

English 223
Greek and Roman Literature
(paired with Philosophy 310)
Fall 2006
T - Th, 11:15-12:35
Hoover 202

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and by appointment

A Sense of Wholeness: Greek and Roman Literature

The race of men and of the gods is one.
For from one mother have we both
The life we breathe.
And yet the whole discrete endowment
Of power sets us apart;
For man is naught, but the bronze vault of heaven
Remains for ever a throne immutable.
Nevertheless some likeness still
May we with the immortals claim, whether
Of mind's nobility or body's grace,
Though knowing not to what goal
Has destiny, by day or through the night,
Marked out for us to run.

Pindar (522-443 B.C.E.), Sixth Nemian Ode

These poignant lines--written by the fifth-century Greek poet Pindar, to commemorate a boys' wrestling match in 470 B.C.E.--embody a quality that we will see again and again in our survey of classical literature: a quality of balance, a desire to see life (as Victorian poet and critic Matthew Arnold put it) both "steadily and whole."

This wholeness of vision may feel quite remote in our fragmented and rapidly changing world. But--as you will see in this course, and in the pair of which it is a part--Pindar's world was scarcely less fragmented and unstable than our own. (The Greek philosopher Heraclitus, in fact, suggested that the only permanent thing in the universe was change; his successor Plato suggested that permanence and "reality" existed only in the world of *ideas*, or *forms*.) Literature was for the Greeks, as for people of many cultures, a way to find balance and meaning in the face of transience and instability--to mediate between the permanent and perfect world of the imagination and our own fleeting experience upon the earth.

Most students in this pair find that the works we read resonate pretty deeply in their lives. In fact, the events of the past few years have left many of us more aware than usual of our vulnerability in the face of enormous and complex forces--of the uncertainty of our destiny, both as individuals and as a society. So perhaps this time of loss and dislocation is an especially good

one to stand back and ponder the other side of the classical dialectic: the "mind's nobility" and the connections, whether social or philosophical, that nobility suggests--an idea that lies at the root of the disciplines we have come to call *the humanities*. For the Greeks, when the going got tough, the tough got thinking: (1) what is it, at bottom, to be a human being, a man or a woman; and (2) how, even in times of cynicism and polarization, can we live in society and to contribute meaningfully to its well being? (Not coincidentally, the word *politics* comes down to us from the Greeks.)

This course and the pair of which it is a part--"A Sense of Wholeness: Classical Philosophy and Literature"--gives us remarkable grounding in the humanities by taking us back to the beginnings of Western civilization in ancient Greece and Rome. The two courses cover a similar time period: from roughly the ninth century B.C.E. to the fourth century of the common era. (Although Homer predates the pre-Socratic philosophers, we will come together chronologically at a number of points; and both courses end with late classical and early Christian materials.) But more important are the thematic connections between philosophical and literary texts, and the connection of both to their shared cultural matrix: to the Athenian *polis*; then to Rome as republic, empire, and finally as besieged political, and fledgling spiritual, center.

As we look at these two complex and related civilizations, we will read a history as least as bloody, uncertain, and cynical as that of our own time. But we will also find some of the world's most remarkable writers--among them Homer, Sappho, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Virgil, and Augustine--seeking wisdom and solace in works that still possess their edge and relevance. The pair will look at many points of connection between philosophers and literary writers, in their shared quest for a sense of wholeness in the life of the individual and of society.

Required Texts (for English 223):

Aristophanes. *Four Comedies*, ed. Dudley Fitts. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1962.

Dorsch, T. S. and Penelope Murray, eds. *Classical Literary Criticism*. London: Penguin, 2000.

Euripides. *Euripides I: Four Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1955.

Homer. *The Odyssey*, trans. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Random House, 1990.

Kebric, Robert B. *Greek People*, fourth ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

_____. *Roman People*, fourth ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Sophocles. *Sophocles I*, ed. Grene and Lattimore, 2nd ed. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.

Virgil. *The Aeneid*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam, 1980.

You will also be responsible for a collection of shorter readings (*SR*) and a brief text of stoic philosophy to be distributed by Dr. Hunt, along with a number of hand-outs.

Required Work:

1. Reading assignments to be completed before the dates for which they are assigned (i.e. in time for class discussion).
2. Prompt and regular attendance at all class sessions. Each absence after the first two will result in a serious reduction of the final grade; six absences may be considered as grounds for failure in the course.

This semester our class sessions will include a required field trip to the recently re-opened Getty Villa in Malibu on Wednesday, November 8. Please discuss this in advance with your other professors!

