

History 620 Topics in European History: Greco-Roman Witchcraft

Professor E. A. Pollard
Course Webpage: blackboard.sdsu.edu

Spring 2008 Tuesdays 5:00-7:40 PM in Arts & Letters 566
(then enter SDSU username and password; select HIST 620:
Greco-Roman Witchcraft from "My Courses")

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Course Description:

The *goals* of this course are 1) to familiarize students with the significant methodological concerns surrounding the study of magic in the Greco-Roman World, the wider historiographic context of witchcraft studies, recent critical scholarship on magic in antiquity, and the primary and ancient secondary sources available for investigating this topic and 2) to have the students experience the 'spirit of the academy' by exploring in detail some of these issues as a group in seminar-style discussion and in their own focused research project. This course will utilize historical methods while drawing on methods from sociology, anthropology, religious studies, and gender studies in order to dissect this multi-disciplinary topic. In order to *accomplish these goals*, 1) students will read from and discuss in class ancient magical texts, ancient fiction, historical and legal sources from antiquity, and modern critical essays and monographs and 2) students will conduct and share individual research projects. In order to *assess students' achievement of these goals*, graded assignments will include class participation (measured by journals on the readings, in-class preparation, and two on-line summaries), leading discussion during one class meeting, a book review (1,250 words), a formal research proposal (1,500 words), a class presentation on an ongoing research project, and a formal paper (6,250 words) developed out of that research.

Grading:

Although the work of a historian is sometimes conducted in isolation, his/her work is evaluated and discussed within the wider community of academia. The grading and assignments for this course will reflect that collegiate discourse. Attendance at lectures IS REQUIRED. As a general rule, extensions on assignments will **not** be granted. PLAN AHEAD. Late work will result in a lowered grade (one letter grade per day late). Among other uses, Blackboard will be actively employed for peer reviewing of papers, posting of class summaries by students, continuation of classroom discussion, and posting of assignment guidelines and help-sheets.

In your written work and in your classroom involvement (both in person and on-line) you will be expected to adhere to "acceptable standards of conduct" as discussed on the web page for the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities (<http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/>).

Participation (30%): Regular attendance is vital for consistent and valuable participation. Class time will focus on discussing the critical scholarship and on developing interpretive skills for working with the primary texts. The 30% for participation is broken down into: 10%, your preparation on the class readings as measured by your attendance and contributions to class discussions; 10%, 2-page typed journals on the readings for weeks 2-7 (best five of six counted for your grade) [highlighting the theses of the articles/books assigned for the day, your ideas about the ancient sources for the topic under discussion, issues that struck you as important, and substantive questions you want to discuss in class]; and 10%, divided evenly between two 750-word summaries (5%) of what was discussed in class that you then post to Bb and your meaningful ongoing contributions/discussion on Bb (5%).

Leading Discussion (10%): During weeks 3-7, students will take turns leading class discussion (approximately 3 students per week). Discussion leaders will each post to Bb by Sunday night prior to the day on which they are leading discussion a list of questions for classmates to think about as they are preparing the readings. In class, discussion leaders will work to make sure important issues in the readings are addressed and major themes are discussed.

Book Review (15%): Each week from weeks 8-10, there will be assigned one major book that will focus on the topic that week. Five students each week will take the lead in discussion on the book highlighted that week. All students will submit a formal book review (1,250 words) of their book by 3/27.

Presentation of On-Going Research (including research proposal, bibliography, formal abstract, and in-class presentation) (15%): In week 7, students will submit a 1,500 word formal research proposal and bibliography

(following *Chicago Manual of Style* format). In week 11, students will meet with the professor and finalize a 300-word abstract of their research for submission to our mock "Magic Conference." In weeks 12-13, students will deliver 15-20 minute presentations on their ongoing research to our "Magic Conference."

Final Paper (30%): The final paper will be the culmination of the research proposal, presentations and a peer review process. It will: 1) present an organized argument on some aspect of Greco-Roman witchcraft, 2) be based on extensive research in both ancient primary sources and modern secondary scholarship, 3) be 6,250 words in length, 4) include footnotes and bibliography following the *Chicago Manual of Style* and 5) be submitted for peer review prior to submission to the professor.

