Leganto, for details on which, see VLE)**

For Homer’s *Iliad*, we will be referring to Peter Greens’ translation, available through idiscover:


For Homer’s *Odyssey*, we will be referring to Barry Powell’s translation, available through idiscover:

For Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*, we will be referring to Peter Burian and Alan Shapiro’s translation, available through iDiscover:
https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51619970950003606

For Sophocles’ *Oedipus* and *Antigone*, we will be referring to David Slavitt’s translation, available online through iDiscover:
https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51625642170003606

For Aristophanes’ *Frogs*, we will be referring to Kenneth McLeish’s translation, available through iDiscover:
https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA515297578770003606

For Euripides’ *Bacchae*, we will be referring to David Greig’s translation, available through iDiscover:
https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51529763410003606

Other comparative readings will be provided via scans and links.

**Further Reading Suggestions**

**General Reading on Greek Literature**

**Whitmarsh, Tim. *Ancient Greek Literature*. (Polity 2004)**
—A fantastic review of the history of Greek literature from Homer to late antiquity

—Somewhat pricey; a brilliant treatment of myth in the Greek world, its development, and its relationship to other spheres of life and literature

*Lefkowitz, Mary. *Greek Gods, Human Lives: What we can Learn from Myths*. (Yale 2005).*

*Nagy, Gregory. *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*, available for purchase and for free at this link*  
—A tour de force from one of the world’s leading Homerists, containing discussion of many of his most important contributions to Homeric and Greek scholarship, and much new material

**Parker, Robert. *On Greek Religion*. (Cornell 2011)**
—A go-to place for the study of religion from the author of *Miasma* on pollution in the Greek world

**Homer**

Knox, Bernard, Introduction to Fagles’ *Iliad and Odyssey* (Viking 1997)  
Haubold, Johannes *Homer’s People*. (Cambridge 2000)

**Cairns, Douglas L. *Oxford Readings in Homer’s Iliad*. (Oxford 2001).**

**Redfield, James *Nature and Culture in the Iliad* (Chicago 1975)**

**Tragedy**

Burnett, Anne Pippin *Revenge in Attic and Later Tragedy* (University of California 1998)  
Carter, D. M. *Politics of Greek Tragedy* (Bristol 2007)  
Goldhill, S. *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1986)  

**Hall, E. *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford 1989)**

**Hall, E. *Greek Tragedy: Suffering Under the Sun* (Oxford 2010)**
Loraux, N. *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City* (Cambridge, MA 1986)
Loraux, N. *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman* (Harvard 1987)
Winkler, J. and Zeitlin, F. (eds.) *Nothing to Do with Dionysus?* (Princeton 1990)

**Oresteia**
Tzanetou, Angeliki *City of Suppliants* (University of Texas 2012)
Zeitlin, F. 'The Dynamics of Misogyny: myth and myth-making in the *Oresteia*, *Arethusa* 11 (1978) 149–84; also in her collected volume, *Playing the Other* (Chicago 1996)

**Sophocles**
Blondell, Ruby *Hurting Friends and Harming Enemies* (Cambridge 1991)
Easterling, P. E. 'Character in Sophocles', Greece and Rome 24.2 (1977) 121–9, reprinted in *Oxford Readings*
Knox, B. *The Heroic Temper* (Berkeley 1966)
Konstan, D. *Pity Transformed* (London 2001)

**Euripides**
Wohl, Victoria *Euripides and the Politics of Form* (Princeton 2015)
Easterling, P. E. 'Women in tragic space', BICS 34 (1987) 15–26
Winnington-Ingram, R. P. Euripides and Dionysus: An Interpretation of the Bacchae (Cambridge 1948)

**Aristophanes**
Nelson, Stephanie *Aristophanes and his Tragic Muse* (Brill 2016)
Robson, James *Aristophanes: An Introduction* (Bloomsbury 2009)
Griffiths, Mark *Aristophanes' Frogs* (Oxford 2013)
Syllabus for second unit
Lent term 2022

Latin Literature: “An exploration of Latin Epic”

