



LATN 3002 Age of Augustus

<http://myweb.ecu.edu/stevensj/latn3002/2015syllabus.pdf>

Prof. John A. Stevens
Office: Ragsdale 133
Office Hours: MW 2-4:30 and by appt.

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stevensj@ecu.edu
(252) 328-6056

Objectives. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- read golden Latin poetry of the Age of Augustus, explain the grammar and syntax of a passage, answer questions about content, and translate it into cogent English.
- analyze the literary qualities of a passage of classical Latin, commenting on its vocabulary and mode of composition, and using: appropriate citation of the original literary source as evidence; a correct understanding of the passages cited; multiple modes of analysis (word choice, imagery, and where appropriate, metrical scansion); and a persuasive interpretation
- locate, organize, and evaluate information to investigate complex, relevant topics and address significant questions through engagement with and effective use of credible sources
- situate the dominant imagery of Augustan poetry in its history and material contexts.

After an historical introduction, we will start reading the poetry of the period, beginning with Vergil's Eclogues. From your reading in Catullus, you understand that Roman poetry had adopted the Hellenistic ideal of the small, perfect, poem. Another of the other ideals of Hellenistic poetry (set down by the 3rd cent. BC Greek poet, Callimachus in his Hymn to Apollo, and Aetia) includes "expertise" *τέχνη*, which means that the poet is supposed to be an expert of his craft. This they understood to include a mastery not only of meter, but of obscure mythological references, of etymology, sometimes including Latin words that allude to the meanings of Greek words, a comprehensive knowledge of all previous poetry, and an integral sense of one's own literary heritage. This manifests itself in an intricate infrastructure of veiled references to previous Greek authors. Their poetry was intended to reflect nature: on the surface one perceives beauty; upon deeper reflection there appear so many component structures of allusion and symbolism that the whole seems chaotic, but once all of the elements are understood, the last impression is one of infinite complexity and supreme order (the creator's view of his creation: God of nature, the poet of his poem; this is the view the reader strives after). To this Hellenistic tradition, the Romans grafted one crucial element that was distinctly their own: a didactic (= teaching a moral lesson) philosophical intention.

The theme that dominates all poetry of this period is loss and fall, caused by civil war. Rome has been tearing itself apart for 100 years: from the Gracchi who first provoked riots with their reforms (133, 121BC); to the social wars that pitted Italy against Rome (91-89 BC); to the proscriptions of Sulla that killed off his entire political opposition (the liberal half of the Roman aristocracy, 82 BC), which had itself massacred many of the conservative wing under Marius and Octavius (87); to the unconstitutional first triumvirate (Caesar, Pompey, Crassus) and its bloody end which pitted the Roman army of Caesar against Pompey, the Senate, and its forces at Pharsalia (49-48 BC), which spread revolt from Asia Minor to Egypt to Spain; to the assassination of Caesar himself (44 BC); to the second triumvirate (Octavian, Antony, Lepidus) which renewed proscriptions (43), this time against Caesar's murderers (Brutus, Cassius, and many senatorial families including Cicero); and to another civil war battle between the triumvirate and the patricides at Philippi in 42; and finally, at the breakup of the second triumvirate, to universal war between Octavian and Antony, splitting the mediterranean world into armed camps,

west against east, at the battle of Actium in 31. After this, Octavian was the sole power. By the time Vergil (70-19 BC) was writing the *Eclogues* (42-40), nearly the entire aristocracy of Rome (senatorial families) had been decimated, and even Vergil himself had lost his home in the proscriptions. The didactic theme of all Augustan poetry is that the old republic and the old ways are not only immoral but destructive. A new order is needed, a new order of everything. Vergil declared in the *Aeneid*, *maior nascitur ordo*, "a greater order of things is being born". (He uses it to refer simply to the new mode that his poem takes on in Book 7, but Book 7 introduces the theme of Italy, the new world) The word *maior* is key: Octavian, now Augustus, is conceived as creating a new world, as if he were God (Jupiter), and this world is "senior", superceding or having greater moral authority than the previous world, alluding to the *maius imperium* of the Roman consul. The concept of "the previous world", oddly enough, denoted the Roman republic only at the level of allusion: rather than damning their own recent history, the Augustan poets generally spoke allegorically of Homeric myth, behaving as though Troy rather than Republican Rome was the fallen morally bankrupt world. The dominant imagery of all Augustan poetry is that of a new Rome rising from the ashes of the old yet morally "immature" world. The hero Aeneas must "mature" before the new society can be created, and his maturation is in some ways identical to the creation of a new Rome.

