Humanities 11000
Readings in World Literature 1

Autumn Quarter, 2012
Epic Poetry

Section 7

Discussions: MW 3:00pm to 4:20pm
Cobb 104

Instructor: Gary Tubb (email: tubb@uchicago.edu)
office hours Thursdays 3pm-4:20pm
and by appointment in Foster 207

Writing Intern: Ilanit Loewy Shacham (email: ilanits@uchicago.edu)

Image: The Death of Bhishma, from a Mahabharata.
Paper manuscript with color and gold.
India, 18th C., Panjab Hills.
Freer & Sackler Galleries.
Details at the Smithsonian website.
Course Requirements

We will be reading, discussing in class, and writing about four texts of epic poetry from around the world. The four required books are listed below, and may be purchased at the Seminary Coop bookstore. The first three will be read in all the sections of the course, while the fourth text is chosen separately by the instructor in each section.

The course requirements are careful reading of the prescribed texts, attentive presence at each class meeting, thoughtful discussion in class, and the timely completion of three writing assignments, each consisting of a paper of three to four pages, laying out a reasoned response to a particular question. The specific assignments will be given on the schedule described below. The writing intern for our section will conduct separate meetings devoted to questions of writing, and the instructor and writing intern will collaborate in evaluating and commenting on the papers.

Each student is also expected to make a brief submission to the section’s online bulletin board, available through the Chalk site, before 10am on the beginning of each class meeting after the first meeting. The purposes of these submissions will be discussed in class.

Each of the three papers will count for 25% of the final grade, with class discussion and online submissions counting for the remaining 25%. Papers are to be turned in at the beginning of the class meeting on the day they are due. Papers without page numbers will not be accepted, and late papers will be penalized on a strict schedule of declining grades.

Part of one class meeting during the second week will be spent in a tour of the Babylonian gallery at the nearby Oriental Institute, and supplementary video opportunities may be announced in class.

The exact schedule of readings and assignments is subject to possible change.

The use of laptop computers and other electronic devices is not allowed during discussion meetings, so that we can all concentrate on what each person has to say.

Our texts are epic in length as well as greatness; please plan to read them in advance of the associated discussion meetings.
Schedule of Discussions

First meeting: October 1 Monday (Introduction)

First text:

The Epic of Gilgamesh
The Babylonian epic poem, and other texts in Akkadian and Sumerian
Translated into English by Andrew George

For reading assignment see below.

October 3 Wednesday
October 8 Monday
October 10 Wednesday First paper assigned
October 115 Monday

Required book:
The Epic of Gilgamesh: The Babylonian Epic Poem and Other Texts in Akkadian and Sumerian.
Translated with an introduction by Andrew George.
    ISBN-10: 0-140-44919-1
(Note: This is not the same as the shorter translation by N. K. Sandars, which is also published in the Penguin Classics series.

Second text:

The Odyssey
*Odyssey*, composed in ancient Greek and attributed to Homer
Translated into English by Robert Fagles

To be read in its entirety.

October 17    Wednesday
October 22    Monday
October 24    Wednesday
October 29    Monday
**October 31**    Wednesday

*First paper due*
*Second paper assigned*

Image: **Riace Warrior A (Odysseus)**
Bronze & copper & silver. Early Classical Greek, c. 450 BCE.
Museo Nazionale, Reggio Calabria.
© Kathleen Cohen.
Details at [Worldimages Kiosk](#).

Required book:
Homer. *The Odyssey*.
Translated by Robert Fagles. Introduction and Notes by Bernard Knox.
Third text:

The Great Story of the Bhāratas

Mahābhārata, composed in epic Sanskrit and attributed to Vyāsa
Translated into English by John D. Smith

For reading assignments see below.

November 5       Monday
November 7       Wednesday
November 12      Monday
November 14      Wednesday
November 19      Monday

Required book:
The Mahābhārata.
An abridged translation by John D. Smith.

Selections to be read:
Beginnings (pp. 1–83).
The Gambling Match (pp. 121–163).
The Bhagavadgītā (pp. 354–366).
The Killing of Karna (pp. 507–525).
The Night Raid (pp. 563–581).
The Great Journey and the The Ascent to Heaven (pp. 771–791).
Fourth text:

Iwein, the Knight with the Lion
_Iwein_, composed in Middle High German
by Hartmann von Aue
Translated into English by J. W. Thomas

To be read in its entirety, pp. 55–149.

[November 21 Wed.: no class]
November 26 Monday
Second paper due
Third paper assigned

November 28 Wednesday
December 3 Monday
December 5 Wednesday

Third paper due: Wednesday, December 12

Image: Iwein receives the ring from Laudine.
Fresco, Rodenegg Castle, South Tyrol, Italy, 13th C.
Anonymous.
In the public domain.
Details at Wikipedia Commons.

Required book:
_**Iwein, by Hartmann von Aue.**_*
Translated, with an Introduction, by J. W. Thomas.