Start date 4 January 2022
End date 26 February 2022
Day Various (see session list below)
Time Various (see session list below)
Tutor(s) Dr Henry Tang
No of meetings Various (see session list below)

Aims

• To explore Latin epic by Virgil, Lucan, and Statius
• To gain familiarity with the form and content of Latin epic
• To examine how different Latin epic writers put the same themes, phrases, and images to work in different ways.
• To discuss the intersection of religion, social history, and literature in Rome of the early Principate and early Empire.
• Introduce methods for the analysis of ancient literature

Content

More than a thousand years after the poet’s death, Virgil is chosen by Dante Alighieri as his pilgrim’s guide through hell and purgatory in his Christian epic poem, the Divine Comedy (14th century CE). What is so special about Virgil, and what is so special about his own epic, the Aeneid (1st century BCE)? This unit considers the role played by Virgil’s Aeneid within the epic tradition, how the poem has been interpreted and how it sets itself up for re-interpretation. In English translation, students will read not only this most famous poem, but other lesser-known works of Latin epic including Lucan’s Civil War and Statius Thebaid (both 1st century CE). All texts read in this course are in English translation, and this course requires no prior knowledge of ancient history, literature, or languages.

The unit will consider questions which still concern authors today: How does a work of literature declare itself monumental? How does one work draw from another without becoming derivative? To what degree do readers’ interpretations depend on their own society, rather than that in which a work of literature was composed? How different are the challenges faced by mythological epic (like the Thebaid) and historic epic (like the Civil War), and where does the Aeneid fit in such a scheme? What is the role of the gods in these epics, and is that role constant from the 1st centuries BCE and CE? How did these works interact with the politics and culture of their times? These are just some of the questions to be addressed in this course, which will focus on close reading of these masterpieces of world literature, setting them in their historic context, and pointing to their immense influence on subsequent traditions.

Presentation of the unit
Teaching and learning will be delivered remotely through a combination of pre-recorded lectures (formal presentations often with slides) and live seminars (tutor-led talk combined with group exercises and discussion), as well as reading and assignments undertaken individually by students outside the course sessions. Teaching will include sessions that relate to the topics currently being addressed by students and tutor drop-ins that dedicate time for students to ask questions relating to course-work. Pre-recorded lectures will be released several days in advance of the live seminar in order that students have the opportunity to watch at a time that suits them.

The unit will be presented as a combination of pre-recorded lectures, live discussion sessions attached to lectures, and 1-hour open drop-in social sessions to discuss outstanding questions and ideas, including methods of close-reading for paper-writing.

Please also look at the VLE for each block’s dedicated discussions and forum activities, which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

Provisional lecture list / Course Structure
Please note that all pre-recorded sessions are released one week in advance of the lecture

Tuesday 4 January 2022, 7pm-9pm:
Aeneid Books 1-4 (live session, 2 hours)
Aeneid Books 1-2: Gods and Prophecies (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)
Aeneid Books 3-4: Alternate Romes: Gender, ethnicity, culture (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Tuesday 11 January 2022, 7pm-9pm:
Aeneid Books 5-8 (live session, 2 hours)
Aeneid Books 5-6: Becoming Roman (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)
Aeneid Books 7-8: Shaping the Aeneid (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Saturday 15 January 2022:
Social Q&A (live session, 4-5pm)

Tuesday 18 January 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Aeneid Books 9-10 (live session, 1 hour)
Aeneid Books 9-10: The Morals of War (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Tuesday 25 January 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Aeneid Books 11-12 (live session, 1 hour)
Aeneid Books 11-12: Cosmos and Imperium (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Saturday 29 January 2022:
Social Q&A (live session, 4-5pm)

Tuesday 1 February 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Lucan Books 1-5 (live session, 1 hour)
Lucan Books 1-5: the Bellum Civile and Lucan’s Rome (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)
Deadline for close reading assignment

Tuesday 8 February 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Lucan Books 6-10 (live session, 1 hour)
Lucan Books 6-10: the Bellum Civile, an Anti-Aeneid? (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Saturday 12 February 2022:
Social Q&A (live session, 4-5pm)
Tuesday 15 February 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Statius Books 1-6 (live session, 1 hour)
Statius Books 1-6: Tragedy and Epic (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Tuesday 22 February 2022, 7pm-8pm:
Statius Books 7-12 (live session, 1 hour)
Statius Books 7-12: Epic failures? (pre-recorded lecture, 1 hour)

