

Spring 2009, TR 1:15-2:30, MA 20

Instructor: Christopher Chinn

Office: Pearsons 007

Office Hours: MW 1:00-1:50 or by appointment. I have an open-door policy and am in my office quite a bit, but it's always best to let me know ahead of time if you intend to drop in.

Course Objective: The goal of this course is for the student to gain an appreciation for the ancient epic tradition through reading of representative Greek and Latin epic poems. We will focus on heroic epic poetry, though we will address didactic, historical, and other epic forms as well. Hopefully an appreciation of the ancient epic tradition will also instill in the student a sense of the deep influence these poems have had on Western literature.

Course Plan: We will read and discuss selections from Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Apollonius' *Argonautica*, Vergil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Lucan's *Civil War*, and possibly some other works. We will also view and discuss several "epic" films. There will be a series of graduated writing assignments and exams throughout the term. Students will be periodically responsible for formulating questions for class discussion.

Texts: Please obtain the following texts. Since translations can vary greatly, please be sure to acquire the specific editions listed below.

- Ahl, Fred (tr.), *Virgil Aeneid* (Oxford 2007).
- Ambrose, Z. Philip (tr.), *Ovid Metamorphoses* (Newburyport, MA 2004)
- Braund, Susanna (tr.), *Lucan Civil War* (Oxford 1992).
- Green, Peter, (tr.), *The Argonautika: the Story of Jason and the Quest for the Golden Fleece by Apollonios Rhodios* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1997).
- Lattimore, Richmond (tr.), *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago 1951)
- Lattimore, Richmond (tr.), *The Odyssey of Homer* (Chicago 1965).

NB: I will supply an online course reader of additional texts.

Academic responsibility: I take the issues of cheating and plagiarism seriously. Please familiarize yourself with Pomona's policies and procedures regarding appropriate and inappropriate academic behavior by reading the following document:

<http://www.pomona.edu/studentaffairs/policies/AcademicHonestyPolicy.pdf>

It is your responsibility to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct, plagiarism, and other violations of academic honesty.

Academic accommodations: Pomona offers various means of support for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Grading: Here is the breakdown of assignments. For my views on grading, participation, and classroom etiquette, please read this: <http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/policies.htm>.

Essays (4): 40%

Exams (2): 25%

Daily responses and discussion posts: 20%

In-class participation and attendance: 15%

Course expectations: I expect you to engage in critical reading of the texts, to participate actively in class, and to produce good writing. Below I have detailed my expectations of you.

I. Reading: Expect to engage in critical reading of about 40 pages per class session. The texts we will be examining are translations of ancient Greek and Roman writers. Because of cultural and linguistic difference these are sometimes difficult to understand right at first.

- Write down any questions or observations you have while reading. Analyze these questions and observations for patterns before coming to class and make sure to bring them up.
- Don't worry about all the details. Keep track of the thread of the plot, the main characters, and any features of the text that strike you as interesting or unusual. Write down your ideas and bring them to class. We'll work out the minor details in class.
- Try to find solutions to problems or confusions you may have by briefly reviewing an assigned reading. Often you will be able to answer your questions yourself this way.

II. Writing: For all papers I expect good writing and complete documentation (see my "Writing guidelines" sheet: http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/writing_guidelines.htm). Paper assignments will be graduated to reflect your increased experience with the texts.

- Your papers should propose an interesting thesis, and should support this thesis with evidence from the text.
- Don't mess around with cute introductions or flowery terminology. Just state your case as simply and forcefully as you can.
- Provide citation of all evidence used. NB that modern scholarship does not in most cases constitute evidence (though if you follow a modern scholar's argument you should cite it). For a guide to citing the ancient writers go to: <http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/citation.htm>.
- Do not use internet sources of any kind. I know this is a draconian stricture, but it seems necessary in order to cut down on plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional.
- The Writing Center (Smith Campus Center 216, above the Coop Fountain) offers students free, one-on-one consultations at any stage of the writing process—from generating a thesis and structuring an argument to fine-tuning a draft. The Writing Fellows—Pomona students majoring in subjects including Biology, History, Politics, and Religious Studies—will work with you on an assignment from any discipline. Consultations are available by appointment, which you can make online: <http://writing.pomona.edu/writingcenter>.

III. Participation: Active participation in class is an extremely important part of this course. You are asked to contribute to all discussions.

- Come to class prepared to talk about the assigned texts. This means having questions, observations, and arguments *written down ahead of time*. It also means you have to bring up what you've written down during class discussion.
- If you're shy, come talk to me about strategies for you to participate. I will also try to get you involved at appropriate times during class.
- Make sure you pull your weight in group work. Collaboration with others is an important skill in the real world, so you might as well start practicing it now.
- I will also be making use of the discussion feature of Sakai. Your contribution to these discussions will also be figured in your participation grade.

Schedule of readings: We will try to follow the course of readings below. This schedule is subject to change, depending upon the pace of our discussions. Please pay attention for email updates! Please have the assignments read BEFORE the date indicated.