Readings:

Instructions for accessing the academic journal databases (JSTOR, etc.): Go to the SDSU Library homepage <infodome.sdsu.edu>. Under research, on the left-hand button bar, click "Article Databases." Browse the alphabetized list to locate the database you need (as indicated on the syllabus). Enter your name and Red ID when prompted (if accessing from off-campus). Use the search feature to search by author's last name or by the title of the article (not journal title).

ECR: Instead of a costly reader, I have made other required reading selections available for you on Electronic Course Reserve (marked ECR on the syllabus). These readings are required. You can access these by going <<http://ecr.sdsu.edu/eres/>>, selecting "Electronic Reserves and Reserves Pages", navigate to our course (either by "course number" HIST 620, "course name" Greco-Roman Witchcraft, or "Instructor" Pollard), use the password <necromancy>, and then scroll down the readings to find the short title you need.

Required: The following texts are available at Aztec Shops and KB Books.

(Ankarloo) Ankarloo, B. and S. Clark. *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

Apuleius *The Golden Ass* Translated by E.J. Kenney (New York: Penguin Classics, 1999).

(PGM) Betz, H.D. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

(MH) Faraone, C. and D. Obbink. *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

(Gager) Gager, J. *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

(Graf) Graf, Fritz. *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

(Sourcebook) Ogden, D. *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Recommended:

Dickie, M. *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (Routledge, 2003).

Faraone, C. *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Ogden, D. *Greek and Roman Necromancy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Turabian, K. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th Revised Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

CALENDAR OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Readings are to be completed before class on the day for which they are assigned. Professor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus slightly, should the need arise.

Week One (1/22): Introduction

(Academic Search Premier) Peter Green "Now, Now, Quickly, Quickly" *New Republic* 8/21/2000, 44-48.

(ECR) Peter Green, "The Methods of Ancient Magic," *Times Literary Supplement* 5168 (4/19/2002): 5-6.

(Proquest) S.I. Johnston, "Describing the Undefinable: New Books on Magic and Old Problems of Definition," *History of Religions* 43, no. 1 (August 2003): 50-54.

Week Two (1/29): Methods, Terminology, and Definitions

(ECR) Alan Segal "On the Nature of Magic: Report on a Dialogue between a Historian and a Sociologist," 275-92.

(JSTOR) Eli Edward Burriss, "The Terminology of Witchcraft," *Classical Philology* 31, no. 2 (1936): 137-45.

(JSTOR/EBSCO/Proquest) Three reviews of S.J. Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge University Press, 1990). [n.b. please go beyond Paul, Ruel and Midelfort!]

(Ankarloo) R. Gordon "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic"

(MH) Fritz Graf "Prayer and Magic in Religious Ritual"

recommended: (Graf) "Chapter 2: Naming the Sorcerer"

Week Three (2/5): Ritual Experts

(Sourcebook) Ch. 2 "Greek Sorcerers" and Ch. 3 "Alien Sorcerers"

(Graf) "Chapter 3: Portrait of the Magician" and "Chapter 4: How to Become a Magician"

(ECR) Elizabeth Pollard, "Indian Spices and Roman 'Magic' in Late Antique Indomediterranea"

(ECR) David Frankfurter "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category 'Magician'," 115-35.

(ECR) Lynn R. LiDonnici "Beans, Fleawort, and the Blood of a Hamadryas Baboon: Recipe Ingredients in Greco-Roman Magical Materials," 359-77.

(Betz) Looking at some of the rituals in this book, what kind of expertise seems to be inherent in their performance?

Week Four (2/12): Magic in Greco-Roman Literature

(Sourcebook) Ch. 5 "Medea and Circe", Ch. 6 "Witches in Greek Literature", and Ch. 7 "Witches in Latin Literature"

(Ankarloo) G. Luck "Witches and Sorcerers in Classical Literature"

Apuleius *Golden Ass* Read Books 1-3, 10-11 closely (skim Books 4-9)

recommended (Graf) "Ch. 6: Literary Representation of Magic"

Week Five (2/19): Legal Definitions of Magic

(Sourcebook) Ch. 14 "Magic and the Law"

Apuleius *Apologia* online at <<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/apuleius/>> and go to "Text and Translations"

(MH) C.R. Phillips "*Nullum Crimen sine Lege*"

(ECR) Hans G. Kippenberg "Magic in Civil Discourse: Why Rituals Could Be Illegal," 137-63; (ECR) *The Theodosian Code and Novels* "Introduction," "On the Cornelian Law on Cutthroats," and "Concerning *Maleficium* and Astrology and other similar things."; (ECR) *Ancient Roman Statutes* "The Twelve Tables" and "Cornelian Law on Murderers and Poisoners or Magicians."; (ECR) Tacitus. *Annals of Rome* II.53- III.28, IV.52-59, XII.64-69, and XVI.1-35.; (ECR) Ammianus Marcellinus. *Res Gestae* XIX.12, XXVIII.1.1-45, and XXIX.1.1-3.5.