Saturday 26 February 2022:
Social Q&A (live session, 4-5pm)

Wednesday 23 March 2022:
Deadline for essay

Learning outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an awareness of major literary conventions of Latin epic
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the uses made of Virgil’s Aeneid by later Latin poems
- Demonstrate a capacity to interpret individual passages of Latin epic, both on their own terms and in the context of the broader works of which they are a part
- Demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between Latin literature and the social settings in which it emerged.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the methods of literary and historical analysis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the broad outlines of Roman history from the late first century BCE to the late first century CE.

Student assessment

The unit requires a commitment to reading and pre-class preparation. Coursework will be in the form of two assignments that together will come to a total of 3,000–4,000 words. The two assignments are weighted as follows: the first assignment (‘Close Reading’) of 1000–1500 words counts for 40% of the total grade, the second assignment (‘Essay Question’) of 2000–2500 words counts for 60% of the total grade.

Close Reading Assignment

The first writing assignment is a 1000-1500 word close-reading of a single passage of at least 24 lines of your choice from the course readings of Virgil’s Aeneid. For details concerning the ‘Close Reading Assignment’, please see VLE. This assignment will be due on 1 February 2022 by 12:00 noon GMT* (*Greenwich Mean Time). Close-reading strategies will be discussed throughout the course lectures and discussions. This assignment is designed to demonstrate that you have developed analytical skills appropriate for a literary critic.

Essay Assignment

The second writing assignment is a 2000–2500 word essay. Please choose your essay from the list below:

1. May one generalise about the kind of roles given to female characters in the Latin epic?
Guidance: because this question asks about the appropriateness of ‘generalities’ to the analysis of women, it would be reasonable to choose more than one woman to study, and, ideally, three across at least two works. In addition to giving a sense of the range of roles occupied by women in these epics, and describing any common features you may see, you will also want to focus in on particular cases that allow you to engage in close reading, so as to understand what brings your cases closely together and/or what keeps them apart. You will want to think of “role” both in the theatrical sense—a personality, a character, a figure—but also in the structural sense: what do these women figures “do” for their poems?

2. Are post-Virgilian epics inevitably ‘anti-Aeneids’?

Guidance: this question asks for a comparison between Virgil’s Aeneid and at least one of Lucan’s Civil War or Statius’ Thebaid. It would be reasonable to identify two or three themes represented in specific scenes of the Aeneid which the later poets directly engage with. A clear way making this comparison would be to analyse (through close reading) the scenes from the Aeneid and the later poems side by side. You will want to question how the later authors react to their predecessor, whether they are copying features of the Aeneid, conflicting with them, or expanding on tensions and ideas already present in the Aeneid and Epic. It may be helpful to reflect upon how a work can belong to a genre and work with generic tropes, while making itself distinct.

3. Philip Hardie has emphasized the way in which Virgil’s poem unites ‘Cosmos and Imperium’; to what extent is this visible in Lucan’s Civil War and/or Statius’ Thebaid?

Guidance: in researching your piece, you will want to review the lectures on Virgil’s Aeneid, and look at the excerpts on the VLE from Philip Hardie’s Cosmos and Imperium. In writing your piece, it would be reasonable to give a sense of what you believe Hardie means by these terms and their role in the Aeneid; then, you will want to choose two to three moments (or themes captured in particular passages) in the other poems. You should read these passages carefully, but, as the question asks for how ‘Cosmos and Imperium’ contribute to the unity of each respective work, you will want to analyse how these individual moments contribute (or don’t) to the unity of those other poems.

