

MODULE SYLLABUS

The Muses' Playground: Epic in Antiquity
CLCS5001

Module Code: CLCS5001
Credit points: 20
Pre-requisites/restrictions: None
Taught: Semester 1
Lecturer: Dr Ruth Parkes

GENERAL INFORMATION

This module focuses on three epics – this year the focus is on Greek and Roman epic. We will be studying Homer's *Odyssey*, Vergil's *Aeneid*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* against the background of the epic genre as a whole. The module provides students with a detailed study of the genre of epic, and a sense of evolution. As such, the module highlights the historical development of the genre and the importance of intertextuality for the appreciation particularly of later epic, but also considers overarching themes such as descriptions of warfare, portrayals of gods and use of mythology. The module also allows students to develop their methodological skills by applying, for instance, narratological, historicist, and gender-focussed readings, to the studied texts.

AIM(S)

- To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the epic genre;
- To provide students with the tools to critically evaluate epic texts in the contexts of genre and socio-historical situations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module all students should be able to:

- demonstrate a sound knowledge of the genre of epic and of the three individual epics read as part of the module;
- display an understanding and critical appreciation of key themes and diverse scholarly approaches to epic;
- demonstrate an understanding of literary, socio-cultural and historical contexts, and how these affect our interpretation of the chosen set texts.

OFFICE HOURS/HOW TO CONTACT ME

Please feel free to come and see me if you would like to discuss any problems you may have concerning this module. Try, if at all possible, to come during my office hours. My office hours are Wednesday 11.10-12.10, Friday 1.05-2.05 and 3.15-4.15. If you come to see me at another time and I am not in because of teaching or other commitments, please email me (R.Parkes@tsd.uwtsd.ac.uk). You can also ask questions (not confidential) in the discussion board available in the Moodle space for this course.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

This 20-credit module has 30 contact hours, inclusive of 2 revision classes. Attendance is compulsory for ALL lectures and workshops. If you cannot make a class because of illness or other good reason, you need to inform the Faculty Office (classics@tsd.uwtsd.ac.uk).

Lectures and workshops take place on :

Tuesday 4.15-5.05 (LR 17); Wednesday 12.15-1.05 (LR 20); Friday 11.15-12.05 (mac lab)

Course Outline:

Type	Content
lecture	module introduction
lecture	Homer's <i>Iliad</i>
lecture	Homeric poetry and its context
lecture	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
lecture	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
lecture	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
lecture	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
workshop	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
lecture	Apollonius' <i>Argonautica</i>
lecture	Early Roman Epic
lecture	Catullus 64
workshop	Catullus 64
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
workshop	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
lecture	Lucan's <i>Civil War</i>
workshop	Lucan's <i>Civil War</i>
lecture	Revision
lecture	Revision

ASSESSMENT

Coursework (50%)

1. one 500-word exercise (20%)
2. one 1,500-word essay (30%)

Course work

Coursework 1: 500 word gobbet

To be submitted by Tuesday 21st October no later than 3 pm, returned by Tuesday 18th November.

You should choose ONE of the following gobbets and comment on its context and content in an essay of 500 **words** (worth 20% of your final mark) :

1.

“So he spoke, and sent another arrow from the string straight at Hektor, and his heart longed to hit him. And he missed Hektor, but his arrow hit the excellent Gorgythion in the chest, a noble son of Priam, born to a mother who married from Aisyme, lovely Kastianeira, beautiful as the goddesses. He dropped his head to one side like a poppy in a garden, bent by the weight of its seed and the showers of spring: so his head sank drooping to one side under the weight of the helmet.

Teukros sent another arrow from the string straight at Hektor, and his heart longed to hit him. But again he missed, as Apollo foiled his shot: but he hit Archeptolemos, Hektor's brave charioteer, in the chest by the nipple as he came speeding into battle. He crashed from the chariot and his swift-footed horses shied at his loss: life and strength collapsed where he lay. Terrible pain for his charioteer clouded Hektor's heart. But then for all his grief for his companion he let him lie there, and called to his brother Kebriones, who was nearby, to take up his horses' reins: and he did not fail to do as he had heard.”

(Homer *Il.* 8.300-19)

2.

