

# HUMANITIES SEMINARS PROGRAM

Fall 2016

## HOMER'S *ILIAD*

Taught by Dr. BELLA VIVANTE, Professor Emerita of Classics

[bvivante@email.arizona.edu](mailto:bvivante@email.arizona.edu)

<http://classics.arizona.edu/node/109>

**WELCOME** to this exploration of Homer's superb epic poem about the Trojan War: *The Iliad*. While much of the poem centers on battle and military matters, in the process it raises themes that embrace the complexity of a human life. These include conflict between the military and domestic realms; role of the gods; portrayal of women as war prizes or as family members; concepts of heroism; ways of warfare; creation of poetry; and more.

The goal of this course is to appreciate this broad complexity of the poem. Since war continues to play a significant part of our modern lives, it is helpful to see how this pivotal poem presents the issue of warfare and its attendant themes from a broad array of perspectives. This more profound understanding of another culture's views on the complexity of societies' wars, especially from a society so influential on the later development of Western culture, will provide valuable insights into our own thinking about warfare and its numerous effects.

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Homer, *The Iliad*, trans., Stanley Lombardo. Hackett Publishing Co. ISBN #978-0-87220-352-5, Paper.

**NOTE:** I prefer you use the translation I ordered to more readily keep up with class references. If you use your own text, just be aware of the potential challenges.

Additional brief readings for the first class (and possibly others occasionally) will be stored in an online cloud storage called Box @ UA. Kerstin Miller will email you the link for these readings to be downloaded at your convenience.

**Syllabus** – Readings will be discussed on the date they are listed. The readings focus on specific selections from the designated books [poem divisions]. You are encouraged to read the complete poem. Because of time considerations, you may skip the books in [], whose main themes are indicated.

### 1 Sep. 29 Introduction to the course

- ◆ **Background** to Homer, the Oral Tradition, Epic Poetry and the Trojan War. Short background readings.
- ◆ ***Iliad* Book 1:** Setting the plot in motion: the anger of Akhilleus, conflict between military and domestic realms; portrayal of the gods and main characters

### 2 Oct. 6 *Iliad* Books 2–3:

- ◆ **Book 2:** Agamemnon; class distinctions; warrior commemoration
- ◆ **Book 3:** Paris-Menelaos duel; Helen, the “teikhoskopia”; Helen and Aphrodite

**3 Oct. 13 *Iliad* Books 4–6:**

- ◆ [Book 4: the gods; truce broken]
- ◆ Book 5: Athena and Ares; other heroes—Diomedes and gods
- ◆ Book 6: Diomedes and Glaukos; Hektor in Troy with his mother Hekabe, brother Paris, sister-in-law Helen, wife Andromakhe and son Astyanax

**4 Oct. 20 *Iliad* Books 7–9:**

- ◆ Book 7: Athena and Apollo; other heroes—Ajax and Hektor
- ◆ [Book 8: gods and mortals; fighting resumes]
- ◆ Book 9: Embassy to Akhilleus, Akhilleus' response

**Oct. 27 NO CLASS**

**5 Nov. 3 *Iliad* Books 10–11:**

- ◆ Book 10: Night raids
- ◆ Book 11: Greek warriors fight; Patroklos and plot development

**6 Nov. 10 *Iliad* Books 12–15:**

- ◆ [Books 12–13: the battles rage; gods and mortals]
- ◆ Book 14: Hera and Zeus
- ◆ Book 15: Situation of the Greek troops; other heroes—Ajax and Hektor

**7 Nov. 17 *Iliad* Books 16–18:**

- ◆ Book 16: Patroklos' glory; Sarpedon
- ◆ Book 17: the fight for Patroklos' body and Akhilleus' armor
- ◆ Book 18: Thetis and Hephaistos, Hephaistos' workshop, Akhilleus' shield

**Nov. 24 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING**

**8 Dec. 1 *Iliad* Books 19–21:**

- ◆ Book 19: Akhilleus arms; Briseis mourns Patroklos
- ◆ Books 20–21: Akhilleus' *aristeia*, his glorious battle feats/ killing rampage

**9 Dec. 8 *Iliad* Books 22–23:**

- ◆ Book 22: Akhilleus and Hektor duel
- ◆ Book 23: Patroklos' funeral games

**10 Dec. 15 *Iliad* Book 24: Priam and Akhilleus; mourning over Hektor: Ending**

- ◆ Concluding discussion