4. Is Latin epic narrative more of a labyrinth or a straight track?

Guidance: this question asks about narrative-style, which you might analyze usefully both as a feature of the movement from one part of the narrative to another or as the structure of the work as a whole. This question invites thinking about these poems in architectural, or at least large-scale terms, but it might be useful, to avoid abstraction, to choose turning-points in the narrative, or scenes of narrative ‘distraction’ (such as ekphrases) that will allow you to demonstrate how you feel the poems hold together either as one or the other of the question’s terms. You would do well to consult on the VLE the scanned excerpts of David Quint’s “Epic and Empire.”

This assignment is designed to demonstrate that you have developed analytical skills and a knowledge base appropriate for a literary critic and historian at this stage.

The assignment will be submitted through the ICE VLE. For further information, including details about electronic submission and a rubric, please see VLE.

Closing date for the submission of assignments: Wednesday 23 March 2022 by 12 noon GMT* (*Greenwich Mean Time)

Reading and resource list

For Virgil’s Aeneid, we will be using the translation of Sarah Ruden, available through idiscover: https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51616156230003606
For Lucan’s *Civil War*, we will be using the translation of Susanna Braund, available through idiscover:
https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51532067270003606

For Statius’ *Thebaid*, we will be using the translation of A.S. Kline, available on poetryintranslation.com at the following address:
https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/StatiusThebaidI.php

**Further Reading Suggestions**

For a good general history of Rome’s late Republic and early Empire, see David Potter, *The Origin of Empire: Rome from the Republic to Hadrian* (264 BC - AD 138).

For a good history of Latin literature, see Gian Biagio Conte, *Latin Literature: A History*.


**Virgil**
- Elliot, T.S. ‘*Virgil the Classic’*
- Feeney, Denis. ‘*The Taciturnity of Aeneas*, 1983
- Ziolkowski, Theodor, *Virgil and the Moderns*, 1993

**Lucan**
- Fantham, Elaine. ‘*The angry poet and the angry gods: problems of theodicy in Lucan’s epic of defeat.’* In: Susanna Braund & Glenn W. Most (edd.). *Ancient Anger. Perspectives from*
Homer to Galen. Cambridge: CUP, 2004
- Wonderful on Nero, with good material on relationship with Lucan

**Statius**
Syllabus for third unit
Easter term 2022

The Philosophies of Ancient Greece and Rome

Start date: 29 March 2022
End date: 24 May 2022
Day: Tuesdays
Time: 7pm
Tutor(s): Dr Martin Parker, Dixon, Thomas, Langley (to be confirmed)
No of meetings: 12

Aims

- To introduce students to a representative selection of texts and themes from Greek and Roman philosophy.
- To read philosophical texts with a sensitivity to their style, logic and argument, but also to their social context and wider purpose.
- To discover how the interpretation of philosophical discourses can provide insights into the knowledge and beliefs of their respective cultures and the nature of life.

Content

Just prior to the time of Plato, the figure of the philosopher emerged in Greece from the crowd of poets and playwrights, lawyers and statesmen, mathematicians and astronomers, doctors, mystics and sages; and from paid itinerant teachers known as ‘Sophists’. The philosopher, the first great exemplar of which was Socrates, was one whose life was to be fully dedicated to, and transformed by, the pursuit of wisdom. In this unit we will be reading philosophical texts with view to discovering how, in ancient Greece and Rome, thinking and arguing interacted with acting and living the good life; how mathematical demonstration and science built up knowledge of the world, and how scepticism destroyed it. We will study key Socratic dialogues, the extreme political vision of The Republic, and the scepticism of the Theaetetus; we will consider the cosmology and scientific theories of the period; Divinity, the soul, and the logos; the good life of flourishing; the Stoic acceptance of one’s fate, and the Sage-like indifference and emotional equilibrium of Pyrrhonism.

Presentation of the unit

Teaching and learning will be delivered remotely through a combination of pre-recorded lectures (formal presentations often with slides) and live seminars (tutor-led talk combined with group exercises and discussion), as well as reading and assignments undertaken individually by students outside the course sessions. Teaching will include sessions that relate to the topics currently being addressed by students and tutor drop-ins that dedicate time for students to ask questions relating to
course-work. Pre-recorded lectures will be released approximately one week in advance of the live seminar in order that students have the opportunity to watch at a time that suits them.