Vergil's *Eclogues* may seem escapist at first against these historical realities. They portray, as is the tradition of such "pastoral" poetry (cf. V's model, the "idylls" of the 3rd cent. Hellenistic Sicilian poet, Theocritus, perhaps imitated by Gallus, the friend of Vergil whose poetry is presumed to have been highly influential on V. but is lost), an ideal natural world where the greatest concerns are song and feasting and art amid the pleasures of pastures and flocks. But the art produced by the shepherds in Vergil's pastoral world suggests the conflict in the real world. *Eclogue* 1 sets the tone, as one shepherd who has lost everything meets another who is prospering under the protection of a mighty sponsor from the city. The fourth suggests the birth of a golden race, a child is coming whose birth will usher in a new age, and for this reason Vergil is revered by Christians as having foreseen the Messiah. Romans would have conceived of the imagery in Hesiodic terms: they inhabit an iron age coming to an end, to be replaced by a new mature (2nd) golden age. Vergil wrote three great works: *Eclogues* (publ. 37 BC), *Georgics* (publ. 29 BC) and *Aeneid* (publ. after Vergil's death in 19 BC). After *Eclogues*, we will read the Roman archeology of *Aeneid* VIII.

There were four other great poets of the Augustan age: Horace, Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid. Of these, we will spend a good deal of time on Horace (65-8BC). Vergil conceived of his literary heritage (established in *Ecl.* 6) as following a genealogy that includes Apollo, Linus, Orpheus, Hesiod, Callimachus, Aratus, Theocritus, Apollonius, Euphron, Parthenius and Gallus. This suggests a world of lyric poetry (traditionally personal and light in theme) informed both by a didactic strain (Hesiod) as well as by a sort of scientific knowledge of man, nature, and god: Vergil's conception of *τέχνη* is to be a poet philosopher. Horace on the other hand choose Archilochus, the grumbling swag-bellied soldier-poet with the sharp tongue, and Alcaeus, whose themes combine the soldier and poet into one (he gives us the allegory of the ship of state), and Sappho, whose love poems seem to allegorize *erōs* into something philosophical. Horace was indeed a soldier and a poet. He had the decency and also poor political sense to be on the losing side at Philippi commanding a legion. He returned to Rome and became a friend of its wealthiest citizen, Maecenas, in 38 – Maecenas who also happened to be a friend of Octavian. Through this friendship, Horace grew to become poet laureate of Rome. In 35 he published *Satires*, whereupon Maecenas gave him an estate in the Sabine Hills which amounted to financial independence. In 30, he published *Epodes* and a second book of *Satires*; in 23, books 1-3 of *Odes* (*Carmina*), his masterwork. After the death of Vergil, Horace was the leading poet of his day. He had resolved upon becoming a literary critic and theorist, publishing his first book of letters (*Epistulae*) in 19, when he was asked to write a hymn to mark the end of the age to celebrate the *Iudi saeculares* in 17. He did so, some say reluctantly; but it is difficult to detect any reluctance in this beautiful short poem (*Carmen Saeculare*) in which he allegorizes the union of the three spheres of the world (= divinities), sky, earth/sea, and underworld, as well as Rome's harmony with the gods (who are also in harmony). After this success, he was also prevailed upon to write a fourth book of *Odes*, which he published in 13 BC rather near the time that his second book of *Epistles* appeared. We will concentrate on the *Epodes* and *Odes* 1-3. Horace compares himself to a follower of Bacchus, singing the hymns by which the god conquers the world and teaches it civilization, the symbolism being that Augustus is like the god himself, but Horace is the one whose song does the conquering and teaching. There is a constant struggle in his Bacchic symbolism between two levels of interpretation: the political, where all seems to refer to Augustus, and the poetic, where it seems to refer to Horace. And this gives us the Augustan adaptation of Hellenistic poetry: small lyric poems purporting to represent the personal experience of the poet actually describe the activity of the state and its princeps.

The historical transformation of Rome achieved by Augustus will be reserved for our early class discussions and one of our last pieces of reading: the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, an inscription placed in provinces all over the Roman world, in which the emperor describes to the world how he wishes his political legacy to be remembered. It gives a marvelous view into the subtle scheme that Octavian devised to avert the fate of Caesar to be killed as a tyrant. Rome now required strong leadership, and given the uncontrolled ambitions of the

