

Ancient Greece and Rome

Vanguard University of Southern California

Class

Semester: Fall, 2014

Room: GRPS 2

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11-12:15

Instructor

Kevin Walker, Ph.D.

Office: Social Science Building

Office Hours: MW 12:15-2:30; F 11:1

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Course Description

Western civilization is often called the “marriage of Athens and Jerusalem.” This course is a study in the Athenian half of that union. There, we find the origins of our own thoughts – our strongest expectations of justice and the right ordering of society, the standard of excellence and beauty, and our deepest assumptions about both the depravity and glory of human nature. It might be said that if Christ saves mankind, the Greeks reveal something about what made us worth saving. We will study the great myths, and what the gods, heroes and even monsters teach us about ourselves; we will examine the major events in Greek history, particularly the origins of freedom and the struggle to maintain it, in the writings of Herodotus and Plutarch. We will then examine the practical improvements on Greece in ancient Rome in their republic, the decline of liberty as Rome grew into an empire, the rise of Christianity, and the final collapse into the Dark Ages. We will conclude with the Stoic philosophy of Seneca, and how it connected the best of the Greek and Roman wisdom with the coming civilization of Christendom. Throughout this class, we will consider what the classical world offers us today, how it might renew its relationship with our faith, and provide guidance for modern life.

Required Texts

Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2011.

Herodotus. *Histories*. Trans. Aubrey de Séincourt. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

Plutarch. *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives*. Translated by Ian Scott-Kilvert. London: Penguin Books, 1960.

Martin, Thomas R. *Ancient Rome: From Romulus to Justinian*. Yale: Yale University Press, 2013.

Seneca. *Dialogues and Essays*. Translated by John Davie. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

- **Participation (20%)**. Come to class every day with the readings done and be prepared to answer questions about the texts. Inability to answer questions or not having the book will result in the loss of a point.
- **Research Essay (30%)**. This is a research essay on a topic of your choice. There will be a prompt. Incorrect footnote and bibliographic citations *will result in the immediate loss of a letter grade*. It will be due in three phases:
 - **Phase 1 (5%)**. The introduction, literature review, and thesis.
 - **Phase 2 (5%)**. Phase I and the body.
 - **Final Draft (20%)**. The completed essay.
- **Midterm Exam (25%)**. This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings from the first half of the course. There will be a study guide.
- **Final Exam (25%)**. This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings on the second half of the course. There will be a study guide.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, or the use of someone else's text without quotes and proper citation, is considered a violation of the university's standards of academic integrity and will be grounds for serious disciplinary action. A first offense will be an F on the assignment; a second offense will be an F in the class and a referral to the Dean.

2014-2015 Disability Services Statement

The Office of Disability and Learning Services provides reasonable accommodations for students who need assistance with learning, and for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your professor(s) and Disability and Learning Services. If you have a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include but not limited to attention-related, learning, mental health, vision, hearing, physical or other health impairments), please contact the Office of Disability and Learning Services at 714-619-6484 or disabilityservices@vanguard.edu.

Class Schedule

I. Mythological Foundations

Week 1 – The Gods and Greek Religion

August 25

Introduction

August 27

Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*, Introduction, Chapters 1-3

Week 2 – Myths

September 1

Labor Day – No Class

September 3

Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*, Chapters 4-8 (pp. 95-194)

Week 3 – Heroes and Epics

September 8

Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*, Chapters 9-12 (pp. 196-252)

September 10

Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*, Chapters 13-16 (pp. 253-319)

II. Greek History

Week 4 – The Historian

September 15

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book I.1-200 (pp. 1-88)

September 17

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book V.28-126 (pp. 320-359)

Proposal for Essay Topics Due

Week 5 – The Persian Wars

September 22

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book VI (pp. 360-412)

September 24

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book VII (pp. 413-500)

Essay Topic Selected

Week 6 – Greek Victory

September 29

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book VIII (501-553)
Recommended: Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Themistocles (pp. 77-108)

October 1

Herodotus, *Histories* – Book IX (pp. 554-603)

Week 7 – Statesmanship

October 6

Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Aristides and Life of Cimon (pp. 109-163)

October 8

Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Pericles (pp. 165-206)

Essay Phase I Due Friday, October 10

Week 8 – Piety and Politics

October 13

Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Nicias (pp. 207-243)

October 15

Midterm

Week 9 – Empire and Hubris

October 20

Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Alcibiades (pp. 245-285)

October 22

Plutarch, *Rise and Fall of Athens* – Life of Lysander (pp. 287-318)

III. Roman History

Week 10 – The Roman Way

October 27

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapters 1-2

October 29

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 3

Essay Phase II Due Friday, October 31

Week 11 – The Roman Republic

November 3

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 4

November 5

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 5

Week 12 – Fall of the Republic

November 10

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 6

November 12

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 7

Week 13 – Rise and Fall of the Empire

November 17

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapters 8-9

November 19

Thomas Martin, *Ancient Rome*, Chapter 10

Essay Final Draft Due Friday, November 21

IV. Ancient Philosophy: Stoicism

Week 14 – The Stoic’s View of the Cosmos

November 24

Seneca, *Essays and Dialogues* – “On Providence” and “On Anger” (pp. 3-52)

November 26

Thanksgiving

Week 15 – The Stoic’s Life

December 1

Seneca, *Essays and Dialogues* – “On the Happy Life” and “On Tranquility of Mind” (pp. 85-139)

December 3

Seneca, *Essays and Dialogues* – “On the Shortness of Life” and “On Mercy” (pp. 140-162; 188-218)

Week 16 – The Stoic’s Life (continued)

December 8

Seneca, *Essays and Dialogues* – “On Earthquakes” (pp. 219-248)

Final Exam – Wednesday, December 10, 10:30am-12:30pm
