

# HUMANITIES 2

## Syllabus

Prof. Stanley Chodorow  
Spring 2017

Office Hour: Thurs. 11:00-12:00  
and by appointment

Office: HSS 6019 (NOTE: I will hold office hour at Mandeville Coffee Cart)

Email: schodorow@ucsd.edu

### **The Subject of the Course**

Humanities 2 focuses on the civilizations of the Roman Empire and medieval Europe. We begin with Virgil's epic poem on the origins of Rome, *The Aeneid*. Roman civilization was well established by the time of Virgil, who died in 19 B.C.E., and he sought to give an historical account of Roman cultural values. By the first century B.C.E., those values had absorbed a significant part of the Greek tradition. Educated Romans learned Greek and read Greek literature, science, and philosophy. Historians often refer to Roman civilization as a Greco-Roman culture, and you will see how Virgil used Homer in his work.

Shortly after Virgil's death, an obscure preacher in Palestine, then a client kingdom of the Roman Empire, became the focus of a small movement among the Jews that eventually became a new religion. Jesus was a Jewish reformer and a preacher of a particular view of the history of his people; the Romans came to see him as a threat and executed him ca. 29 C.E. Through exceptional leadership and historical contingency, the movement that had formed around Jesus grew to be a major religion within the Empire, until it was declared the official religion in 395. In the course of its development, Christianity absorbed a great deal of Roman culture and became its principal transmitter to Rome's Germanic successors in Europe. What became European civilization arose from a merger of Roman and Germanic culture that took place from the fifth to the eighth centuries mediated in large part by the Christian church.

The Germans were Indo-Europeans (like the Greeks and Latins) who migrated into the forests of northern Europe and Scandinavia in the first and second centuries C.E. As they moved west, they displaced Celtic tribes (also Indo-European) that had occupied the European provinces since the sixth century B.C.E. The Germans settled just outside the Empire and became a constant threat to its peace and commerce, forcing the Romans to establish a heavily fortified frontier along the Rhine and Danube rivers. During the fifth century, Roman authority in the empire's European provinces collapsed. Gaul (modern France and Belgium), southwestern Germany, Britain, and Spain became the territories of Germanic tribal kingdoms. European civilization is a product of the amalgamation of Roman provincial culture and Germanic culture in those territories. By then, the Roman provincial population was Christian.

Europeans of the Middle Ages believed that they were the heirs of Roman civilization. We will see that while their culture absorbed the Roman tradition, as transmitted and shaped by the Christian church with its particular interests and biases, it also preserved much of Germanic culture, as well as elements of the culture of the peoples Rome had conquered centuries earlier. So, this course deals with the formation of the European cultural tradition, a complex civilization that is the subject of the remainder of the Humanities Sequence.

What do we mean by “tradition?” The word means literally a handing down of ideas and practices from one generation to another. The way your parents teach you to interact with others—with your parents themselves and other elders, with siblings, with friends, with classmates, with enemies—derives from a tradition that could be traced back for generations in your family and in families from a similar cultural background. Within each tradition there are sayings, stories, ways of doing things (preparing food, celebrating holidays, practicing religion etc.) and works of art that people within the tradition regard as emblematic. If you want to know what the tradition is, study those things; the tradition is conveyed in them. In the Humanities, we focus on literature of different kinds, in part because literary works are the most public or shared conveyers of cultural tradition and in part because literature reveals in its stories, characterizations, and descriptive passages many of the private conveyances of culture. Literature, broadly understood to include philosophical and religious texts as well as what we now call fiction, is a rich source of knowledge about the formation and content of a tradition.

### **Communications**

The best way to communicate with me is by email. I will try to answer email quickly—though not instantaneously. If you drop me a note at 2AM, don’t expect an answer until the next morning.

Office Hour: I have set up an official office hour, Thursday 11:00AM to 12:00PM—i.e. before class. I will hold office hour at the coffee cart at Mandeville Hall (east end). There is an outdoor area with tables there. If the weather is bad, they set up tables in the East Room of Mandeville, just inside the door next to the cart.

I know that for some students the office hour conflicts with other classes and work schedules. I’ll be happy to make an appointment to see you at another time during the week, though I prefer Tuesday or Thursday. Set up an appointment by email or in person after class.

Occasionally, I will communicate with the class by email to make an announcement or inform you of something you should know. The Tritoned platform has your UCSD email addresses in it, so I’ll be communicating with you through that address.

## The Components of the Course

This course has four main components: Lectures, discussion sections, readings, and narrated slide lectures. The slide lectures are on the class web site. Click on them and they will start up. More about the slide lectures below.

I will assign readings for each lecture, and if you have not read the materials listed for a lecture, you may find yourself lost. However, the assignments are not always specific, because we are reading substantial works, which I will work through. I suggest that you get into the reading for each segment of the course as quickly as you can.

In this course, the readings are all primary sources. Whatever we say about the nature of Roman or medieval culture will rest on the way we read those sources and what we find in them. My lectures will be the secondary source in the course. I will make claims about the nature of the two cultures by interpreting the readings. Your job, in the discussion sections and in your papers, will be to test the adequacy of my interpretations. I have asked the TAs to help you learn to read and listen critically. Nothing will make me happier than having a student challenge a point I have made in lecture. It is the aim of these courses to make you critical in the careful, perceptive, civil way that educated people are critical.

I believe that geographical knowledge is important. The Roman and European civilizations formed in particular geographical settings and circumstances. I think it is necessary that you understand the geographical constraints and advantages of the lands these peoples occupied. So, I will put maps on the web site and will have maps in some classes. I have created my own historical “atlas” for the course, based on digital versions of base maps. All of the maps I use in class will also be on the web site, so you can look at them at your leisure. I’ll expect you to know the geography of the Mediterranean Basin and of Europe.