senatorial aristocracy, one-man rule may have been necessary. But how to have one-man rule without using the hated word “king”? how to have a ruler with unquestionable authority, such as only god is given, without being worshipped as a god as was the custom in Greece & Egypt? how to maintain absolute control over the military without doing away with elective government nor occupying all the elective offices? how to control political decision making without doing away with the senate, which sat at the top of and gave direction to the entire class system upon which Rome was built? This was one of the most delicate balancing acts in the history of politics, one to which every later ruler from the Popes to Charlemagne to Napoleon to Hitler appealed, but one which was seldom fully understood or even remotely imitated. It, like our own constitution, provided a basis upon which sensible rulers could exercise peaceful authority for nearly five centuries. That Rome never realized the philosophical ideals of Vergil and Horace is not to the point; the poets were merely articulating the pre-requisite for a peaceful society: it is not enough for the emperor to be a good ruler. He must rule himself first, and the people must also rule themselves rather than relying upon an external force to set limits for them. Only when all men accept this one philosophical principle is a “new” civilization really possible.

Textbooks:

- Virgil. Opera (Ed. Mynors) Oxford Classical Texts: 0-19-814653-1 1969
- Horace. Opera (E.C. Wickham, ed.) Oxford Classical Texts OUP: 0-19-814618-3 1922 2nd ed.
- Res Gestae Divi Augusti (Cynthia Damon, ed.) Bryn Mawr Latin Commentaries 0-929524-84-5
- (Optional) Allen & Greenough's New Latin Grammar 0-89241-331-X
- Additional readings from Catullus and Propertius, and history in translation are available online

Grading:

Attendance and class participation	40%	Scale: A 93-100, A- 90-92
Presentations & assignments	10%	B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82
4 page paper due 2/24, revision due 3/5	20%	C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72
6-8 page final paper due 5/5	30%	D+ 67-69, D 63-66, D- 60-62, F 0-59

You will be graded largely on the degree of your preparation. I expect you to have read each assigned passage 2 or 3 times, to have identified every word carefully and to be prepared to translate and discuss the passage. At first this will be difficult. But with application, facility will come.

Internet sites of interest:

Vergil Homepage: <http://vergil.classics.upenn.edu/>
 Views of Rome: <http://www.vedute.fi/imbias/roma/startpage.php?lang=fi&action=1pages/MAIN.HTM>
 Internet resources: <http://www.ecu.edu/classics/library.htm>
 Life of Augustus: <http://www.luc.edu/roman-emperors/auggie.htm>

Bibliography:

S. Commager, The Odes of Horace PA 6411 C59
 D. Mankin, Horace. Epodes PA 6396 A1 1995
 Nisbet & Hubbard, A Commentary on Horace Odes I-II PA 6411 N55, N56
 D. West, Horace. The Complete Odes and Epodes PA 6395 W3913 1997
 Suetonius, Lives of the Poets 6700 A2 R6 1914 v.2
 Appian's Roman History (Sulla-Actium) PA 3873 A2 1912 v.3-4
 Dio Cassius (II: 241-70; III: 70-50; IV: 50-43; V: 43-30; VI after Actium) PA 3947 A2 1954
 D. Favro, The Urban Image of Augustan Rome DG69 .F38 1996
Oxford Classical Dictionary Ref DE 5 O9 1996
The Cambridge Ancient History Ref D 57 C252 (1982) v.9-10
 Smith, Dictionary of Greek & Roman Bio & Myth Ref DE 5 S75 1967

Syllabus:

- Tues. 1/13 Introduction; Lecture on Roman History from 67-52 BC
- Thurs. 1/15 2 Presentations: one on the battle of Pharsalos and Caesar's dictatorship based on the 2nd half of [Rome from Village to Empire Online Ch.8](#); the other on Caesar's life based on [Suetonius' Life of Caesar](#)
- Tues. 1/20 2 Presentations: one on the formation of the 2nd triumvirate, battle of Philippi, and wars against Sextus Pompey based on [Rome from Village to Empire Online Ch.9](#); the other on the conflict with Antony and Cleopatra, the battle of Actium (31 BC), triumph (29BC) and the "Restoration of the Republic." (27BC)
- Thurs. 1/22 2 Presentations: on on the "2nd settlement" of 23BC, literature in the reign of Augustus, and his building program in Rome based on [Rome from Village to Empire Online Ch.9](#); the other on Augustus' life based on [Suetonius' Life of Augustus](#). Do [mapping assignments](#).
- Tues. 1/27 Read [Catullus 64.302-342](#)
- Thurs. 1/29 Read [Catullus 64.343-83](#).
- Tues. 2/3 Translate Vergil, [Eclogue](#) 1.1-39 (meter: dactylic hexameter). Intro: how to read a classical poem
- Thurs. 2/5 Translate Vergil, [Eclogue](#) 1.40-end.
- Tues. 2/10 Translate Vergil, [Eclogue](#) 4.1-30.
- Thurs. 2/12 Translate Vergil, [Eclogue](#) 4.31-end.

