

Course Number

Greek 301-0

Course Title

Reading in Greek Literature: Gender and Homecoming in Homer's *Odyssey*

Quarter/Year

Fall 2021

Day/Time

TR 3:30-4:50

Instructor

Marianne Hopman

Degree/Distro Fulfillment

Classics major and minor requirements;
Literature Fine Arts Distro Area

Course Description:

Women play such an important role in the *Odyssey* that 19th century scholar Samuel Butler thought its author was a woman. Odysseus' survival during his return journey from Troy to Ithaca involves encounters with a series of powerful females—some beautiful, others monstrous—who may secure or jeopardize his homecoming, while his reinstalment as the legitimate ruler of Ithaca after a long absence depends on the willingness and ability of his wife Penelope to keep male competitors at bay. The course explores constructions of gender ideology in select passages across the *Odyssey*, with a special focus on negotiations of power and authority and the extent to which the poem has contributed to the construction and naturalization of patriarchal ideology. Special attention will be paid to the formularity of Homeric epic and the way digital tools such as the Chicago Homer can help us detect, analyze, and interpret formulas.

Required Textbooks

T.W. Allen, ed. 1922. Homer, *The Odyssey*. Books 1-12 and Books 13-24. (Oxford Classical Texts: Homeri Opera, Vols. 3 and 4). Oxford.

Assessments

Oral presentation, quizzes, final paper, final exam.

Image: Odysseus and Circe. Boeotian Black-figure skyphos, Cabirion ware. C. 425-375 BCE. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum G249 (V262).