(Betz) Looking at some of the spells in Betz, can you imagine why some of these rituals might be considered illegal?

(ECR) optional: Elizabeth Pollard "Magic Accusations against Women in Tacitus' *Annals*," forthcoming in *Daughters of Hecate*

Week Six (2/26): Magic in Public and Legal Competition

(Sourcebook) Ch. 10 "Curses"; (MH) H. S. Versnel "Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers"; (Gager) "Competition in Theater and Circus," "Tongue-tied in Court," "Businesses, Shops, and Taverns," "Pleas for Justice and Revenge," 42-77, 116-99; (Betz) Find spells/rituals that would fall into this category

Week Seven (3/4): Health Spells and Other Amulets

(Sourcebook) Ch. 13 "Amulets" (pp. 265-74); (MH) Roy Kotansky "Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets"; (MH) John Scarborough "The Pharmacology of Sacred Plants, Herbs, and Roots"; (Gager) "Antidotes and Counterspells," 218-42; (ECR) Roy Kotansky. "An Early Christian Lamella for Headache," 37-46; (ECR) Gary Vikan. "Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium," 65-86; (ECR) Campbell Bonner. "Amulets Chiefly in the British Museum: A Supplementary Article," 320-45 and plates 96-100; (Betz) Find spells/rituals that would fall into this category

*****Formal research proposal due in class (see Bb for detailed instructions)*****

Week Eight (3/11): Erotic Spells

(Sourcebook) Ch. 11 "Erotic Magic"; (Gager) Sex, Love, and Marriage"; (Ankarloo) D. Ogden "Binding Spells"; (MH) J. Winkler "The Constraints of Eros"; (MH) C. Faraone "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells"; (ECR) Bernadette Brooten "Inflame Her Liver with Love: Greek Erotic Spells from Egypt," 73-113; (Betz) Find spells/rituals that would fall into this category; Find and read at least two reviews of Faraone's book.

Book for review: C. Faraone *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Week Nine (3/18): Ghosts and Necromancy

(Sourcebook) Ch. 8 "Ghosts" and Ch. 9 "Necromancy"; (MH) J.H.M. Strubbe "Cursed be he that moves my bones"; Steven Saylor "The Lemures," 75-110; (Betz) Find spells/rituals that would fall into this category; Find and read reviews of Sarah Iles Johnston's *Restless Dead* (1999); Find and read at least two reviews of Ogden's book.

Book for review: D. Ogden. *Greek and Roman Necromancy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Week Ten (3/25): Monographs on Magic (Historiography and Bibliography)

Discussion of scholarship: Share bibliographies and where research projects are going so far (informal) (ECR) Georg Luck. "Recent Work on Ancient Magic," 203-22; (Sourcebook) "Bibliographies"; (JSTOR) John Bossy, "Thinking with Clark," *Past and Present* 166 (2000): 242-250; (JSTOR) David Hall, "Witchcraft and the Limits of Interpretation," *The New England Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (1985): 253-81. Find and read reviews of M. Bailey's *Battling Demons* (2003), D. Willis' *Malevolent Nurture* (1995), L. Roper's *Witch Craze* (2004), C. Karlsen's *Devil in the Shape of a Woman* (1987) and M.B. Norton's *In the Devil's Snare* (2002); Find and read at least two reviews of Dickie's book.

Book for review: Dickie, M. *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (Routledge, 2003).

