History 620 Topics in European History: Greco-Roman Witchcraft

Professor E. A. Pollard
Spring 2008 Tuesdays 5:00-7:40 PM in Arts & Letters 566
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(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.
Apuleius *The Golden Ass* Translated by E.J. Kenney (New York: Penguin Classics, 1999);

Recommended:

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

Week Two (1/29): Methods, Terminology, and Definitions
(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"
(ER) Elizabeth Pollard, “Indian Spices and Roman ‘Magic’ in Late Antique Indomediterranea”
(ER) David Frankfurter "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category 'Magician'," 115-35.
(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"
(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**

***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"; (ER) 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.

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.


Week Ten (3/25): Monographs on Magic (Historiography and Bibliography)
Discussion of scholarship: Share bibliographies and where research projects are going so far (informal)


***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)

***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.

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 .A53 (@ 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
* (ClAnt) *Classical Antiquity* DE1 .C64
* (CPh) *Classical Philology* PA1 .C5
* (CQ) *Classical Quarterly* PA1 .C6
* (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 fur Antike und Christentum* (BR128 .A2 J3 @ UCSD)
* (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
* (TAPA) *Transactions of the American Philological Association* P11 .A522

* (ZPE) *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* PA 3339 .Z4 (@ UCSD)

* held at Love Library