

The Muses' Playground

Epic in Antiquity

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- **MODULE CODE:** CLCS5001
- **TITLE:** The Muses' Playground: Epic in Antiquity
- **MODULE CONVENOR:** MO
- **LEVEL:** 5
- **CREDITS:** 20
- **TEACHING METHODS:** Lectures 13%
Workshops 2%
Directed Learning 85%

Teaching slots

- Lectures and workshops:
 - Tuesdays 9.15-10.05 (LR17)
 - Wednesdays 12.15-13.05 (LR7)
 - Thursdays 10.15-11.05 (LR10)
- **We have three lecture slots every week, some will be lectures, some will be workshops**
- Module syllabus separates lectures by week, but not by date – don't forget about reading week!

The Muses' Playground

- *'This 20-credit module has 30 contact hours, inclusive of 2 revision classes. Attendance is compulsory for ALL lectures and workshops.'*
- 20 credits means 200 hours of work, meaning you should be spending about 20 hours a week on this module

This module

- ‘This module focuses on three epics (in any given year this may include Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Apollonius Rhodius’ *Argonautica*, Vergil’s *Aeneid*, Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, Statius’ *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*, Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*, Quintus Smyrnaeus’ *Posthomerica*, Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* or the *Orphic Argonautica*) and provides students with a detailed study of the genre of epic. 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.’

Set texts

Virgil: *The Aeneid. Translated and with an Introduction by David West* (revised edition), Penguin Classics, London 2003 or later.

Ovid: *Metamorphoses. A New Translation by A. D. Melville*, Oxford World Classics, Oxford 1986 or later.

Lucan: *Civil War. A New Translation by Susan H. Braund*, Oxford World Classics, Oxford 1992 or later.

In addition, you will be using online translations of Homer, Aristotle, Catullus... ..all linked on Moodle

Module structure

- First block: The epic genre
- Second block: Early epics from Greece and Rome
 - Including Homer, Apollonius Rhodius, Livius Andronicus, Catullus, and Ennius
- Third block: A classical epic
 - Vergil's *Aeneid*
- Fourth block: An epic challenge
 - Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
- Fifth block: Old-style epic for a new time?
 - Lucan's *Civil War*

Preparing for class

- Please read the Moodle pages for the module carefully!
 - *‘Please prepare for this lecture by reading Aristotle's Poetics (link below). Pay particular attention to what Aristotle says about epic poetry here.’*
 - Lecture slots will typically be prefaced by information about preparatory reading

Bibliography and follow-up

- The module syllabus also contains a short bibliography detailing scholarly texts of key importance
 - Relevant to the course as a whole
 - You will also have author-specific bibliographies, e.g. on Vergil
- The Moodle space for each lecture/workshop/seminar will contain *additional* follow-up reading relevant to that particular class

Assessment

- **Examination**
 - one two-hour exam (50%)
- **Coursework**
 - One 500 word exercise (20%)
 - one 1,500 word essay (30%)

Coursework

- All gobbets/titles in the module syllabus
- One 500 word exercise (20%): gobbet exercise
 - **Deadline: 23.10.11**
 - Common theme: the genre of epic
 - ...but both gobbets and essay titles include items that are pliable to historical and literary interests!
- one 1,500 word essay (30%): essay
 - **Deadline: 27.11.11**
 - Themes: Virgil and Ovid

Exam

- 2 hour
- Four gobbets and one essay question
- Gobbets will be taken from the whole module
 - Unlike gobbets in 1st year exams, you will now need to identify the text yourself
- Essays will focus on the second half of the module, particularly Ovid and Lucan, but also on generic issues

Marking criteria

- Marking criteria for
 - Gobbets
 - Essays
 - Exams
- ...are all included at the back of your module syllabus
- Useful checklist

Office hours

- Set office hours:
- Tuesday 11-12, Wednesday 9-10, and Thursday 14-15
- If you cannot make any of these slots, or have an urgent problem, please email m.ohrman@tsd.ac.uk to make an appointment

Next lecture

Wednesday 3rd October. Epic in Antiquity: What this module is really about

Please prepare by reading through Aristotle's *Poetics* (sections on epic): there is a link to an online translation on the Moodle space