**NB the pattern of teaching for Easter Term will be a mixture of 1 or 2-hour pre-recorded lectures with the addition of live online seminars and optional open discussion sessions.**

Please also look at the VLE for each block’s dedicated discussions and forum activities, which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

**Provisional lecture and seminar list:**

**Week 1 – Tuesday 29 March 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus two hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- Textual provenance and sources.
- Philosophy as a route to the understanding of Classical culture
- The social position of the philosopher; educational culture
- Early Greek Philosophy: Philosopher-poets and mathematicians
- Cosmology and the Logos.

**Week 2 – Tuesday 5 April 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- What was the Academy?
- Competing schools of thought
- Socrates and Meno: Thinking about virtue
- Dialogue: talking and finding the truth

**Saturday 9 April 2022**
Social 4-5pm, 9 April

**Week 3 – Tuesday 12 April 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus two hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- The Symposium: philosophy or a play?
- The nature of love and sexual relationships
- Plato’s cave; the theory of the Forms
- The Republic: Truth and appearance; the ideal society

**Week 4 – Tuesday 19 April 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- Theaetetus: the later Plato
- What is knowledge?
- Aporia and Scepticism

**Saturday 23 April 2022**
Social 4-5pm, 23 April

**Week 5 – Tuesday 26 April 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- Aristotle: new methods and assumptions
- Understanding the natural world

**Week 6 – Tuesday 3 May 2022, 7-8pm, live session**
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
- Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics
Virtue, the ethical life, and flourishing.

Saturday 7 May 2022
Social 4-5pm, 7 May

Week 7 – Tuesday 10 May 2022, 7-8pm, live session
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
• Diogenes Laertius: Lives of the Eminent Philosophers
• The nature of history and biography

Week 8 – Tuesday 17 May 2022, 7-8pm, live session
Plus two hour pre-recorded lecture covering:
• Stoicism: Zeno to Marcus Aurelius
• Sextus Empiricus: The outlines of Pyrrhonism
• Deep connections with Eastern religion and philosophy?

Week 9 – Tuesday 24 May 2022, 7-8pm, live session
Plus one hour pre-recorded lecture:
• Footnotes to Plato: Classical philosophy in the 20th Century
• Summary and reflections

Learning outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

• Critically examine the primary sources of classical philosophy closely and integrate their reading with later scholarly and interpretative traditions.
• Demonstrate and defend in writing theses and ideas which pertain to the philosophical traditions of ancient Greece and Rome.
• Make defensible connections between philosophy, science, politics, religion and other discourses and beliefs of classical civilisation.

Student assessment

The course requires a commitment to reading and pre-class preparation

You are expected to complete two essay assignments which will be weighted 40/60. The first will be a mid-term assignment of 1,000 - 1,500 words, which should be submitted by Friday 29 April 2022. The second will be an assignment of 2,000 to 2,500 words. The two assignments together should come to a total of 3,000 – 4,000 words overall.

Essay Assignments

Mid-term assignment,
Please choose one essay title from the list below:

1. Evaluate the ’scepticism’ of Plato’s Academy in comparison with one or more alternative schools of thought of the period.
Guidance: The verb ‘evaluate’ functions as shorthand for ‘understand and critically assess’. Throughout this unit, to understand a philosopher requires one to discern how their commitments and beliefs are formed and maintained. Being a sceptic is in many ways an intellectual style, even a lifestyle; so you will need to define that style. As a hint, the Greek ‘Skepsis’ = ‘inquiry’; sceptics inquire. Why do they inquire? Sceptics take up a position on, for example, whether or not to have confidence in our sense impressions, or in our beliefs. And scepticism needs evaluating because it can produce some unattractive paradoxes that other philosophers can evade. (In terms of other schools of thought, consider for example, the Epicureans, the Cynics, the Stoics, or the Sophists.) You are free to take up a position yourself (as long as you try to defend it!)

