

Beginnings and Repetitions

COL 241 — Antiquity Colloquium — Fall 2021

Prof. Kleinberg
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W 2:45-4:30 or appointment

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Th 9:30-11:30 or appointment
8:30-10pm Zoom

The sophomore antiquity colloquium is the first of a series of five that together constitute the core of the COL program. Together, we will be reading and interpreting works of religion, literature, history, and philosophy ranging from 18th-century BCE Mesopotamia, through archaic and classical Greece, to 3rd-century CE Rome. This period marks one of the richest phases of cultural, political, and intellectual innovation in human history and serves as a prominent touchstone for subsequent generations of thinkers and writers. One central theme that will help focus our reading is *beginnings and repetitions*. Origin stories constitute an important genre in antiquity. In addition to their function as instruments of political legitimacy, historical interpretation and critique, as well as literary canonization, these texts were aware of themselves as recapitulations and reinterpretations of pre-existing conceptual and thematic material. They are not just tellings but re-tellings – and are meant to be retold. Indeed, the material you encounter in the antiquity colloquium will return in myriad variations throughout the other colloquia. Though it is especially evident in origin stories, this dynamic structure of textual and cultural inception/reception, re/interpretation, and re/transmission is pervasive in the ancient world and will both necessitate and facilitate our efforts to contextualize our reading.

PAPERS

- You will write four papers, each of 4-6 pages (1000-1800 words).
- Traditionally, no prompts are provided for COL papers. We will provide optional prompts for the first paper. For all other papers, you are **strongly** encouraged to discuss possible topics/questions with Prof. Kleinberg and Prof. Smyth.
- Papers must be submitted via email to both instructors by 7pm on the specified due date. Files must have extension .docx or .pdf
- A no-questions-asked extension of up to seven days will be granted upon request, provided (1) the request is made by email prior to the original due date and (2) a new due date within the week-long window is specified in the email.

ACCESSIBILITY

We are eager to make this course accessible to everyone. For legal reasons, all accommodations must be officially coordinated with the Student Affairs Accessibility Office, which will provide you with an accommodation letter. Then we'll arrange reasonable accommodations according to your needs. Students seeking accommodations must schedule a time to discuss their situation with one of us by September 15th, or as soon as they have obtained an accommodation letter.

To obtain an accommodation letter, you can write directly to the accessibility specialist, Crystal Rose Hill (chill01@wesleyan.edu) or contact the office by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu), phone (860.865.5581), or via the website: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/>

TEXTS

- Physical copies of all texts are required. Order copies of the course reader through WesPortal (a PDF is also available on Moodle).
- If purchasing books is a financial burden, the COL will buy them for you. Just email either instructor and we'll arrange it.
- Though we encourage you to consult other translations, the specific editions we've adopted (in the course reader and listed below) are required, so that we will all be on the same page.
- The texts listed below have been adopted and are available at R.J. Julia. If you choose to acquire your texts from elsewhere, please shop responsibly (don't support evil corporations).

Euripides, *Alcestris, Medea, Hippolytus*, trans. Diane Arnsion Svarlien (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007). ISBN: 978-0-87220-822-3

Herodotus, *On the War for Greek Freedom*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003). ISBN: 978-0-87220-667-0

Hesiod, *Theogony and Works and Days*, trans. Richard Caldwell and Stephanie Nelson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009). ISBN: 978-1-58510-288-4

Plato, *Meno*, trans. George Anastaplo and Lawrence Berns (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998). ISBN: 978-0-94105-171-2

Plotinus, *Ennead I.6 On Beauty*, trans. Andrew Smith (Las Vegas: Parmenides, 2016) ISBN: 9781930972933

Seneca, *Six Tragedies*, trans. Emily Wilson (New York: Oxford Classics, 2010). ISBN: 978-0192807069

Thucydides, *On Justice, Power, and Human Nature*, trans. Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993). ISBN: 978-0-87220-168-2.

Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Shadi Bartsch (New York: Penguin, 2021) ISBN: 9781984854124
**** Note: this edition will not be available until mid-September.

Syllabus

(CR = Course Reader)

9/6	Introductions, Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
9/8	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
9/13	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
9/15	<i>Enuma Elish</i> (CR)
9/17	First Paper due (7pm)

- 9/20 Hesiod, *Theogony*
9/22 Genesis, Chapters 1-3, 12-22 (CR)
- 9/27 Comparative: Enuma Elish, Theogony, Genesis
9/29 Sappho (CR)
- 10/4 Herodotus (pp. 1-27, 119-164)
10/6 Thucydides (pp. 1-25, 39-52, 102-109)
- 10/11 Euripides, *Medea*
Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VII.1-450 (CR)
10/13 Euripides, *Medea*
Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VII.1-450 (CR)
- 10/18 Plato, *Meno*
10/20 Plato, *Meno*
Euclid, *Elements*, excerpts from Book I (CR)
- Fall Break
- 10/27 Aristotle, *Physics* I.1, 5-9; II.1-3, 7, 8 (CR)
10/29 **Second Paper due** (7pm)
- 11/1 Aristotle, *Physics* III.1-3, *De Generatione et Corruptione* I.4 (CR)
11/3 Seneca, *Medea*
- 11/8 Virgil, *Aeneid*, Books I-III
11/10 Virgil, *Aeneid*, Books IV-VI
- 11/15 Livy, *The Early History of Rome*, Book I: Rome Under the Kings (CR)
11/17 Lucian, *How to Write History* (CR)
11/19 **Third Paper due** (7pm)
- 11/22 Plotinus, *On Beauty*
Thanksgiving
- 11/29 Plotinus, *On Beauty*
12/1 Plutarch, Life of Alexander; Life of Caesar (CR)
- 12/6 Gospel of Luke; Gospel of John (CR)
12/8 Comparison of "Lives"
12/15 **Fourth Paper due** (7pm)