Week 1**T Jan 20:**

Introduction

R Jan 22*Iliad* 1; 2.1-493; 3 (ca. 44 pages)

Week 2**T Jan 27:***Iliad* 4; 5.1-42, 240-469, 699-909; 6 (ca. 47 pages)**R Jan 29***Iliad* 7; 8.1-183; 9 (ca. 40 pages)

Week 3**T Feb 3***Iliad* 11.595-847; 14.153-439; 15.1-280; 16 (ca. 48 pages)**R Feb 5***Iliad* 18; 19.238-348; 21 (ca. 38 pages)

Week 4**T Feb 10***Iliad* 22; 24 (ca. 37 pages)**R Feb 12***Odyssey* 1; 4; 5 (ca. 39 pages)

Week 5**T Feb 17***Odyssey* 6; 8.256-586; 9; 10 (ca. 49 pages)**R Feb 19***Odyssey* 11; 12; 13.184-440 (ca. 37 pages)

Week 6**T Feb 24***Odyssey* 14; 16.1-320; 19 (ca. 41 pages)**R Feb 26***Odyssey* 21; 22; 23 (ca. 36 pages)

Week 7

T Mar 3

Argonautica 1.1-22, 605-935, 1153-1362; 2.155-647, 1030-1285 (ca. 39 pages)

R Mar 5

Argonautica 3 (ca. 38 pages)

Week 8

T Mar 10

Argonautica 4.1-211, 202-502, 659-1222, 1617-1781 (ca. 34 pages)

R Mar 12

Aeneid 1; 2.250-804 (ca.44 pages)

Week 9

T Mar 24

Aeneid 3; 4 (ca. 46 pages)

R Mar 26

Aeneid 6 (ca. 29 pages)

Week 10

T Mar 21

Aeneid 7.1-600; 8 (ca. 43 pages)

R Apr 2

Aeneid 10 (ca. 30 pages)

Week 11

T Apr 7

Aeneid 12 (ca. 31 pages)

R Apr 9

Metamorphoses 1; 2.1-400 (ca. 40 pages)

Week 12

T Apr 14

Metamorphoses 6.1-145; 7.1-403; 10 (ca. 42 pages)

R Apr 16

Metamorphoses 11.1-84; 12; 13.1-398 (ca. 35 pages)

Week 13

T Apr 21

Metamorphoses 13.623-729; 14.75-153, 512-851; 15.745-879 (ca. 25 pages)

R Apr 23

Civil War 1.1-391, 466-695; 2.1-15, 234-391; 3.1-45; 4.402-660 (ca. 36 pages)

Week 14**T Apr 28**

Civil War 5; 6.1-332 (ca. 31 pages)

R Apr 30

Civil War 6.413-820; 7 (ca. 36 pages)

Week 15**T May 5**

Civil War 8; 9.1-293, 538-586 (ca. 34 pages)

R May 7

NO CLASS

Select Bibliography: Below is a very brief selection of modern scholarship in English on ancient epic in general and on individual poets.

General

Albrecht, Michael von. 1999. *Roman Epic. An Interpretative Introduction*. Leiden: Brill.

Beissinger, Margaret H., Jane Tylus and Susanne Wofford, eds. 1999 *Epic Traditions in the Contemporary World. The Poetics of Community*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: UC Press.

Beye, Charles Rowan. 1993. *Ancient epic poetry: Homer, Apollonius, Virgil*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP.

Feeney, Denis. 1991. *The gods in epic: poets and critics of the classical tradition*. Oxford: OUP.

Hainsworth, John. 1991. *The idea of epic*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: UC Press.

Hardie, Philip. 1993. *The epic successors of Virgil: a study in the dynamics of a tradition*. Cambridge: CUP.

Hershkowitz, Debra. 1998. *The Madness of Epic. Reading Insanity from Homer to Statius*. Oxford: OUP.

Keith, A.M. 2000. *Engendering Rome: Women in Latin Epic*. Cambridge: CUP.

Newman, J.K. 1986. *The Classical Epic Tradition*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Pavlock, Barbara. 1991. *Eros, Imitation, and the Epic Tradition*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP..

Quint, David. 1993. *Epic and empire: politics and generic form from Virgil to Milton*. Princeton: Princeton UP.

Toohy, Peter. 1992. *Reading epic: an introduction to the ancient narratives*. New York: Routledge.

Homer

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Graziosi, Barbara. 2002. *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic*. Cambridge: CUP.

Griffin, Jasper. 1980. *Homer*. Oxford: OUP.

Hainsworth, J. B. 1969. *Homer*. Oxford: OUP.

Kirk, Geoffrey. 1962. *The Songs of Homer*. Cambridge: CUP.

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Apollonius

- Albis, Robert V. 1996. *Poet and Audience in the Argonautica of Apollonius*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Clare, Ray J. 2002. *The Path of the Argo. Language, Imagery and Narrative in the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Clauss, James. 1993 *The Best of the Argonauts: The Redefinition of the Epic Hero in Book One of Apollonius' Argonautica*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goldhill, Simon. 1991. "The Paradigms of Epic: Apollonius Rhodius and the Example of the Past." In *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature*. Cambridge: CUP: 284-333.
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Vergil

- Adler, Eve. 2003. *Vergil's empire: political thought in the Aeneid*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
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Lucan

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