3. A midterm covering Greek literature, in the context of the historical material presented in Kebric's *Greek People*.
4. Two analysis and response papers (about three pages each) to be turned in as shown on the schedule below.
5. One analysis and response essay based on some work at the Getty Villa in connection with a work (or a theme within several works) in this course.
6. One longer synthetic paper (6-7 pages) going beyond the material covered in the course.

For those enrolled in the pair, this longer paper will be replaced by a somewhat more extensive (10-12-page) paper done *jointly* with the final paper for Philosophy 310. This joint final paper will address a topic of your choice that brings together material from *the second half of both courses*. Suggested topics will be made available, and the professors will meet with all paired students in advance to facilitate topic selection.

Note: Late work will be accepted, but will be marked down one half grade for each class day after the due date. Under extraordinary circumstances, I will consider an extension without penalty-- provided that I am consulted in advance and that the circumstances seem serious enough to warrant such an extension.

6. A comprehensive final exam (covering material from the entire course, including Kebric's *Greek People* and *Roman People*).

Grading Factors:

(1) Attendance, preparation and discussion	10
(2) Midterm	20
(3) Short response papers	20
(4) Longer (or joint) paper	25

Manuscript Style:

Papers are to be typed double-space in a 12-point font (this syllabus, in Times 12-point, serves as an example), and printed on a laser-quality printer. They should be handed in on separate sheets of 8 1/2 X 11 bond paper, stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Margins should be one inch; paragraphs are to be indented five spaces. Spaces should not be skipped between paragraphs. Notes and bibliography must follow the *MLA Handbook*, copies of which are available in both the library and the bookstore. MLA style is also summarized in your *Random House Handbook*.

Always keep hard-copies of all your work. Documents can get lost--both from my desk and from your disk, whether hard or floppy. Should this occur, I will expect you to be able to produce a copy immediately; otherwise, I will be forced to count the paper as late beginning with the original due date. (See above for general policy on late papers.)

Note: Electronically submitted work will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to leave enough time to submit a clean hard copy for evaluation.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism occurs whenever the true author of a piece of prose, of an idea, or of a line of thought is not the person who claims to be the author. Plagiarism can occur in varying degrees, and will be penalized--in this class as in all others at the College--in proportion to its severity. Papers in which plagiarism is sufficiently serious will receive an F, and student's name will be turned in to the Dean of Students. A repeated act of plagiarism will result in an automatic F in the entire course, in addition to any action taken by the Office of Student Life (which can include suspension from the College). A number of such serious sanctions have been imposed in recent years.

A particularly common and egregious form of plagiarism is the down-loading of materials from papers posted by others on various web sites. Please be aware that faculty have the tools to identify any work unfairly borrowed from the web--as well as other sources.

If you are in doubt about the need for documentation of borrowed material, please feel free to consult me or any other professor on campus. Also be sure that you have mastered the material in the 2005-2007 College Catalog, pp. 29-33. Ignorance of this material will not be regarded as an excuse.

ADA Policy:

If you have any disabling condition that may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, please begin by contacting the Office of Disability Services in CAS (Science 105; extension 4825). I will be happy to provide any accommodations regarded by the

Director as appropriate, but am not in a position to offer such accommodations independently. Short of actual accommodations, however, please feel welcome to talk with me about anything I can do to help you succeed in the course.

The Final Exam:

The final examination will be given only at the published time (Thursday, December 14, 10:30-12:30), so plan your departure for winter vacation accordingly. Plane tickets purchased by students not consulting the schedule (or not informing their families of the schedule) will not be accepted as an excuse for missing (or rescheduling) the exam. If you should find yourself scheduled for three final exams on a single day, you are (as the *Catalog* notes) entitled to request an adjustment from your professors.

The Schedule (subject to revision as necessary):

I. The Greeks

- Sept. 7 "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer": an introduction to the period, the course, and the pair (readings attached to syllabus).
- 12 Greek Epic: Homer's *Odyssey* (ca. 850 B.C.E.), I-IV: the Telemakia (1-78). Also study the chronology and maps in Kebric, xix-xxvi, and read "After Homer," 1-36.
- 14 *The Odyssey*, V-VIII: Odysseus's journey [odyssey] (81-142).
- 19 *The Odyssey*, IX-XII: Odysseus's tale (145-225).
- 21 *The Odyssey*, XIII-XX: Odysseus's homecoming, disguise, and recognition (229-387).
- 26 *The Odyssey*, XXI-XXIV: the test of the bow, slaughter of the suitors, reunion with Penelope, and restoration of peace on Ithaca (391-462).
- 28 Greek Lyric (1)--Personal Lyric (6th-5th centuries B.C.E.): Alcaeus, Sappho, Anacreon, and Theognis (in *SR*). Also read "A World of Iron and Tyrants," Kebric, 37-56, and "Eros Unchained," 91-121.
- Oct. 3 Greek Lyric (2)--Public Lyric: Pindar (522-443 B.C.E.), Tenth Pythian Ode and Sixth Nemian Ode (*SR*). Also read "The Panhellenic Games," Kebric, 57-90.
- 5 Greek Tragedy (1): The Oedipus Cycle of Sophocles (496-406 B.C.E.)--(A) *Oedipus the King* (405 B.C.E.). Also read "The Problem with Persia," Kebric, 122-52.

