

# Classics

## Lecture 1

### **Assessments**

Essay 2,500 words - 60%

Commentary exercise - 40%

500 word commentary format, due by Week 5

Use bibliography in essays, but add own texts as well

### **Introducing Early Greece:**

#### **Chronology**

Collapse of Mycenaean Civilisation (1200BC) - Battle of Plataea, End of Persian Wars (479 BC)

After the collapse, everything was forgotten and everything starts again from scratch, there are theories as to why the civilisation collapsed, but there is no exact evidence or certain theory as to what occurred.

#### **Literary Sources**

Homer - Iliad and Odyssey

Hesiod - Theogony, Works and Days

Alcaeus, Tyrtaeus, Theognis, Sapho - lyric poetry

Herodotus - Histories

Persian wars and events that led there

#### **Epigraphic Evidence**

Graffiti on pots

Funerary inscriptions

Laws

Dedicatory inscriptions

Decrees

#### **Material Evidence**

Pottery

Sculpture

Art historical approaches

Architecture

Contextual approaches

Burials

Sanctuaries

Settlement remains

### **How dark were the dark ages?**

Lekkundi

Euboia

### **Geometric Period: Rise of the Polis (end of the 8th century, Homer)**

Rise in population

Dense habitation

Emergence of elites

Importance of religion (temples)

Intense contact with the wider Greek and non-Greek world.

Emergence of something approximating the concept of citizenship

From pastoralism to more intense agriculture exploitation of landscape

### **Archaic Period (17th century): Orientalising Period**

Intense political strife (elites) (masses)

Symposium of culture

Extravagance of wealth, access to oriental luxury goods

Emergence of monumental sculpture, architecture

Gods and monsters

### **Archaic Period (6th Century): The Age of Tyrants (Pisistratos, Athens; Polykratos, Sarnos)**

Villains or heroes?

Monumentalisation of civic space

Important public works

New popular festivals

### **Establishment of democracy, Athens (508/7 BC)**

How did it come about?

### **Panhellenic (all of Greece) and local**

Tribal identities: Doric, Ionian, Aeolian

Amphictyonis: groups around a cult (Delphi, Poseidon Kalanreia)

Panhellenic identity

Civic polls indentities  
Village, neighbours  
Kinship groups

## **The Emergence of Athens and Sparta**

N/A

## **Lecture 2**

### **The Odyssey**

#### **Community in Disarray**

Aristotle:

- The Poetics (plot)
- Aristotelian distinction in which he separates a plot into the beginning, middle and end.

Beginning:

- world is set up
- something changes and uproots everything, thus creating a 'plot'

Middle:

- journey

The Odyssey is a poem about the aftermath of the Trojan War. The Trojan War is considered by historians and literarians to be the origin story, a fundamental event.

Aftermath of the Trojan War:

- Odysseus stranded with Calypso
- Odysseus' home besieged by suitors
  - perceptive of Odysseus and perceptive of home waiting for Odysseus

The 'Action':

- Telemachas' voyage of discovery
- Odysseus' return

- flashback narrative
- Telemachus and Odysseus reunited
  - two narrative threads reunite in book 15

N.S.Gill's study guide, is really useful if really stuck.

Main focus of the plot:

- the family : from confused to isolated to united
- the household : from financial and social ruin to restoration
- how is this change produced? thats the point of the story
- is it gripping? war, voyages, their aftermath
- weird family dynamic, one child
  - mother dying
  - nuclear family
    - the son
    - the centre of a society

The point of the Odyssey is to move from disarray to order and unity.

Oikos: (literally means house)

- house, household, estate, husband, family, workers and slaves
- the Homeric oikos: imaginary or real?
- the oikos in Ithaca
- the Gods (divine order): ensuring human communities have the right values  
4.805-7
- communities of the imagination
  - the Phaeacians
  - the Cyclopes
  - Lotus Eaters
  - the Dead

Dictionary of Homeric Greek...useful apparently.

Proper order of things:

- husband in charge
- son legitimate and like his father
- wife obedient and not the object of male attention
  - brutality
  - after war

## Aegisthus and Odysseus

- suitors
- disarray
- aftermath of war
- both working in the parameters laid out by the Gods
- anti-Odysseus
- 1.1-44

## Agamemnon and Clytonestra

## Odysseus and Penelope

Nostos - the story of the return home from war

## Displaying Ithaca:

- how is the reader introduced to the problems in Ithaca
- narrative through speech and dialogue
- focalization: moving from individuals to groups
- Delays Odysseus until book 5
  - enables 2nd beginning

## Lecture 3

## Troy, Mycenae and Homer

### **Troy:**

Troy was wealthy because of agriculture, location in terms of trading and trade routes, and raised ground. It was on raised ground artificially from building on top of each place.

Excavated by Schliemann who thought he found the Scaean Gates as they were 3 metres wide and seemed to be in the right place.

Troy VIIa was destroyed by fire, most likely 'Troy' to be where the battle takes place.

### Trojan Horse

- 7th century BC storage jar from Mykonos shows Trojan Horse alive in art and material culture by Homer's period