

Classical Civilisations (CASP)

This course provides an overview of the two main classical civilisations that spread in the Ancient Mediterranean, the Greek and the Latin one, the backbones of our Western society. We will mainly rely on literary sources, reading and interpreting written texts (the most genuine evidence that we own from Antiquity), to portray some of the main aspects of the Classical world.

Please note that, though an awareness of the Classical world and languages is preferred, a knowledge of Greek and Latin is NOT required to attend this course. Texts will be provided both in the original language and in English translation and the teaching will be adapted to the students' level.

The course aims to cover the following topics:

- Introduction to Greek history, with focus on the time frame between the 6th century B.C. and the beginning of Hellenism (4th B.C.). Readings from Thucydides will be provided.
- Classical Theories on the Origins of the Universe: Hesiod's *Theogony* and the origin from Chaos, Pre-Socratics' theories, Lucretius' atomistic theory and Ovid's mythological account.
- Heroes and gods: a comparison between the role and the influence of divine will on heroes' deeds in the *Odyssey* and in the *Aeneid*.
- A traditional Greek genre: the theatre and the birth of tragedy, through Aristotle's testimony and pottery evidences.
- Living the ancient Romans through Horace and Martial.
- The *Metamorphosis* in literature and art: reading statues through Ovid's poem.
- Love poetry: different perspectives of love from Athens to Rome. The case of Sappho and Catullus (other examples might be provided).
- Women lament in ancient Greek Literature.
- 'All is well that ends well': Fable in the Ancient World. Introduction on ancient fable: Aesop and Phaedrus in comparison.
- Students' presentations

Recommended pre-summer reading

Beard, M. & Henderson, J., *Classics. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

If you are unable to obtain books locally, they may be ordered from

<http://bookshop.blackwell.co.uk> or www.amazon.co.uk