

HIEU 108 – Sex and Romance in the Ancient World

COURSE SYLLABUS

This class will introduce you to cultures of ancient Sumer, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Rome and India through an examination of their conceptions and expressions of love, desire and sexuality. These ideas are culturally determined and reflect important cultural assumptions very different from our own. We will engage in an interdisciplinary study using a variety of literary genres including lyric poetry, love letters, philosophical dialogue, didactic poetry and the romance novel. The focus of this study will introduce a wide range of topics for discussion including the split between physical and spiritual love, philosophic ideals of “love” and “beauty,” perceptions of appropriate gender roles, physical ideals of female and male beauty, the different conceptions of hetero- and homosexual relations, and the conventions of literary form.

Lecture Times: MWF 10:00-11:30

Instructor: David Miano (drmano@yahoo.com)

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 12:30-1:30 (HSS 6051) or by appointment

Texts: Ariel Bloch and Chana Bloch, *The Song of Songs* (ISBN: 0520213300; University of California Press, 1998); Stephen Bertman, *Erotic Love Poems of Greece and Rome* (ISBN: 0451214803; NAL Trade, 2005); *Plato's Symposium* (ISBN: 0226042758; S. Benardete, trans.; Univ. of Chicago Press, 2001); Ovid, *The Art of Love* (ISBN: 0375761179; J. Michie, trans.; Modern Library, 2002); Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* (ISBN: 0192804278; T. Whitmarsh, trans.; Oxford University Press, 2001); *Course Reader*.

Course Requirements: The formal requirements of the course include completion of assigned reading, regular attendance at class-meetings, a written exercise in source analysis, and a final examination.

Source Analysis: An integral component of the course involves an exercise in source analysis. The product of this exercise will be a short paper of three pages. The assignment prompt will be distributed approximately two weeks before the due date.

Final Examination: The final exam will have two parts. The first half will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions pertaining to things learned in the course, each worth one point. The second, also worth 50 points, will contain selections from readings assigned for this course. Students will be asked to write essays on the significance of these passages.

Grades: Assignments should always be submitted directly to the reader before or after class. Grades of assignments handed in late will be lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade each day past the due date. An approximate final grade will be determined as follows:

15% class participation
30% source analysis
55% final exam

A slight adjustment may then be made to this figure, either positively or negatively, depending on your overall performance. Your ultimate grade will largely be affected by the effort you display and the extent to which you make improvement.

Students will do well in the course only if they attend lectures faithfully and keep up with the reading assignments.

Lecture Schedule		Reading Assignment
6/27	Love at the Beginning of Civilization	Reader, "From Sumer" (first half)
6/29	Inanna and Dumuzi	Reader, "From Sumer" (second half)
7/1	Love and Desire in Egypt	Reader, "From Egypt"
7/4	Egyptian Love Poetry	<i>The Song of Songs</i>
7/6	Biblical Erotica	Reader, "The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite"
7/8	Aphrodite and Eros	Bertman, "Erotic Love Poems of Greece"
7/11	Male and Female in Greece	Reader, "Theocritus, Idylls"
7/13	Pastoral Poetry	<i>Symposium</i>
7/15	Love in Philosophy	Bertman, "Erotic Love Poems of Rome"; Reader, "Different Desires"; <i>Art of Love</i> (Book 1)
7/18	Love in Rome	<i>Art of Love</i> (Books 2-3)
7/20	The Art of Love	<i>Leucippe and Clitophon</i> (Books 1-2)
7/22	The Ancient Romance Novel	<i>Leucippe and Clitophon</i> (Books 3-5)
7/25	Daphnis and Chloe	<i>Leucippe and Clitophon</i> (Books 6-8)
7/27	Ancient Indian Erotic Literature	Reader, "Kama Sutra"
7/29	Final Examination	