



Ancient Culture Lab: Homer's Epics and the Greek Language

Module Coordinator	Dr Martine Cuypers, Classics, School of Histories and Humanities
What will you learn from this Elective?	<p>Ancient Greece, its language and its cultures are among the great formative elements in the history of European literature, thought and civic life. In this module you will receive an introduction to Greek thought and the language in which it is expressed while exploring two seminal texts of Western literature, Homer's <i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i>, whose linguistic and cultural roots go back to the late Bronze Age.</p> <p>Understanding ancient Greece and its language and thought matters today more than ever. Many of the values in our multicultural and global world, our debates about democracy (<i>demokratia</i>, 'the rule of the people'), politics (the <i>technê politikê</i>, the art of the 'city', the 'commonwealth, the Greek <i>polis</i>) and poetry (<i>poetikê</i>, 'the art of "making" things'), philosophy (<i>philosophia</i>, 'the love of wisdom'), history (<i>historia</i>, an 'enquiry' into the past) and more, look back, respond, regale and rebel against the thought – indeed the very language and ideas – of the ancient Greeks.</p> <p>With the support of a range of digital tools we will examine some of the basic structures of ancient Greek discourse, its ideas, structures, its language and its words as well as its legacies in English and other modern languages.</p> <p>In our 'lab', focussing on the ancient heroic poetry of Homer, the cornerstone of ancient literature and one of the most exciting and dramatic texts in the cultures of the West, we will examine and analyse the essential formations of the language. We will discuss seminal stories and ideas, scenes, social and psychological dynamics, politics, family, war, gender, love, death, freedom, justice, and learn to see first-hand how these elements of thought are embedded in Homer's language, its words and its grammatical structures.</p>
Student Workload	<p>22 contact hours (1 x 1-hour class per week, 1x 1 hour seminar in groups).</p> <p>22 hours of online discussion and reflection activities.</p> <p>66 hours of guided independent study.</p>
Assessment Components	<p>Class Participation (10%): Engage in discussions in class and online.</p> <p>In-Class/Online Tests (20%): Short tests on material covered in lectures, seminars and readings.</p> <p>Team Project (70%): Analyze a key Greek word or concept and its relevance over time.</p>

Indicative Reading List

Kahane, A. *Homer: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury 2012).

Kahane, A., Mueller, M. Berry, C. and Parod, W. *The Chicago Homer*.
Online at <https://homer.library.northwestern.edu/>

For further bibliographies: Oxford Bibliographies online, 'Homer' and L'Année Philologique online bibliography, both available through the Library/Stella.

Boardman, J., Griffin, J. and Murray, O. *The Oxford History of Greece and the Hellenistic World* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Beard, M. and Henderson, J. *Classics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 1995).

Jones, P., *Learn Ancient Greek* (Duckworth, 1998).

Green, T., *The Greek and Latin Roots of English* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. Discuss significant values and concepts from the world of the Homeric epics with reference to the Greek words in which they are expressed.
2. Examine a range of central verbal concepts in ancient Greek and their relation to modern linguistic usage, especially in English.
3. Analyse the relationship, interactions, continuities and conflicts between the values and thought of the ancients and those of our modern cultures, in relation to topics such as gender, freedom, death, human rights, and political structures.
4. Confidently read out and pronounce ancient Greek words and phrases.
5. Effectively use e-learning tools and electronic resources to support language learning and cultural research.
6. Recognise some key features of the ancient Greek language, such as its alphabet