

# GREE 216: Greek literature

Classics, Greek, and Latin  
School of Art History, Classics, and Religious Studies  
Victoria University of Wellington  
2/2008

## Course organisation

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**Class times:** Tue./Wed. 10.00-10.50, Fri. 11.00-11.50, Old Kirk 523

**Additional information:** Any further information, such as announcements and unofficial final results, will be posted on noticeboards in Old Kirk, level 5.

**Lecturers:**

- Ms Jo Whalley (OK 520), ph. 463 5233 ext. 8045, e-mail euripidesgirl@hotmail.com
- Dr Peter Gainsford (course organiser, OK 525), ph. 463 6453, e-mail peter.gainsford@vuw.ac.nz

## Set texts

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- Euripides, *Alcestis*, ed. Dale (Oxford University Press)
- Lucian, *Selections*, ed. Sidwell (London)

We will be working on Euripides in weeks 1-6 with Jo Whalley, and Lucian in weeks 7-12 with Peter Gainsford.

Further resources:

- See the bibliographies on Euripides and Lucian in this handout.
- Grammars for classical Greek may be obtained for free from <http://www.textkit.com>. The relevant books are
  - Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (15.67 MB)
  - William W. Goodwin, *Greek Grammar* (8.52 MB)

For reference purposes we recommend Smyth slightly ahead of Goodwin. (It's a good idea to have both.)

## Course content and objectives

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The course examines literary and historical texts for translation and study of subject matter, language and literary setting. We focus on Euripides' play *Alkestis* and a range of writings by the essayist Lucian. Students who have successfully passed the course will have improved their fluency in ancient Greek, and reinforced their knowledge of grammatical and morphological points learnt previously; improved their appreciation of niceties of classical Greek prose and verse style; and gained an appreciation of the historical contexts and literary genres of the texts studied (including scansion, in the case of Euripides).

## Mandatory course requirements

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There are no mandatory requirements for this course.

## Workload

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Students should expect to put an average of 14 hours' work per week into this course. There is no requirement on attendance as such (see above), but it is highly unlikely that any student will be able to manage satisfactorily with the 'seen' elements of the assessment without attending at least 85% of classes.

## Assessment

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Assessment is by internal assessment (40%) and a three-hour final exam (60%). Assessment is designed to determine students' ability to (1) translate classical Greek into English, (2) express coherent, informative, and insightful comments both on specific passages and in the context of the larger work.

### Internal assessment (40%)

- **2x unseen translation tests** (10% each), 30 minutes each, in class.  
Dates: Fri. 1 August (week 4) and Fri. 19 September (week 9)
- **2x text analyses** ('gobbets') (10% each), of ca. 800-1000 words each, the first on Euripides and the second on Lucian. These hand-in assignments will take the form of an in-depth analysis of a passage of the set author, or a short essay about a passage. Further details on how to approach the assignment will be given in class. If the assignment is submitted late without an extension given *in advance*, it will be subject to a penalty of 5 marks out of 100 per workday.  
Due dates: Euripides: Fri. 15 August (week 6); Lucian: Fri. 10 October (week 12)

### Three-hour final exam (60%)

The exam will feature questions on the following; full details on these questions and how much each is worth will be forthcoming in class near the end of the course. The exam period is 17 October to 8 November 2008.

- gobbets on both Euripides and Lucian (translate a seen passage into good English and then provide comments and analysis on the passage); a choice of passages will be offered
- scansion of iambic trimeter
- unseen translation

### Policy decisions to be made

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Reading literary authors shifts the focus away from simply learning grammar and vocabulary, and to some extent this means adopting different work habits. The following are points on which you will need to make policy decisions, and which you should remind yourself to think about repeatedly:

- **Use of cribs.** You should make a policy decision on whether or not to use a 'crib' (a published translation to aid you in deciphering the Greek text). On the one hand, your familiarity with the Greek language and with the style of the author will improve much more if you avoid using cribs; on the other hand, reading the Greek text without a crib can be more time-consuming. **Some lecturers may actively prohibit the use of cribs.**
- **Writing out a full translation.** This can be a little bit time-consuming, but it makes revising for the final exam enormously faster. If you do make a full translation, you should correct it while going through the text in class. (When translating in class you **must not** simply be reading from your translation.) If you do not make a full translation, you should still make very thorough notes in class, and organise your notes carefully.
- **Translation style.** When making a translation, should you try to write a literary, 'poetic' translation in good English, as though aiming for publication? Or should you make a very literal translation ('translationese')? Each to their own, but you should decide one way or the other.
- **Look at the commentary.** This is not so much a do-it/don't-do-it question, but rather a reminder that there *is* a commentary in the back of the textbook. The commentary provides an enormous amount of assistance in understanding the text, as well as offering literary comment and pointing to secondary sources. The commentaries will probably be among your main secondary sources for the text analysis assignments. Ignoring the commentary is one of the most common mistakes made by students beginning GREE 216.