**Technical Assistance:** If you need some technical assistance with the course web site, you can email the Instructional Web Development Center (iWDC): [iwdc@ucsd.edu](mailto:iwdc@ucsd.edu). Students often ask me for help, but I am, relative to most of you, a techno-peasant. You are better off seeking help from iWDC.

**Grading** in the course will be based on your participation in discussion section and the completion of all assignments—the papers and the final exam. **To pass the course, you must complete all assigned work and participate actively in discussion sections.**

The assignments will consist of three 4-5 page papers and a final exam. Each successive paper will weigh more than its predecessor as a percentage of your course grade. You will see the breakdown below.

We will assign a grade for participation in section. The success of the sections depends on your being there and on your participation. I will ask the TAs to record attendance. If you must miss a section meeting, you should contact your TA to explain the absence. **If you have three (3) unexcused absences from section, you will get an F in that**

**component of the course.** It is up to you to be responsible to your TA and your classmates.

The Humanities program uses **Turnitin.com** to screen for plagiarism on the papers. Turnitin is very effective. **You must upload your paper to Turnitin.com and hand in a physical copy on the date the paper is due.** A paper is handed in on time only if you give the physical copy to the TA in the class when it is due. You will hand in all papers in lecture on the designated date, which will be posted on the class web page.

Many students who are caught plagiarizing claim that they were merely looking for help on the web or in the library and sloppy in keeping track of texts they copied into their notes. Negligence is not an excuse. Obviously, we will make a judgment about the seriousness of the offence, but you should know that even a small amount of plagiarized text can lead to a serious penalty, both academic and disciplinary.

If you have a problem understanding what plagiarism is, look at the UCSD Student Handbook. You'll also find a very good, clear statement on plagiarism on the Princeton University web site ([www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity](http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity)).

If you are caught cheating on the exam or plagiarizing parts of a paper, we may treat the assignment as if it had not been submitted at all. If that happens, you will automatically fail the course, because you must submit all assignments to pass the course. An F for cheating is permanently recorded on your transcript; it is not a good thing.

Your course grade will be computed based on the following weighting of assignments:

Paper 1:	10%
Paper 2:	20%
Paper 3:	25%
Section:	10%
Final Exam:	35%

**Course Calendar:**

Lectures: Tues.-Thurs., 12:30-1:50PM, Mandeville B-210  
Final Exam: Monday, June 12, 11:30AM-2:30PM, Mandeville B-210

**Required Texts:**

The New Oxford Annotated Bible, Oxford Univ. Press  
Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum, Bantam Classics  
St. Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World's Classics  
*Njal's Saga*, trans. Robert Cook, Penguin Classics  
Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. John Ciardi, New American Library  
Dornan and Dawe, *The Brief English Handbook*, 7<sup>th</sup> edn., Pearson Longman

**Notes on the slide lectures:** I produced and narrated the slide lectures to give you a sense of the built environment that Romans and medieval people experienced. Most people of those times lived in small villages composed of mud and wattle huts, and most people never traveled to a large town, much less to one of the great cities, such as Rome or Paris. In prosperous parts of Europe, agricultural villages acquired wooden and even a few stone buildings—a church and a barn for storing foodstuffs. The slide lectures do not show village life, which could not be done except in a reconstruction. So, the lectures look at the buildings and art that people would have seen if they came to a substantial town to sell their produce.

Each slide lecture has a title, but the content usually ranges beyond what the title implies. I want to give you information about the social, political, and economic aspects of what I show you. The slide lectures give you the visual context of the literature we read.

## Syllabus

- 4/4: Introduction to the Course and Early Rome
- 4/6: Aeneas' Journey – Odyssey redux  
Readings: Virgil, Aeneid, bk 1-5  
Slide Lecture: Roman Portraits
- 4/11: Aeneas in the Underworld and the Foundation of Rome  
Readings: Virgil, Aeneid, bk 6-7  
Slide Lecture: Roman Life in Funerary Art
- 4/13: The War for Rome (Iliad redux) and Virgil's Subversion  
Readings: Virgil, Aeneid, bk 8-12  
Slide Lecture: Roman Wall Painting
- 4/18: The Formation of Christianity – Roman Syro-Palestine  
Readings: Gospel of Mark
- 4/20: The Early Christian Community  
Readings: Acts, Gospel of John
- 4/25: Pauline Christianity  
Readings: Letter to the Galatians, First Letter to the Corinthians
- 4/27: Augustine's Christianity I  
Readings: Augustine, The Confessions, bks 1-9 (for this and the next lecture)
- 5/2: Augustine's Christianity II

- 5/4: The Origins of Europe  
Readings: Njal's Saga  
Slide Lectures: Sutton Hoo Treasure, Romanesque Architecture
- 5/9: Vikings and Icelanders  
Readings: Njal's Saga
- 5/11: The Society of Iceland c. 1000  
Readings: Njal's Saga
- 5/16: Feud, Law, and Settlement in Icelandic Society  
Readings: Njal's Saga
- 5/18: Deep Currents in Njal's Saga  
Readings: Njal's Saga
- 5/23: The Thirteenth-Century Synthesis  
Readings: Dante, Inferno  
Slide Lecture: Gothic Architecture
- 5/25: High Medieval Culture – Dante's Way  
Readings: Dante, Inferno
- 5/30: The Spiral Course  
Readings: Dante, Purgatorio
- 6/1: The Shedding of Sin – The Mountain Climbed  
Readings: Dante, Purgatorio
- 6/6: Into Heaven  
Readings: Dante, Paradiso
- 6/8: The Vision of God  
Readings: Dante, Paradiso
- 6/12: FINAL EXAM: 11:30AM – 2:30PM