

SELF, SOCIETY, AND RELIGION

REL 237.001 FALL 2019

LECTURES: TR 12:30PM – 1:45PM AT MANLY 207

Prof. Vaia Touna

Email: vaia.touna@ua.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 (and by appointment)

Office: Manly Hall 202 (348-4617)—Department Office: Manly Hall 212 (348-5271)

Course Website

<https://religion.ua.edu/courses/rel-237-001-self-society-and-religion/>

Description

This course examines the ways in which individuals and groups develop a particular idea of the self. Why do we choose to join clubs? Is it an individual choice or a choice premised on larger social structures? Throughout the course we will be looking at different modern theories of the self, and how those may inform the way we understand the ancient world, and more specifically ancient Greece. Although the course surveys the socio-cultural context of ancient Greece (i.e., information on Gods, Heroes, Myths, and Social life), its focus is to case study a very well known tragedy written by Euripides.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Describe social, religious, and economic aspects of the ancient Greek world.
- Identify ancient Greek Poets and describe their work.
- Compare and analyze different theories and approaches of the self (social theory, psychoanalysis, gender theory, etc.)
- Implement the above knowledge in writing assignments.
- Develop skills necessary for making public presentations by presenting in class, individually or in small groups, summaries and analyses of assigned reading material.

Books

The course has one required book, that can be purchased at the University Supply Store, local book stores, or at such sites as amazon.com or bn.com; used copies are also available:

- Bagg, Robert (1973). Euripides. Hippolytos. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Readings

Further PDF readings will be available through the blackboard site. The schedule below provides a list of the readings that you will be responsible for on any given day. Doing all of your assigned readings well in advance of class is important because our seminar and the discussions all presume that you have the necessary background knowledge provided by these readings.

Excused Absences

Evidence of your legitimate absence must be presented to the professor in a timely fashion if you wish it not to count against you in the seminar. If you miss a presentation, that you were responsible for, you

must contact the professor immediately to explain your legitimate absence, and you will be required to hand in your presentation as a writing assignment, the next class. The same applies for the abstracts, that is, if you miss a class you will be required to hand in the next time the class meets both the abstract of that day's reading but also the abstract of the day you missed.

Requirements and Assignments

Regular attendance, adequate preparation for each day's readings, and active participation will be necessary requirements for this class as well as the following assignments:

1. You will have to meet the professor during office hours at least once during the semester (2%)

2. 2 Tests (30%)

There are two multiple-choice tests. The main focus of each test is on the readings and lectures covered every Tuesday and are related to Ancient Greek history—there will be available material on Blackboard. Each test is worth 15% of your course grade for a total of 30% of your overall course grade.

3. Writing assignment (10%)

Read Robert Baggs "Euripides Hippolytus" and answer the following questions:

- a) Write a summary of Euripides Hippolytus
- b) Who you think is the most tragic character in the play and why?
- c) Did Hippolytus deserve his ending or not, and why?

Each question should be a paragraph long and your assignment should be between 1500 and 2000 words. The assignment, bearing your name on a cover sheet, is to be stapled and typed, double spaced, with one inch margins, and 12 point Times Roman or Times New Roman font. **It is due in class on Tuesday September 3.**

4. Abstracts (28%)

You will be required to write 8 abstracts on the reading of the day (see tentative schedule below), that accurately describe the argument of the reading for that week, avoiding all assessment, commentary, or quotation; each abstract should be a paragraph long, typed, double spaced, and with a 12 point Times Roman or Times New Roman font. Each abstract is worth 3.5% of your course grade for a total of 28%.

5. Presentation (10%)

Throughout the course each student will have to make a presentation (assigned during the first day of class) related to the reading material of the assigned day. The presentation will worth 10% of your course grade.

6. Final Writing Assignment (20%)

At the end of the course you will be required to write a paper (of maximum 2500 words) discussing an alternative interpretation of Euripides' Hippolytus, applying things taught in the course. This final assignment will be discussed in class well in advance of its due date. Each student is expected, during the last two classes of the semester, to make an informal presentation of their final paper to solicit input from the class.

Grading Scale

A+	95-100%	C	70-74
A	90-94	D+	65-69
B+	85-89	D	60-64
B	80-84	D-	50-59
C+	75-79	F	below 50

General Comments

1. Plagiarism is a serious scholarly offence and amounts to using the intellectual labor of another author without proper quotation, citation, and acknowledgment. If the instructor suspects that a student has copied the work of another author (whether that author is a peer, classmate, or published author), the case will immediately be referred to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

2. No grades of "I" (incomplete) will be assigned in this course. In my experience, when awarded at the 100-level a grade of "I" rarely leads to the completion of course requirements. Please speak with me well in advance if you are having difficulties satisfactorily completing the course's requirements on time or if you anticipate your absence from

class becoming routine. Although I cannot guarantee that reasonable accommodations can be made for all occasion that may arise, speaking with me before a problem arises will greatly enhance our ability to address the situation in a way that is both fair to your classmates and beneficial to you.

3. Students with documented physical and/or learning disabilities should contact the professor outside of class time as soon as possible to review documentation and discuss accommodations. Also, students should familiarize themselves with the Office of Disability Services at <http://www.ods.ua.edu>.

4. UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at www.ua.edu. In the event of an emergency, students consult this site for further directions. Also familiarize yourselves with UA's Severe Weather Protocol at www.prepare.ua.edu

5. The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides a list of reporting channels that can be used to report incidences of illegal discrimination, harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, retaliation, threat assessment or fraud.

Tentative Schedule

Th Aug. 22	Introduction to the Course
T Aug. 27	Ancient Greece – General Introduction
Th Aug. 29	Theory 1—Arnal & McCutcheon “On the Definition of Religion”
T Sep. 3	Ancient Greece 1—Theatre— Hand in Writing Assignment
Th Sep. 5	Theory 2—Zaidman & Pantel “Some fundamental notions”
T Sep. 10	Ancient Greece 2— Society in 5 th c. BCE
Th Sep. 12	Theory 3—Robert Sharf “Experience”
T Sep. 17	Ancient Greece 3— Society in 5 th c. BCE
Th Sep. 19	Theory 3— Robert Sharf “Experience”
T Sep.24	Ancient Greece 5— Public and Domestic Life I
Th Sep. 26	Theory 4— McCutcheon “Religion and the governable Self”
T. Oct. 1	Ancient Greece 6— Public and Domestic Life II
Th. Oct. 3	Theory 4—McCutcheon “Religion and the governable Self”
T. Oct. 8	Test 2
Th. Oct. 10	Theory 5—Foucault “Technologies of the Self”
T. Oct. 15	Ancient Greece 7— Rituals
Th. Oct. 17	Theory 6— Festugiere “Personal Religion Among the Greeks”
T. Oct. 22	Ancient Greece 8— Gods
Th. Oct. 24	Theory 7— Grene “The Interpretations of Hippolytus”
T. Oct. 29	Ancient Greece 9— Gods
Th. Oct. 31	No Class Fall Break
T. Nov. 5	Ancient Greece 10— Heroes
Th. Nov. 7	Theory 8—Lucas “Euripides Hippolytus”
T. Nov. 12	Ancient Greece 11— Heroes
Th. Nov. 14	Theory 9—Touna “The Construction of the Modern Self”
T. Nov. 19	Ancient Greece 12— Movie

Th. Nov. 21 **Test 2**
T. Nov. 26 **No Class**
Th. Nov. 28 **No Class** Thanksgiving
T. Dec. 3 Presentations
Th. Dec. 5 Presentations

Final Paper due December 10 at Manly Hall 202 (My Office) or 212 (Main Office)