

University of Exeter – Classics and Ancient History

The reading list below represents a selection of ancient texts that will whet your appetite for things to come. They will introduce you to a range of different genres of writing and at the same time to many aspects of the history, society and culture of the ancient world.

Even if you already know which modules you will be following, you are advised **not** to acquire any books relating to individual modules until you have received instructions from the relevant lecturers and tutors: the reading schedule and all other matters will be explained during the first few weeks after your arrival. (Many of the items that you will be asked to read will be provided in the Library or in electronic format when you have enrolled.)

Homer, *The Odyssey* (Oxford World's Classics, tr. W. Shewring) [Greek epic poem; books 5-12 a particularly good read]

Herodotus, *The Histories* (Oxford World Classics; tr. Robin Waterfield) [Greek history-writing; perspectives on several great ancient civilisations; lively anecdotes throughout]

Euripides, *Medea and Other Plays: Medea; Hecabe; Electra; Heracles* (Penguin Classics, tr. P. Vellacott) [Greek tragedies; a particular interest in female characters]

Plato, *Symposium* (Penguin Classics, tr. C.J. Gill) [Greek philosophy; a dialogue on love]

Lucian, *Selected Dialogues* (Oxford World's Classics; tr. C.D.N. Costa) [Greek satires; includes a 'science fiction' novella]

Plautus, *The Rope and Other Plays* (Penguin Classics, tr. E.F. Watling) [Roman comedies; *Up Pompeii* started here, as well as many Shakespearean comedies]

Catullus, *The Complete Poems* (Oxford World's Classics, tr. Guy Lee)

Virgil, *The Aeneid* (Penguin Classics, tr. W. Jackson Knight) [Roman epic poem; the fall of Troy and the origins of Rome]

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (Penguin Classics, tr. D. Raeburn) [Roman Epic; the best single introduction to the full range of Greek myth]

Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars* (Oxford Worlds Classics, tr. Catharine Edwards) [Roman biographical writing; imperial lives from Julius Caesar to Domitian]

Apuleius *The Golden Ass* (Oxford World's Classics, tr. P.G. Walsh) [Roman novel; fantastical, picaresque and racy!]

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, translated by R. Hard with introduction and notes by C. Gill (Oxford World's Classics) [Roman philosophy; a best seller as recently as 2002]

If you are interested in finding out about ancient archaeology, we recommend Ray Laurence's *Roman Archaeology for Ancient Historians* (Routledge, 2012) and R. Neer, *Art and Archaeology of the Greek World* (2012 Thames & Hudson)