The poetic vision of Rome in chaos: the world in search of reason and a leader:

- Tues. 2/17 Read Horace [Epode](#) 7 (meter: iambic stanza); lecture on Horatian meter. Assignment: 4 page paper on [Epode](#) 7 using as many classroom methods of analyzing the poem as possible. Due 2/24.
- Thurs. 2/19 The Folly of Philippi: Read Horace [Ode](#) 2.7 (meter: Alcaic stanza).
- Tues. 2/24 **4 page paper due.** What was wrong with the Republic? Horace [Ode](#) 2.13 (meter: Alcaic stanza)

The end of disorder: the battle of Actium

- Thurs. 2/26 Propertius [Ode 2.31](#) in Latin; Read [Ode 4.6](#) in translation.
- Tues. 3/3 Vergil [Aen.](#) 8.675-706
- Thurs. 3/5 **Revisions of 4 page paper due.** Vergil [Aen.](#) 8.707-end.
- 3/8-3/15 Spring Break, no class

Augustan Rome (see the slide lecture online)

- Tues. 3/17 See your advisor. Read Augustus, [Res Gestae](#) 1-9
- Thurs. 3/19 Read Augustus, [Res Gestae](#) 10-18
- Tues. 3/24 Read Augustus, [Res Gestae](#) 19-27
- Thurs. 3/26 Read Augustus, [Res Gestae](#) 28-35
- Tues. 3/31 Vergil [Aen.](#) 8.31-56, 337-69

The New Rome and the call for a new man:

- Thurs. 4/2 Read Horace [Ode](#) 3.1 (meter: Alcaic stanza)
- Tues. 4/7 Read Horace [Ode](#) 3.2 (meter: Alcaic stanza)
- Thurs. 4/9 Read Horace [Ode](#) 3.3.1-36 (meter: Alcaic stanza)
- Tues. 4/14 Read Horace [Ode](#) 3.3.37-end

- Thurs. 4/16 Read Horace Ode 3.4.1-40 (meter: Alcaic stanza)
 Tues. 4/21 Read Horace Ode 3.4.41-end
 Thurs. 4/23 Read Horace Ode 3.6 (meter: Alcaic stanza)
 Tues. 4/28 Good Friday make-up day; attend Monday classes.
 Tues. 5/5 **6-8 page final paper due.**

Meters

1st Aesclepiadean:

-- / - ~ ~ / - ^Y - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

2nd Aesclepiadean:

- x / - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Glyconic)

-- / - ~ ~ / - ^Y - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Aesclepiadean)

3rd Aesclepiadean:

(3 lines) -- / - ~ ~ / - ^Y - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Aesclepiadean)

(1 line) - x / - ~ ~ / - ~ / -

(Glyconic)

4th Aesclepiadean:

(2 lines) -- / - ~ ~ / - ^Y - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Aesclepiadean)

(1 line) -- / - ~ ~ / - x

(Pherecratic)

(1 line) - x / - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Glyconic)

Alcaic stanza:

(2 lines) x / - ~ ~ / - - ^Y - ~ ~ / - ~ / x

(Greater Alcaic)

(1 line) x / - ~ ~ / - - / - ~ / - -

(Trochaic Dimeter)

(1 line) - ~ ~ / - ~ ~ / - ~ - x

(Lesser Alcaic)

1st Archilochean stanza:

- - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - x

(Dactylic Hexameter)

- - - / - - - / -

(Dactylic Trimeter Catalectic)

4th Archilochean stanza:

- - - / - - - / - - - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - -

- - - - - / - - - - - / - - - - -

(Iambic Trimeter Catalectic)

Elegaic Couplet:

- - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - x

(Dactylic Hexameter)

- - - / - - - / - - - - - / - - - / - - - / - - -

Hipponactean:

- - - / - - - / - - - / x

(Trochaic Dimeter Catalectic)

- - - - - / - - - - - / - - - - -

(Iambic Trimeter Catalectic)

Iambic stanza:

x - - - - / x - - - - / x - - - -

(Iambic Trimeter)

x - - - - / x - - - -

(Iambic Dimeter)

2nd Pythiambic:

- - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - x

(Dactylic Hexameter)

x - - - - / x - - - -

(Iambic Dimeter)

Sapphic stanza:

(3 lines) - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - x

(Lesser Sapphic)

(1 line) - - - - / - - - - x

(Adonic)

Greater Sapphic stanza:

- - - / - - - - x

(Aristophanic)

- - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - / - - - - x

(Greater Sapphic)