2. Do the inquiry ‘methods’ of Socrates have any educative, practical or therapeutic validity?

The kind of open, playful, cross examination that Socrates loved to engage with was certainly impressive, but by breaking open ideas it was also potentially threatening to the civic status quo. The process by which discussion draws out implicit beliefs (the ‘elenchus’) we can recognise as useful, but Socrates also argued that what we find out when we reason was actually the recollection of our experiences in previous existences. Is it clear that such ‘methods’ bring benefits, or do they just ruin our attempt to understand anything? It would be acceptable and interesting to consider the persistence of Socratic styles of reasoning and teaching in modern educational theory. Does examining one’s own life persist in psychotherapy? Choose the emphasis you prefer.

3. With reference to Plato’s Republic, how did justice and education play into the formation of an ideal society?

This question requires you to concentrate on the arguments presented in the Republic. Again, what can seem like very promising ideas we find linked to some speculative claims about the nature of reality (the Forms) and how mere mortals ought to fit in. Why do Plato’s arguments end up promoting the philosopher and demoting the poet? (A good place to start is Ferrari, G. R. F. The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic.)

Second assignment:

1. What roles does Divinity play in constituting the cosmology, ‘science’, and/or philosophy of the Greeks and Romans?

God or gods are always available to the philosopher and theism was a fact of Greek and Roman society. What were the characteristics of the gods? Did they have authority or creative power? Did they represent significant qualities? Was atheism philosophically respectable? Could myth and philosophy work together? In our more philosophical readings, we are interested in how certain assumptions or ideas can provide support for other ideas or positions.

2. Describe and evaluate Aristotle’s ‘scientific’ method.

Aristotle famously departed from the philosophies of his teacher and worked in a way that appears more grounded, realistic, and ‘modern’. Aristotle inquired after secure knowledge (episteme) of the natural world and sought causal explanations and the deep invariant patterns that subsist in reality. Aristotle’s scientific outlook struggled with the differences between logical demonstration, first principles, necessity, perception, and ‘experience’. (See Ebrey, David. Theory and Practice in Aristotle’s Natural Science.)

3. What do either a) Stoicism OR b) Pyrrhonism teach us about the nature of human happiness? Are their conclusions justified?

Living rightly, living the good life, and being happy, have never been far from our considerations in this unit. So how did these potentially extreme and peculiar philosophies recommend we live? What assumptions lay
in the background to their insights? One perspective that brings this question into focus is the early Christian need to distance itself from ‘pagan’ philosophy: St Augustine, a towering figure of the Late Classical period, also wrestled with these questions (see Boersma, G. Augustine’s immanent critique of Stoicism).

4. Critically evaluate the struggle between truth, opinion and rhetoric in any of the philosophies we have considered in this unit.

The key to this essay is to make sure you understand and present definitions of the three key concepts that appear in the question. Show how differing interpretations of the significance of these terms play out in the primary sources. (See Tindale, Christopher W., and Thomas W. Benson. Reason's Dark Champions: Constructive Strategies of Sophistic Argument.)

The assignments will be submitted through the ICE VLE. Further information, including details about electronic submission and a rubric, will be provided.

Closing date for the submission of first assignment: Friday 29 April 2022 by 12 noon BST*. Closing date for the submission of second assignments: Friday 10 June 2022 by 12 noon BST* (*British Summer Time)

Reading and resource list (Generally available online via the Cambridge University Library Catalogue)

Recommended


Background Reading

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marcus-aurelius/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pyrrho/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/skepticism-ancient/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/

Boersma, G. Augustine’s immanent critique of Stoicism. Scottish Journal of Theology, 70(2), 184-197, 2017. (Online)


**Primary Sources**


Cooke, Harold P., Hugh Tredennick, and Aristotle. *Categories, On Interpretation ; Prior Analytics*. 1938. (Online)


Sextus Empiricus. *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Harvard UP. (Online)
# TIMETABLE

## Michaelmas term 2021

### Greek Literature: “Mythology and Storytelling: Homer and the Tragedians”

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(Plus Optional Live Concluding Open Session)

## Lent term 2022

### Latin Literature: “An exploration of Latin Epic”

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## Easter term 2022

### The Philosophies of Ancient Greece and Rome

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Whilst every effort is made to avoid changes to this course, changes to course content and structure and timings may be made. Students will be consulted on any changes.

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