### Bibliography

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#### Euripides, *Alkestis* — articles or chapters

Burnett, A.P. 1983. 'The virtues of Admetus,' in: E Segal (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Greek Tragedy*, Oxford. **PA3133 O98 (3DL)**

Dellner, J.J. 2000. 'Alkestis' double life.' *CJ* 96.1: 1-25. **PA1 C614 J (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Goldfarb, B.E. 1992. 'The conflict of obligations in Euripides' *Alkestis*.' *GRBS* 33: 109-26. **PA1 G794 (p)**

Kim-On Chong-Gossard, J.H. 2003. 'Song and the solitary self: Euripidean women who resist comfort.' *Phoenix* 57.3/4:

209-231. **PA1 P574 (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Konstan, D. 1996. 'Greek friendship.' *AJP* 117.1: 71-94. **PA1 A5 JP (p)**, also in **Project MUSE**

Gregory, J. 2002. 'Euripides as social critic.' *G&R* 49.2: 145-162. **PA1 G793 (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Lloyd, M. 1985. 'Euripides' *Alcestis*.' *G&R* 32.2: 119-131. **PA1 G793 (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Marshall, C.W. 2000. 'Alcestis and the problem of prosatyrlic drama.' *CJ* 95.3: 229-238. **PA1 C614 J (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Nielsen, R.M. 1976. 'Alcestis: a paradox in dying.' *Ramus* 5.2: 92-102. — available as **photocopy**

Padilla, M. 2000. 'Gifts of humiliation: *charis* and tragic experience In *Alcestis*.' *AJP* 121.2: 179-211. **PA1 A5 JP (p)**, also in **Project MUSE**

Slater, N.W. 2000. 'Dead again: (en)gendering praise in Euripides' *Alcestis*.' *Helios* 27.2: 105-21. — in **Academic OneFile**

### **Euripides, *Alkestis* — Books**

Hartigan, K.V. 1991. *Ambiguity and Self-Deception*. **PA3978 H329 A** — chapter on *Alcestis*

Luschnig, C.A.E., and H M Roisman 2003. *Euripides' Alcestis: Notes and Commentary*. **PA 3973 A5 L968**

Parker, L.P.E. 2007. *Euripides' Alcestis: Introduction and Commentary*. **PA3975 A5 E891**

Segal, C. 1993. *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow: Art, Gender, and Commemoration in Alcestis, Hippolytus and Hecuba*. **PA3978 S454 E**

Wilson, J.R. 1968. *20th Century Interpretations of Euripides' Alcestis*. **PA 3973 A5 W749**

Wohl, V. 1998. *Intimate Commerce: Exchange, Gender, and Subjectivity in Greek Tragedy*. **PA3136 W846 I**

### **Lucian**

**Additional Lucian bibliographies** are available at <http://classics.uc.edu/~johnson/Lucian/bibliography.htm> and <http://athena.leidenuniv.nl/letteren/opleiding/klassieketalen/index.php3?m=184&c=214>.

Anderson, G. 1976a. *Studies in Lucian's Comic Fiction (Mnemosyne suppl. 43)*. Leiden. **PA9 M686 S 43 (p)**

Anderson, G. 1996. 'Lucian, *Verae historiae*', in: G. Schmeling (ed.), *The Novel in the Ancient World (Mnemosyne suppl. 159)*, Leiden. **PA9 M686 S 159 (p)**

Baldwin, B. 1961. 'Lucian as a social satirist.' *CQ* n.s. 11: 199-208. **PA1 C6 Q (p)**, also in **JSTOR**

Baldwin, B. 1973. *Studies in Lucian*. Toronto. **PA4236 B181 S**

Branham, B. 1989. *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions*. Cambridge, MA. **PA4236 B821 U**

Georgiadou, A., and D.H.J. Larmour 1998. *Lucian's Science Fiction Novel, True Histories: Interpretation and Commentary (Mnemosyne suppl.)*. Leiden. **PA9 M686 S 179 (p)**

Hall, J. 1981. *Lucian's Satire*. New York. **PA4236 H177 L**

Jones, C.P. 1986. *Culture and Society in Lucian*. Cambridge, MA. **PA4236 J76 C**

Swain, S. 1996. *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World AD 50-250*. Oxford. **PA3081 S971 H** — chapter on Lucian

### **The second Sophistic**

Anderson, G. 1976b. *Lucian: Theme and Variation in the Second Sophistic (Mnemosyne suppl. 41)*. Leiden. **PA9 M686 S 41 (p)**

Anderson, G. 1993. *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire*. London. **DG78 A546 S**

Bowersock, G. W. 1969. *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*. Oxford. **B526 B786 G**

Goldhill, S. 2001. *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*. Cambridge. **DG78 B422**

### **General university statutes and policies**

Students should familiarise themselves with the university's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hardcopy or under 'about Victoria' on the Victoria homepage at [http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/calendar\\_intro.html](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html).

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>.

- Student and Staff Conduct
- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support