



## CLASSICS 4370/WCL 6370: COMPARATIVE EPIC

This course examines epic poetry from ancient Greece and Rome with a comparative approach that draws on other cultures both more ancient and more modern. Readings include the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* together with the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh*.

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Texts: These are all available at the UH bookstore, but because of the high number of different works we read in this class, I recommend that you try to get some used/on-line or from the library. *Except for Gilgamesh and Beye's Ancient Epic Poetry, it is completely fine to substitute another translation/edition for the ones listed here.*

Charles Rowan Beye, *Ancient Epic Poetry: Homer, Apollonius, Virgil, With a Chapter on the Gilgamesh Poems*. Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2006. ISBN 0-86516-607-2.

The *Iliad* of Homer, translated by Stanley Lombardo (1997, ISBN: 0872203522).

The *Odyssey* of Homer, translated by Stanley Lombardo (2000, ISBN: 0872204847).

\**The Epic of Gilgamesh*, translated by Andrew George (2003, ISBN: 978-0140449198).

*Jason and the Golden Fleece* of Apollonius of Rhodes, translated by Richard Hunter (1998, ISBN:978-0192835833).

The *Medea* of Euripides, translated by Rex Warner (1993, ISBN: 978-0486275482).

The *Aeneid* of Virgil, translated by Stanley Lombardo (2005, ISBN: 978-0872207325).

The *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, translated by Charles Martin (2010, ISBN: 978-0393925340).

*Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus, translated by John Maxwell Edmonds and Stephen Gaselee (2010, ISBN: 1145484484).

\*Be sure to get this edition of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*

Components of Course Grade: 2 exams, 1 take home essay (33% each)

## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXAMS

8/23 Introduction and overview

Recommended follow up reading (for those interested in learning more): “Proto-Indo-Europeans” (Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proto-Indo-Europeans>); C. Watkins, “Indo-European and the Indo-Europeans” (<http://www.bartleby.com/61/8.html>)

8/25 The *Iliad* and Oral Poetry

Assignment: *Iliad* 1; begin reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “Oral Poetry”

Recommended follow up reading (for those interested in learning more and graduate students): A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (1960; 2nd edition, 2000) — this is a very readable and incredibly illuminating book! See also <http://chs.harvard.edu/mpc> for the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature.

8/30 The *Iliad* and Oral Poetry (cont.)

Assignment: Complete reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “Oral Poetry”

9/1 *Iliad*

Assignment: *Iliad* 3, 6, 9; Begin reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “The *Iliad*.”

9/1 *Iliad*

Assignment: *Iliad* 10, 16, 18

9/3 *Iliad*

Assignment: *Iliad* 19, 22, 24; complete reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “The *Iliad*”

9/6 LABOR DAY

9/8 NO CLASS MEETING

9/13 Gilgamesh

Assignment: The Standard Version of the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, tablets I-VI (= George 1999 pp. 1-53); Begin reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “Gilgamesh”

9/15 Gilgamesh

Assignment: The Standard Version of the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, tablets VII-XII (= George 1999 pp. 54-100); Complete reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “Gilgamesh”

9/20 Gilgamesh

Assignment: The Sumerian Poems of Gilgamesh, *Bilgames and the Bull of Heaven*, *Bilgames and the Netherworld*, *The Death of Bilgames* (= George 1999 pp. 166-208)

9/22 Exam 1 (covers Gilgamesh and *Iliad*)

9/27 *Odyssey*

Assignment: *Odyssey* 1-6; begin reading *Ancient Epic Poetry*: “The *Odyssey*”

9/29 *Odyssey*

Assignment: *Odyssey* 7-12

10/4 *Odyssey*

Assignment: *Odyssey* 13-18

10/6 *Odyssey*

Assignment: *Odyssey* 19-24; complete reading *Ancient Epic Poetry: "The Odyssey"*

10/11 *Medea*

10/13 *Jason and the Golden Fleece*

Assignment: *Jason and the Golden Fleece* 1-2; *Ancient Epic Poetry: "The Argonautica"*

10/18 *Jason and the Golden Fleece*

Assignment: *Jason and the Golden Fleece* 3-4

10/20 Catullus 64

10/25 Introduction to the *Aeneid*

Assignment: *Aeneid* 1 and 2

10/27 *Aeneid*

Assignment: *Aeneid* 3-5

11/1 *Aeneid*

Assignment: *Aeneid* 6; *Ancient Epic Poetry: "The Aeneid"*

11/3 *Aeneid*; introduction to *Jason and the Golden Fleece*

Assignment: selections (TBA) from *Aeneid* 7-12

11/8 Exam 2

11/10 *Metamorphoses* 1- 5

11/15 *Metamorphoses* 6 - 10

11/17 *Metamorphoses* 11- 15

11/22 NO CLASS - please use the time to read *Daphnis and Chloe* in its entirety

11/24 - 11/28 THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/29 *Daphnis and Chloe*

12/1 *Daphnis and Chloe*

Take home essay due