



### LATN 3002 Age of Augustus

<http://myweb.ecu.edu/stevensj/latn3002/2019syllabus.pdf>

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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 of obscure myths, the interpretation of all prior literary and philosophical models, the etymology of names, sometimes including Latin words that allude to the meanings of Greek words. The result is 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 art seems to surpass nature by imposing a moral order upon nature's apparent simplicity. The task of the reader is to rise to the creator's view of his creation, in nature, this would be God as the divine *artifex*, which the poet tries to rival. This tradition was inspired in large measure by the arguments on aesthetics outlined in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in which Plato suggests that poetry could retain its claim to reveal the divine (and thus its moral authority) only if it adopts a philosophical purpose.

The theme that dominates all Roman poetry after 60 BC 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 Pharsalus (49-48 BC), spreading 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 declares in the *Aeneid*, *maior nascitur ordo*, "a greater order of things is being born". (He is referring to the new theme that his poem takes up in Book 7, but that is 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", superseding 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 speak allegorically of Homeric myth, as though Troy rather than Republican Rome is the fallen morally bankrupt world. The dominant imagery of Augustan poetry is 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. Alexandrian poet, Theocritus), 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 conceives of his literary heritage (established in *Ecl.* 6) as following a genealogy that includes Apollo, Linus, Orpheus, Hesiod, Callimachus, Aratus, Theocritus, Apollonius, Euphorion, 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 chooses 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 *erôs* 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 (sky, earth/sea, and underworld), as a union with the gods of those spheres in harmony with man. 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 poems 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 readings from the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, an inscription placed in provinces all over the Roman world, in which the emperor describes to his subjects 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 (being 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 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:

In-class translation and participation	30%	Scale: A 93-100, A- 90-92
Presentation	10%	B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82
Maps	5%	C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72
4 page paper due 2/19, revision due 2/28	25%	D+ 67-69, D 63-66, D- 60-62
6-8 page final paper due 5/2	30%	F 0-59

For the class participation and translation grade, you are expected 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.

### Online School Commentaries:

Anthon, Charles. 1846. *The Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil* (<https://bit.ly/2BXRRFh>)

Page, T.E. 1881. *Q. Horatii Flacci. Carminum Liber II* (<http://bit.ly/2CLII4f>)

Page, T.E. 1882. *Q. Horatii Flacci. Carminum Liber III* (<http://bit.ly/2AuAdJl>)

Page, T.E. 1895. *Q. Horatii Flacci. Epodon Liber* (<http://bit.ly/2R2vxVs>)

### Internet Resources:

Blackboard (Bb) <https://blackboard.ecu.edu>

Vergil Homepage: <http://vergil.classics.upenn.edu/>

Views of Rome: <http://www.vedute.fi/imbis/roma/startpage.php?lang=en&action=1>

Internet resources: <http://www.ecu.edu/classics/library.cfm>

Life of Augustus: <http://www.luc.edu/roman-emperors/auggie.htm>

Smith's Dict. Biography: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0104>

Ara Pacis: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ara\\_Pacis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ara_Pacis)

Appian, *Bellum Civile* 4.105-138 on Actium (<https://bit.ly/2GPGIBF>)

### Articles:

Arieti, James. 1990. 'Horatian Philosophy and the Regulus Ode (Odes 3.5)' *TAPA* 120: 209-20

(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/283987>)

Carrubba, Robert W. 1966. 'The Curse on the Romans' *TAPA* 97: 29-34 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2935999>)

