CLAS E-116/W

THE ANCIENT GREEK HERO

SPRING 2015

A BASIC STATEMENT ABOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS COURSE

There are no prerequisites for the course. No special competence in any skill or in any language is required. The only requirement is academic honesty. If you enrol in our course, we expect you to agree to the academic honesty guidelines as found on the Harvard Extension School website. Collaboration is encouraged in our course, and if you collaborate honestly, there is nothing for you to worry about. Plagiarism is different from collaboration, and it is antithetical to the moral code of this course; to plagiarize is to take credit only for yourself and to hide the credit that others deserve. Our moral code is, simply, to learn together as a community.

INSTRUCTORS

Prof. Gregory Nagy (e-mail: gnagy@fas.harvard.edu). Classics Department, Boylston Hall, 2nd floor.

Dr. Kevin McGrath (e-mail: kmcgrath@fas.harvard.edu). Classics Dept. Office hour: Thursdays from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Eastern Time in Boylston Hall 228, or by telephone during this time at (617)-495-1941.

COURSE WEBSITES

There are two online resources for this course. The first, referred to in this Syllabus as "HeroesX," is the Course's online content repository, hosted by edX. The HeroesX website contains the textbooks, video and audio materials, discussion board, and exercises. Its contents are divided into 24 "Hours," a term referring to the number of hour-long class meetings in the academic semester.

To access the Course materials on HeroesX, **you must create an edX account and also register for the first module of "The Ancient Greek Hero" on the edX website**. Please create your edX account and register for the course by September 1st. (This takes less than a minute.) Once you have enrolled in the "Epic and Lyric" module (HUM 2.1x), you will be automatically enrolled in each successive module as it becomes available. You can register for, and access, the first HeroesX module at the following URL:

https://www.edx.org/course/harvardx/harvardx-hum2-1x-ancient-greek-hero-24-3131

The second website contains Prof. Nagy's Dialogues (recorded from Harvard College course 'Culture and Belief 22') and the recorded video of Kevin McGrath's weekly class, which is also streamed **live on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. from 1 Story Street in Harvard Square: local students are strongly advised to attend this in person**. You can get access to the Course website by signing into your Harvard DCE account and then going to:

http://isites.harvard.edu/course/ext-24099/2015/spring

COURSE OVERVIEW

What does it mean, to be human? This course takes a close look at the human condition, as viewed through the lens of classical Greek civilization; the basic organizing principle is an objective study of a model of humanity, the Hero. By the time the course comes to an end, students will have learned that there are different definitions of the "hero" in different historical times and places. In the end, though, the one true "hero" of this course will be the *logos* or "word" of logical reasoning, as activated by Socratic dialogue. The *logos* of dialogue in this course will require careful thinking, realized in close reading and reflective writing. The "last word" about this *logos* comes from Plato's memories of words spoken in dialogue by Socrates during the last days of his life, which will be read towards the very end of the course. Such a "last word", shaped by a deep understanding of the idea of the hero in all its varieties throughout the history of Greek civilization, will become the "latest word" for students who earnestly engage in dialogue, by way of writing as well as reading, with heroic expressions of the human condition. This course is driven by a sequence of dialogues that lead to such an engagement, guiding the attentive reader through many of the major works of the ancient Greek Classics. In this course, all readings are translated into contemporary English and supplemented by selections from the ancient visual arts.

REQUIRED READING

1) **SOURCEBOOK**. Available on the HeroesX site as an HTML textbook and as a downloadable e-pub. The Sourcebook contains: the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; the Proclus summaries of the *Epic Cycle*; Hesiod, *Theogony*, *Works and Days*; selections from Theognis of Megara. Alcman, *Partheneion* ("The Maidens' Song"); "Songs ("poetry")" of Sappho; Pindar, *Pythian 8*; Aeschylus, the Oresteia trilogy (*Agamemnon*, *Libation-Bearers*, *Eumenides*); Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Oedipus Tyrannus* ("Oedipus Rex"); Euripides, *Hippolytus*, *Bacchic Women* ("Bacchae"); selections from Herodotus' *Histories*; Plato, *Apology*, *Phaedo*; selections from Pausanias and Philostratus. (The full text of Philostratus *Heroikos* is available at: http://chs.harvard.edu).

2) **THE ANCIENT GREEK HERO IN 24 HOURS**, by Gregory Nagy. Available on the HeroesX site as an HTML textbook and as a downloadable e-pub. This book contains 24 chapters; each chapter is called an "Hour," because each one of the "Hours" is keyed to each one of 24 class meetings. This book, hereafter abbreviated as *H24H*, is designed to provide you with close readings and analysis of some of the most important parts of the relevant primary sources as found in the Sourcebook. These "Hours" take the place of formal "lectures" in this course. The close readings in these "Hours" are meant to be part of the "homework" that you bring to class—in person or virtually—at the Thursday meetings.

RECOMMENDED READING

For further background on and interpretation of the required reading, two books by G. Nagy are available on the CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES website (http://chs.harvard.edu): *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, and, *Pindar's Homer*. These books supply background for some, but hardly all, of the topics to be presented in the course.

<u>COMPONENTS OF THE COURSE GRADE</u>

This is a Writing Intensive Course. Writing-intensive courses at Harvard Extension offer students the opportunity to develop their writing skills in the context of a particular academic discipline; they all feature common elements. Students will:
  Develop core writing skills as defined by the Instructor in the discipline of the course. We shall be concentrating on the art of Close Reading of texts.
  Complete multiple writing assignments of varying lengths <u>at least</u> 2 of which must be revised.
  Produce a minimum of 10-12 pages of writing, exclusive of the two required drafts, over the course of the term.
  Meet at least once in individual conference—in person, by phone, or electronically—with the Instructor to discuss writing in progress.
  Receive detailed feedback on the drafts and revisions for both content and expression.