“Mistress, I throw myself on your mercy. But are you some goddess or a mortal woman? If you are one of the gods who live in the sky, it is Artemis, the Daughter of almighty Zeus, that your beauty, grace, and stature most remind me. But if you are one of us mortals who live on earth, then lucky indeed are your father and your gentle mother; lucky, your brothers too. How their hearts must glow with pleasure every time they see their darling join the dance! But he is happiest of them all who with his wedding gifts can win you for his home. For never have I set eyes on such perfection in man or woman. I worship as I look. Only in Delos have I seen the like, a fresh young palm-tree shooting up by the altar of Apollo, when my travels took me there – with a fine army at my back, that time, though the expedition was doomed to end so fatally for me. I remember how long I stood spellbound at the sight, for no lovelier sapling ever sprang from the ground. And it is with just the same wonder and veneration that I look at you, my lady; with such awe, indeed, that I dare not clasp your knees, though my troubles are serious enough.”

(Homer *Od.* 6.149-69)

3.

“By flogging his own body till it showed all the marks of ill-usage he made himself look like a slave, and with a filthy rag across his back he slunk into the enemy city and explored its streets. It was only by adopting this beggar's disguise that Odysseus, who cut so different a figure by the Achaean ships, could make his way into the town; but he did so, and the Trojans raised no hue and cry. I was the only soul who pierced through his disguise, but whenever I questioned him he was clever enough to evade me. However, the time came when he let me bathe and anoint him, and, at last, after I had given him some clothes to wear and solemnly sworn that I would not disclose his name to the Trojans before he returned to the huts by the ships, he gave me full details of the Achaeans' plans. And after killing a number of Trojans with his long sword, he did get back to his friends with a harvest of information. The other women of Troy were loud in their lamentation, but I rejoiced”

(Homer *Od.* 4.243-260)

4.

“Come, sir, won't you take a hand with us in our games, if you're good at any sport? You must surely be an athlete, for nothing makes a man so famous for life as what he can do with his hands and feet.

Come along then and have a try, casting your cares aside; for it won't be long before you are off on your journey. Your ship is launched already and the crew are standing by.'

Odysseus answered him promptly: 'Laodamas, why vex me with your challenges, you and your friends? I am too sick at heart to think of games. I have been through many bitter and exhausting experiences, and all I seek now is my passage home, which is why I am sitting here in your assembly to plead my suit with your king and your whole nation.'

Euryalus now saw fit to interpose and insult him to his face: 'You are quite right, sir. I should never have taken you for an athlete such as one is accustomed to meet in the world. But rather for some skipper of a merchant crew, who spends his life on a hulking tramp, worrying about his outward freight, or keeping a sharp eye on the cargo when he comes home with the profits he has snatched. No; one can see you are no sportsman.'

(Hom. *Od.* 8.145-64)

Coursework 2: 1,500 word essay

To be submitted by Tuesday, 25th November no later than 3 pm, returned in January.

Write a 1,500 word essay on ONE of the following essay titles (worth 30% of your final mark). :

1. 'The *Aeneid* validates a world of male authority and values.' Discuss.
2. 'Each is both an Achilles and a Hector': discuss ways in which Virgil's presentation of Aeneas and Turnus manipulates the reader's knowledge of Homer's *Iliad*.
3. 'Ovid never abandoned his legacy as a love elegist' (Knox). Discuss with reference to the *Metamorphoses*.
4. 'The poet plays with audience's sense of time' (Wheeler). Discuss with reference to the *Metamorphoses*.

Exam

The exam for this module will take place in the January examination period. It will consist of gobbets and essays on the epics under consideration.

General assessment information: coursework

Coursework submission for this module will be through Moodle. Please follow the instructions on the module's Moodle page for how to submit your work. The deadline for submission will be at 3 pm on the day given above.

Word count

Please be aware that if you go significantly over or under the word limit (i.e. more than 10%), you may be penalised. REMEMBER that the word count includes everything apart from the bibliography, titles or captions. You must provide the word count clearly on the cover sheet.

Welsh First language

If your first language is Welsh and you would like to submit any assessed coursework in Welsh, please see the Faculty Office as soon as possible to make arrangements for this.

Special needs / requirements

If you have any special needs (e.g. dyslexia, visual impairment) that need to be taken into account for the teaching of this module, please make sure that I, as Welfare Officer, am made aware of this so that I can make sure that I fully support you in your studies.

Returning of work

Detailed feedback is given on the essay cover sheet but if you would like to discuss your work in more detail, do come and see me during one of my office hours (see times given above).

Bibliography

A bibliography is provided in the Moodle space for this course.

