



**LATN 4001. Silver Latin Literature**

<http://myweb.ecu.edu/stevensj/>

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Fall 2015 Office Hours: TTh 12:30-3:00

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**Purpose:**

1. To acquire knowledge of Silver Latin Literature. In this course, we will read and study Latin literature from the period after the death of Augustus (14AD) to the death of Trajan (117AD) which shows the style of the early Roman empire.
2. Research methodology: to learn how to add to our body of knowledge about Latin Literature through the literary practices of close reading, identification and analysis of key passages, and an attitude of critical questioning about texts. Use of authoritative sources for accessing scholarly articles on classical topics.
3. Application of knowledge: to learn how Latin literature illuminates themes in the humanities with a broader application to living. In this course, we will focus on myth, history and the novel and explore their moral, psychological-philosophical-pathological aspect, and connections with politics and religion

**Background:** The Silver Latin style is characterized by increased compression from the golden syntax (more frequent use of adjectives as noun-heads of ablatives, more cryptic uses of participles and ablative absolutes), a more rhetorical style (the practice of rhetoric in courts of law in the republic had been replaced by the fact that the emperor was now law; thus rhetoric became “an exercise” which aristocrats practiced like a game without the same consequence), and more dominated by personal themes without political reference (motivated by a desire not to threaten the emperor’s rule). Much of the literature is characterized by extremes of introspection, emotionalism or psychological interest, and overt theatricality. These descriptions are not entirely satisfactory and better understandings of the origin and purpose of these characteristics are the work for the next generation of scholars.

Publius **Ovidius** Naso (Ovid) lived from 43BC-17AD, roughly the period of Augustus’ reign. His poetry is technically “golden” Latin, but his style tends toward the late golden and shows the rise of certain characteristics of the silver style. He is author of a number of works of erotic poetry (*Amores* 20BC, published 19-8BC, *Ars Amatoria* 1BC, *Remedia Amoris*) which show a high degree of interest in blending elegaic and epic themes and even technical handbooks (*Ars Amatoria*, *Medicamina faciei femineae*). He also had a serious interest in mythological / dramatic characters (*Fasti*, *Metamorphoses* 2-8AD, *Heroides*). He was banished for an unknown reason in 8 AD to the remote outpost of Tomis, modern Contantja on the Black sea coast of Romania, where we assume he wrote his despair poems that mention it (*Tristia*, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 9AD, *Ibis* 11AD). There were many reasons he might have been exiled: his satirical criticism of the Vergilian enterprise to glorify a new Augustan golden age in *Ars Amatoria*, the glorification of adultery in his erotic works (contrary to Augustus’ *Lex Julia de adulteriis*

*coercendis* of 17BC and *Lex Papia Poppaea* of 9AD), and his possible knowledge of a plot against the emperor in 6-7 AD (on which see Norwood).

Marcus Annaeus **Lucanus** (39-65 AD), born in Corduba Spain, cousin of Seneca, reputedly author of 13 lost works, joined the conspiracy of Piso against Nero in 65 and was forced to commit suicide at 25. His *Bellum Civile* or *Pharsalia* concerns events of a century earlier, the battle for the Roman republic between Caesar and Pompey in 49-48BC. The style of his language is terse and difficult and his imagery is deeply affected by Stoicism's principle of *sympatheia* (that all things are interconnected by divine soul -- rocks, plants, the earth, our thoughts, the gods, and nature) so that thoughts and feelings may affect nature or history or politics.

Lucius **Apuleius**, (125-180 AD) from Roman N. Africa-- Madaurus in Numidia (now M'Daourouch in Algeria). A famous orator and Platonist, he is author of an *Apology*, a *Florida* (excerpted highlights of rhetorical works), and works on Plato, including one on his *daimon*, *De deo Socratis*. His most famous work is the *Metamorphosis* or "Golden Ass," the centerpiece of which is a tale of the love of Cupid and Psyche (soul), an allegory on the role Plato assigned to *eros* in the soul's progress toward the divine. *Metamorphosis* also has some reference to Ovid's work. One of our tasks will be to identify what that connection might be. *The Golden Ass* is written in the form of a Greek novel or Milesian Tale, which has predecessors in Petronius' *Satyricon* and other travel literature. Like the "Road" movies of Hope and Crosby, this genre usually shows low characters motivated by low desires (hunger and lust) behaving badly and coming to no good, but turning out alright in the end. It has been the inspiration for any number of works, forming the background literary world of Augustine's *Confessions*, to some influence surely upon the *Canterbury Tales*, as well as being the allegorical model of Disney's *Pinocchio*. The centerpiece of Cupid and Psyche stands out, like a work of art within a work of art -- an *ekphrasis* with explanatory power for the entire work.