There are 12 short <u>weekly</u> exercises, the two lowest grades of which can be discarded.

These essays consist of a close reading of relevant texts and are to be no more than five hundred finely argued and succinct words. They are in response to one of the questions in each week's ANNOTATION EXERCISES: these are to be found on the HeroesX site for each Hour and the specific question will be announced each week.

At least TWO of these essays are to be submitted in draft form and then rewritten as a second draft. You are also encouraged and advised to write drafts for as many of these short essays as you wish; these can be submitted at any time but the second/final draft MUST be submitted by Noon on the relevant Sunday.

The QUALITY of writing is important to this Class, not the quantity.

The weekly Close Reading Paper is due by e-mail submission as a PDF on Sunday Noon to Kevin McGrath.

You are responsible for meeting these requirements. There are **No Extensions** given for late work. Late submissions of work are <u>NOT</u> accepted.

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You should complete the assigned reading <u>before</u> each Thursday's Class. It is strongly advised that if you are in the Cambridge area you attend these Thursday Classes, or, if you are an out-of-state student, then you should try and join the Class on at least one of these occasions, if possible.

Week 1 (Jan. 29): Hours 0, 1, and 2

Reading:
- Read "Introduction to the Book" and "Introduction to Homeric Poetry" in *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours* (*h24h*)
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 0 Texts, Hour 1 Texts, and Hour 2 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Iliad* scrolls I, III, VI, and IX

Week 2 (Feb. 5): Hours 3 and 4

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 3 Texts, and Hour 4 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Iliad* scrolls XV (306–404, 592-746), XVI, and XVII (1-69, 188-232, 366-455, 673-751), XVIII-XX, XXI (1-135, 227-390)

Week 3 (Feb. 12): Hours 5 and 6

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 5 Texts, and Hour 6 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Iliad* scrolls XXII-XXIV; I to VIII (repeat)

Week 4 (Feb. 19): Hour 7

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 7 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Iliad* scrolls X-XXIV (repeat)

Week 5 (Feb. 26): Hours 8 and 9

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 8 Texts, and Hour 9 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Odyssey* scrolls i-viii, and ix-xvi

Week 6 (Mar. 5): Hour 10 and 11

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hours 10 Texts, and Hour 11 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: *Odyssey* scrolls xvii-xxiv

Week 7 (Mar. 12): Hours 12 and 13

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 12 Texts, and Hour 13 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: Hesiod *Theogony* 1-115 and *Works & Days* 1-286 and Herodotus scroll 1.1-91 (Croesus)

Week 8 (Mar. 19): No Classes - Spring Break

Week 9 (Mar. 26): Hours 14 and 15

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 14 Texts, and Hour 15 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: "The Sign of the Hero" - Philostratus *Heroikos* (full text available on CHS website); and Herodotus 1.167 (Kyrnos), 1.168 (Timesios), 2.44 Herakles, 2.53 (Hesiod, Homer), 5.47 (Philippos), 5.104,110-14 (Onesilaos), 6.61-68 (Helen, Astrabakos), 7.117 (Artachaees), 7.133-37 (Talthybios), 7.188-92 (Thetis), and 9.114-22 (Protesilaos)

Week 10 (Apr. 2): Hours 16 and 17

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: and Hour 16 Texts, and Hour 17 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: Aeschylus *Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers*, and *Eumenides*

Week 11 (Apr. 9): Hours 18 and 19

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 18 Texts, and Hour 19 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: Sophocles *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Oedipus Tyrannos*

Week 12 (Apr. 16): Hours 20 and 21

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 20 Texts, and Hour 21 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: Euripides *Hippolytus*, and *Bacchae*

Week 13 (Apr. 23): Hours 22 and 23

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*: Hour 22 Texts, and Hour 23 Texts
- Fast reading in Sourcebook: Plato *Apology of Socrates*, and *Phaedo*

Week 14 (Apr. 30): Hour 24 and Afterword

Reading:
- Slow reading in *h24h*:, and Hour 24 Texts

Week 15 (May 7): Review and Discussion of Essays

In this Class we shall closely reread certain key passages from all the Hours.
There is an optional rewrite of any of the twelve close reading papers, due by e-mail Sunday noon.

G E N E R A L   F A C T S   A B O U T   H E R O E S X

HeroesX is divided into five modules, each of which corresponds to a portion of this Course. They are:

HUM (Humanities) 2.1x The Ancient Greek Hero: Epic and Lyric (Introduction and Hours 0–6)
HUM 2.2x The Ancient Greek Hero: Epic and Iconography (Hours 7-11)
HUM 2.3x The Ancient Greek Hero: Cult (Hours 12-15)
HUM 2.4x The Ancient Greek Hero: Tragedy (Hours 16-21)
HUM 2.5x The Ancient Greek Hero: Plato and Beyond (Hours 22-24 and Epilogue)

At each junction you will be automatically enrolled into the subsequent module.

Every week, on the HeroesX site, we encourage you to engage with the two kinds of self-assessment: (a) answering the Content Questions and, (b) completing the Annotation Exercises for the assigned Hours. The results of these self-assessments are not included in the Course grade, but carefully completing them will help prepare you for success in the written portion of the Course.

Participation in Discussion Board is your daily forum for discussion and intellectual exchange and is a strongly recommended venue for your learning.

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