- Hardie, Philip R. 1983. 'Some Themes from the Gigantomachy in *Aeneid*' *Hermes* 111.3: 311-26  
(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4476324>)
- Harrison, S. J. 1986. 'Philosophical Imagery in Horace, Odes 3.5' *CQ* 36.2: 502-7  
(<https://www.jstor.org/stable/639292>)
- Hornsby, Roger A. 1962. 'Horace on Art and Politics' *CJ* 58.3: 97-104 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3295131>)
- Solmsen, Friedrich. 1947. 'Horace's First Roman Ode' *AJPh* 68.4: 337-52 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/291525>)
- Stevens, John A. Under submission. '*Dulce et decorum est, Actium and the Clupeus Virtutis*' on Bb.
- Traill, David A. 1983. 'Horace C. 1.3. A Political Ode?' *CJ* 78.2: 131-37 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3297063>)
- Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew. 1981. 'The Emperor and His Virtues' *Historia* 30.3: 298-323  
(<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4435768>)

### Books in Joyner Library

<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i>	Ref D 57 C252 (1982) v.9-10
Favro, Diane <i>The Urban Image of Augustan Rome</i>	DG69 .F38 1996
Galinsky, Karl. <i>Augustan Culture. An Interpretive Introduction</i>	DG279 G17 1996
Nisbet & Hubbard, <i>A Commentary on Horace Odes II</i>	PA 6411 N56
Nisbet, R.G.M. and N. Rudd 2004. <i>A Commentary on Horace: Odes III.</i>	PA 6411 N57 2004
<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i>	Ref DE 5 O9 1996
Zanker, Paul. <i>The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus</i>	N5760 Z36 1988

### Syllabus:

- Tues. 1/8 Introduction; Lecture on Roman History from 67-52 BC
- Thurs. 1/10 Student presentations: 1. Pompey, Caesar, the battle of Pharsalos, Cleopatra, and Caesar's dictatorship based on [Rome from Village to Empire Online Ch.8](#) (246-65, also on Bb) and Suetonius' *Life of Caesar* (<https://bit.ly/2GOcwRW>) XXXVIII-XLIV, LII, LVI, LXXIX-LXXXII  
2. Assassination of Caesar, formation of the 2nd triumvirate, battle of Philippi, Antony and Cleopatra, down to the defeat of Sextus Pompey, based on *Rome from Village to Empire* Ch. 9 (267-79), and Suetonius' *Life of Caesar* (<https://bit.ly/2GOcwRW>) LXXXIII-LXXXVI, and *Life of Augustus* (<https://bit.ly/2AnuyVz>) V-XVI.
- Tues. 1/15 cont. 3. the conflict with Antony and Cleopatra, the battle of Actium (31 BC), and Augustus' triumph (29BC), based on *Rome from Village to Empire* Ch. 9 (279-91) and Suetonius' *Life of Augustus* (<https://bit.ly/2AnuyVz>) XVII-XXII, XLI  
4. "Restoration of the Republic" (27BC), and Augustus' political reorganization and building projects in Rome, based on *Rome from Village to Empire* Ch. 9 (291-98, 309-12), and Suetonius' *Life of Augustus* (<https://bit.ly/2AnuyVz>) XXVI-XXXI, XLVII. Do mapping assignments (<https://bit.ly/2QieucU>).
- Thurs. 1/17 Mapping assignments due. Read Catullus 64 in English (<https://bit.ly/2BQr9P2>)  
Read 64.1-30 in Latin (<https://bit.ly/2RuUIPI>) (meter: dactylic hexameter)
- Tues. 1/22 Catullus 64.338-74
- Thurs. 1/24 Catullus 64.375-end
- Tues. 1/29 Vergil, *Eclogue* 1.1-39 (meter: dactylic hexameter).
- Thurs. 1/31 Vergil, *Eclogue* 1.40-end.
- Tues. 2/5 Vergil, *Eclogue* 4.1-30.
- Thurs. 2/7 Vergil, *Eclogue* 4.31-end.

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### *Diagnosis of the Fall of the Republic:*

- Tues. 2/12 Horace *Epode* 7 (meter: iambic stanza). Intro to how to read a classical poem. Assignment: 4 page paper on *Epode* 7 using as many methods of analyzing the poem as possible. Due 2/19.