**Texts:**

- Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Selections. Handout
- *A Lucan Reader, Selections from Civil War*, ed. Susanna Braund ISBN 9780865166615
- Apuleius' "Cupid and Psyche" ed. Purser. ISBN: 9781177801560

**Websites of interest:**

- <https://sites.google.com/site/apuleiusandafrica/participants-and-abstracts>

**Grading:**

In class translation	25%
Midterm	25%
Presentation	10%
Research paper 7-10 pages in two stages	40%

The midterm exam will be a passage from Ovid designed to measure your ability to translate at sight. To get ready for it, you should spend the fall attempting to master as much vocabulary as you can. No dictionary will be allowed on the test. The paper should be a close reading of passages from one of our authors (out of Ovid, Lucan and Apuleius) which employs at least two scholarly articles as sources. The point of the paper will be to measure whether you can maintain your own narrative voice while bringing in the perspective of two authoritative sources, clearly demarcating what are your ideas from what are the ideas of others. Web sources are not acceptable. You should be using JSTOR or *L'Année Philologique* to identify articles in classical journals on your topic:

- <http://jproxy.lib.ecu.edu/login?url=http://www.jstor.org/search>
- <http://jproxy.lib.ecu.edu/login?url=http://www.annee-philologique.com>

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The Presentation should be on one of the authors and texts we are NOT reading this semester. You should read the work in English, try a little of the Latin and bring us a sample to look at, and read about the author / work in one of the following authoritative sources:

Brill's New Pauly, Encyclopedia of the Ancient World. Ref. DE5 .N4813 2002.  
Conte, Latin Literature: a History. Ref. PA 6008 .C6613 1994

Your presentation should last no more than 25 minutes and include a discussion of the importance of the work, its nature and genre, its relation to Roman culture of its period, and a chance to read some of the Latin text.

A fairly comprehensive list of authors can be found on the Wikipedia page:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver\\_Latin#Authors\\_of\\_the\\_Silver\\_Age](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_Latin#Authors_of_the_Silver_Age)

The main Latin authors and texts you might consider (many important works from this period are in Greek) include:

- Gaius **Petronius** Arbiter (27-66AD), *Satyricon*
- Lucius Annaeus **Seneca** (4-65AD). *Tragedies, Letters, Dialogues*
- Decimus Junius **Juvenalis** (1st-2ndAD). *Satires*
- Marcus Valerius **Martialis** (38-102AD). *Epigrams*
- Gaius Cornelius **Tacitus** (56-117AD). *Histories, Annals, Germania, Agricola, Dialogus*
- Titus **Calpurnius Siculus** (age of Nero), *Eclogues*
- Gaius Plinius Secundus (**Pliny the Elder**, 23-79AD), *Natural History* (Encyclopedia)
- Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (**Pliny the Younger**, 61-112AD), *Letters*
- Gaius **Suetonius** Tranquillus (69-122AD), *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*
- Publius Papinius **Statius** (45-96AD), *Silvae, Thebaid, Achilleid*
- **Aulus Gellius** (125-after 180AD), *Noctes Atticae*
- Marcus **Velleius Paterculus** (19-31AD), *Compendium of Roman History*
- Gaius **Valerius Flaccus** (-90AD), *Argonautica*
- Tiberius Catius **Silius Italicus** (25-101 AD), *Punica*
- Marcus Fabius **Quintilianus** (35-100AD), *Institutio Oratoria*
- **Persius** (34-62AD), *Satires*

Schedule of Assignments:

Aug. 25 Intro. Sight read Ovid's "Apollo and Daphne"

Aug. 27 Ovid's "Apollo and Daphne"

Sept. 1 Ovid's "Apollo and Daphne"

Sept. 3 Ovid's "Phaethon's Ride" start line 126

Sept. 8 Ovid's "Phaethon's Ride"

Sept. 10 Ovid's "Phaethon's Ride"

Sept. 15 Ovid's "Actaeon"

Sept. 17 Ovid's "Actaeon"

Sept. 22 Ovid's "Actaeon"

Sept. 24 Ovid's "Echo and Narcissus"

Sept. 29 Ovid's "Echo and Narcissus"

Oct. 1 Ovid's "Echo and Narcissus"

Oct. 6 Ovid's "Echo and Narcissus"

Oct. 8 Sight exam on Ovid.

Oct. 13 **No class. Fall Break**

Oct. 15 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*

Oct. 20 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*. Advising Week

Oct. 22 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*

Oct. 27 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*. Registration Week

Oct. 29 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*

Nov. 3 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*

Nov. 5 Lucan, *Bellum Civile*

Nov. 10 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Nov. 12 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Nov. 17 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Nov. 19 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Nov. 24 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Nov. 26 No Class. Thanksgiving Break.

Dec. 1 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Dec. 3 Apuleius, *Cupid and Psyche*

Dec. 9 **Final Examination period 8-10:30. Papers due.**