- 10 *Oedipus the King*. Analysis and Response Paper #1 due.
- 12 Sophocles (B): *Antigone* (441 B.C.E.).
- 17 *Antigone*. Also read "A Gilded Edge for a Golden Age," Kebric, 153-98.
- 19 Greek Tragedy (2): Euripides (485?-406 B.C.E.), *Medea* (431 B.C.E.).
- 24 Greek Comedy: Aristophanes (448?-380 B.C.E.), *The Birds* (414). Also read "Rowdies, Rogues, and Robbers," Kebric, 199-229.
- 26 Greek Literary Theory: Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), *Poetics* (Dorsch and Murray, 57-97). Also read "Hellenistic Science, Technology, and Fantasy," Kebric, 230-71.
- Note: At 1:30 on this day, I will be giving a guest lecture in Professor Hunt's class on Plato's *Symposium*. Students not in the pair are most welcome to attend, and the lecture will give you an alternative, philosophical view of Aristophanes.
- 31 Hellenistic Pastoral: Theocritus (early 3rd C. B.C.E.), *Idylls* (SR). Also read Epilogue, Kebric, E-1-E-4. Review of Greek literature.
- Nov. 2 Midterm exam--covers (1) Homer; (2) the lyric, including Pindar and Theocritus; (3) drama, including Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes; (4) Aristotle's *Poetics*; and (5) Kebric's *Greek People*.

II. The Romans

- 7 Roman Literary Theory: Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65-8 B.C.E.), *Ars Poetica* ["The Art of Poetry"] (Dorsch and Murray, 98112). See also Lucretius and Ovid in SR,
and read "Rome, Expansion, and Conquest," Kebric *RP*, 1-35 (plus chronology and maps, xix-xxviii).
- Nov. 8 **Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. Field Trip (by bus) to the Getty Villa, Malibu. Meet in the Mendenhall Lot. Details to follow.**
- 9 Roman Lyric: Catullus (Gaius Valerius, 87-54? B.C.E.) and Horace (see above)--both in SR.
- 14 Roman Pastoral: Virgil (or Vergil--Publius Vergilius Maro, 70-19 B.C.E.), First and Fourth Eclogues (c. 41 B.C.E.)--in SR. Also read "The Republic in Transition" and

"Politics and Violence in the First Century B.C.," Kebric *RP*, 36-86. Museum Response due.

16 Roman Epic: Virgil's *Aeneid* (19 B.C.E.), I-III (1-80). Also read "The End of the Republic," Kebric, *RP*, 87-121. Analysis and Response Paper #2 due.

21 *The Aeneid*, IV-VI (81-162). Also read "The Early Empire," Kebric, *RP*, 122-46. Guest lecture by Professor Hunt on Stoicism and its concept of Fate, as seen in *The Aeneid*. Additional reading TBA for those not in the pair.

23 **Thanksgiving.**

28 *The Aeneid*, VII-IX (163-241). Proposal for final paper due. (All students-- especially those in the pair-- should also meet with the professor[s] by this date.)

30 *The Aeneid*, X-XII (243-336).

Dec. 5 Later Roman Literature: Martial (Marcus Valerius Martialis, 42?-102? C.E); and Juvenal (Decimus Junius Juvenalis, 60?-140? C.E.) in *SR*. Also read "Flavian Stability --Natural Disaster" and "The Golden Age of Empire," Kebric, *RP*, 147-207.

7 Late Roman and early Christian lyrics (1st-4th centuries C.E.: Gaius Petronius (d. 66 C.E.); Ausonius and Paulinus of Nola; and anonymous selections (*SR*). Also read "Crisis and Christians," "Emperors and Entertainment," and Epilogue, Kebric, *RP*, 242-98; E-1-E-10.

11 Reading Day. Final paper due (one copy to each professor for those in the pair).

14 (Thursday), Final Exam, 10:30-12:30. Make a note of this now and make your holiday travel plans accordingly. As noted above, exceptions will not be granted.