READING:

Essential

Homer's *Iliad* (tr. M. Hammond, *Homer The Iliad*)

Homer's *Odyssey* (tr. E. V. Rieu, *Homer The Odyssey*)

Apollonius' *Argonautica* (tr. Hunter, R., *Apollonius Rhodius: Jason and the Golden Fleece (The Argonautica)*)

Catullus 64 (recommended Lee, G. (1998), *Catullus: The Complete Poems*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. A free version of poem 64 is available at

<http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/cat64.shtml>)

Vergil's *Aeneid* (tr. D. West, *Virgil. The Aeneid*)

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (tr. A. D. Melville, *Ovid Metamorphoses*)

Lucan's *Civil War* (A free version of the loeb translation by J. D. Duff is available at: archive.org/stream/lucancivilwarboo00lucauoft/lucancivilwarboo00lucauoft_djvu.txt)

Foley, J. M. *A Companion to Ancient Epic*. Malden (MA) and Oxford: Blackwell, 2005. (e-book in library)

Toohy, P. *Reading Epic: An Introduction to the Ancient Narratives*. New York and London: Routledge, 1992.

Recommended (general)

Boyle, A. J. *Roman Epic*. London: Routledge, 1996.

Feeney, D. C. *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition*. New York and Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Hainsworth, J. B. *The Idea of Epic*. Berkeley (CA) and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991.

Hardie, Philip *The epic successors of Virgil: A Study in the Dynamics of a Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993

Jenkyns, R. *Classical Epic*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1992.

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

Malpas, S. and Wake, P. *Routledge Companion to Critical Theory*. London: Routledge, 2006.

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

Pavlock, B. *Eros, Imitation and the Epic Tradition*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990.

Recommended (on specific set texts):

Ahl, F. M. *Lucan: An Introduction*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976.
 Boyd, B. W. *Companion to Ovid*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
 Fowler, R. *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
 Martindale, C. *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
 Myers, Sara 'The Metamorphosis of a Poet: Recent Work on Ovid' *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 89. 1999, 190-204
 Papanghelis, T. D. and Rengakos, A. *Companion to Apollonius Rhodius*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Undergraduate Marksheet

Student Name:
Module:

Date:
Tutor:

	0-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-100%
Basic descriptor	☐ Work of an unacceptable and unsatisfactory level.	☐ Work of a satisfactory standard.	☐ Work of a good standard.	☐ Work of a very good standard.	☐ Work of an excellent or exceptional standard.
Focus on question	☐ Little or no focus on the question.	☐ Discernible focus on the question.	☐ Generally good focus on the question.	☐ Sound focus on the question.	☐ Acute and relevant focus on the question.
Approach to task	☐ Lack of ability to identify and solve problems. ☐ Poor knowledge and understanding of the subject.	☐ Some attempt at identifying and solving problems. ☐ Little or no evidence of analysis.	☐ Ability to identify and solve problems. ☐ Some awareness of the wider philosophical dimensions of the subject. ☐ Reasonable, but not always complete response. Measure of analysis.	☐ Ability to understand and solve problems. ☐ Sound awareness of the wider philosophical dimensions of the subject. ☐ Wide coverage of topic. ☐ Thoughtful analysis.	☐ Ability to understand and solve problems. ☐ Excellent awareness of the wider philosophical dimensions of subject. ☐ Analytical and critical appreciation. ☐ Subtle and perceptive analysis.
Written style	☐ Response brief and under-developed.	☐ Argument lacks structure and/or relevance. ☐ Work tends to be descriptive in nature. ☐ Need for attention to writing.	☐ Solid level of argument, though not always relevant. ☐ Satisfactory written style. May be some disjointed arguments. ☐ Attempt at originality or critical appreciation.	☐ Well-developed and structured argument. ☐ Coherent writing. ☐ Some originality and/or critical appreciation of the subject.	☐ Cogent and structured argument. ☐ Fluent writing and clarity of expression ☐ Subtlety and/or originality
Evidence of reading	☐ Insufficient reading.	☐ Evidence of a limited range of reading	☐ Evidence of a range of reading.	☐ Evidence of thorough reading and preparation.	☐ Evidence of wide and thorough reading.
Presentation	☐ Poor presentation with many spelling and grammar errors. ☐ No, or few, references and examples.	☐ Need for attention to presentation. ☐ Spelling and grammar errors. ☐ Some references and examples.	☐ Sound presentation. ☐ Some spelling or grammar errors. ☐ Limited use of examples or references.	☐ Clear and careful presentation. ☐ Work well documented and referenced.	☐ Presentation to a high scholarly standard. ☐ Argument is fully documented and well referenced.