*****All book reviews due by noon on 3/27 to AL 527 (See Bb for detailed instructions)*****

Week Eleven (4/8): Paper Conferences (and prepare/post to Bb formal abstract for "Magic Conference")

Week Twelve (4/15): Presentations

Week Thirteen (4/22): Presentations

Week Fourteen (4/29): Magic in the Nexus of Greco-Roman Religion (Varieties of Paganism, Christianity, and Judaism)

(Sourcebook) Ch. 4 "The Rivals of Jesus"; (Ankarloo) V. Flint "The Demonization of Magic and Sorcery in Late Antiquity"; (MH) H.D. Betz "Magic and Mystery in the Greek Magical Papyri"; (ECR) Peter Schäfer. "Magic and Religion in Ancient Judaism," 19-43; (ECR) Aysa Tuzlak. "The Magician and the Heretic: The Case of Simon Magus," 416-26.

***Papers with writer review due to Bb by 11:59PM on Thursday, 5/1.

Peer responses due to Bb by noon on Monday, 5/5***

Week Fifteen (5/6): Conclusions

*****5/13 (Tuesday) PAPER DUE BY NOON (to AL 527)*****

Background in the History of Greece and Rome: You need not have taken HIST 502 or 503 in order to do well in this course, but the more you do know about the historical and cultural milieu of Greece and Rome, the more thoroughly you will be able to track the development of the concept of magic in the Greco-Roman world. For useful background on some of the issues and people we will be encountering, I would recommend (but I do not require) the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Third Edition, Oxford 1996). Additionally, the following are general texts that will give you an overview of the history of Greece and Rome.

Boardman, John, Jasper Griffin and Oswyn Murray. *The Oxford History of the Roman World*. New York: Oxford

- University Press, 2001.
- Bury, J.B. and Russell Meiggs. *A History of Greece to the Death of Alexander the Great*. London: MacMillan Education, Ltd., 1989.
- Cary, M. and H.H. Scullard. *A History of Rome down to the Reign of Constantine*. New York: Palgrave Publishers, Ltd., 1975.
- Pomeroy, Sarah B., Stanley M. Burstein, Walter Donlan and Jennifer Tolbert Roberts. *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social and Cultural History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Journals Relevant to Studies in the Greco-Roman World

The following list of journals will help you find up-to-date discussions of hot topics in the scholarship on ancient Rome. Peruse recent volumes of these publications, as well as their indices, in order to find articles relevant to the topic you have chosen for your research paper this semester.

- *(AClass) *Acta Classica* PA 25 .A2
- *(AJA) *American Journal of Archaeology* CC1 .A6
- *(AJPh) *American Journal of Philology* P1 .A3
- (AncSoc) *Ancient Society* D 51 .A 53 (@ UCSD)
- (BSA) *Annual of the British School at Athens* DF11.
B6
- * *Antichthon* PA1 .A55
- *(AR) *Archaeological Reports* DF 10 .J82
- * *Arethusa* PA1 .A7
- *(ANRW) *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt* DG209 .T36
- *(BASOR) *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* DS101 .A6
- *(BASP) *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* AS36 .A497
- *(ClAnt) *Classical Antiquity* DE1 .C64
- *(CPh) *Classical Philology* PA1 .C5
- *(CQ) *Classical Quarterly* PA1 .C6
- *(CR) *Classical Review* PA1 .C7
- *(CW) *Classical World* PA1 .C8
- *(Altertum) *Das Altertum* DE1 .A35
- (EMC) *Echos du Monde Classique* PA1 .E28
(ceased in 2000, @ UCSD)
- *(GRBS) *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* DE1
.G73
- * *Helios* PA1 .H34
- * *Hesperia* DF 10 .H4
- * *Historia* D51 .H5
- (JAC) *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
(BR128 .A2 J3 @ UCSD)
- *(JRS) *Journal of Roman Studies* DG11 .J7
- *(JWCI) *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* AS122 .L8515
- * *Klio* D51 .K6
- * *L'Annee Philologique: Bibliographie critique et analytique de l'antiquitee greco-latine*
PA3001 .A65 (Ref) and online @ infodome
- * *Latomus* PA 2002 .L3
- *(P&P) *Past & Present* D1 .P37
- * *Phoenix* DE1 .P45
- *(REA) *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* PA12 .R4
- *(REL) *Revue des Etudes Latines* PA2002 .R4
- *(TAPA) *Transactions of the American Philological Association* P11 .A522
- (ZPE) *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*
PA 3339 .Z4 (@ UCSD)
- * held at Love Library