Week 1 Giovanna di Martino ‘The tragedy of Xerxes’
Both Aeschylus in the *Persians* and Herodotus in the description of the battle at Salamis (book VII) try to account for the disaster that befell Xerxes and his army by outlining (or better: interpreting) the king’s behaviour and character. Xerxes’ wish to yoke the Hellespont is seen as a hubristic act against the gods, which could be set as an example for all mankind of how a man is eventually responsible for his own downfall. Yet, there is something intrinsically different between the two portrayals of the king of Persia: while Aeschylus seems to be suggesting that Xerxes’ destruction is a divine punishment in response to his and only his decision to attack Greece, Herodotus presents the choice as determined by a dream: to put it with Sancisi-Weerdenburg, Herodotus’ Xerxes is ‘a man unable to escape fate’. However slight this distinction may seem, it reveals two very different conceptions and views of what both authors call the *barbaroi*. This difference, and its ramifications, will be at heart of this lecture.

Week 2 Guy Brindley ‘Fatherhood and fatherland in Greek tragedy’
After a brief introductory consideration of the relationship between fatherhood and public life in classical Athenian law, ideology and language, the lecture will move on to exploring the various points of interaction and conflict between paternal and political life in Greek tragedy. The lecture begin with offering two examples of the impact of public/political life upon the conduct of fathers, discussing the narrative of and reactions to Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia in the *Oresteia*, before moving on to considering the consequences of Creon's subordination of his role and conduct as father to his authoritarian political stance in *Antigone*. The lecture will conclude with an example of the impact a father's conduct can have on public life, examining the complex interaction of public and private influences on Oedipus' situation in *Oedipus at Colonus*, and the clear public consequences which are to emerge from his curse on his sons.

Week 3 Jess Lightfoot ‘Concepts of Heroism Between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*’
Heroism in the *Iliad* is a tricky subject. In the *Odyssey* the focus on Odysseus makes this a trickier subject still. This lecture will discuss how and why notions of heroism may differ between the two epics and will discuss how these differences may affect our wider reading of the poems as a whole. This discussion will be of particular interest to those taking the *Iliad* paper at Mods, and EGHP at Greats.

Week 4 Domenico Giordani ‘Female Voices: Roman Graffiti and the Elegies of Sulpicia’
Pompeian walls constituted a public space where women could contest their role as passive objects, offering us an invaluable female perspective on Roman sexuality. What hasn't always been given enough attention, however, is the interplay between this attitude, often involving a markedly obscene vocabulary, and the tendency of writing down very refined elegiac poems, inspired by a truly Alexandrian spirit. As well as documenting the level of culture in Pompeii,
this interplay sheds light on one of the most puzzling Roman female poets: Sulpicia. As a female writer of elegy, she clearly inscribed herself and her work within this particular literary genre, thus providing a very particular perspective on Roman elegy from, as it were, the other side. What is more, Sulpicia refused to embody a standard elegiac puella and claimed a more active role in the expression of her love. By representing amor from a female point of view she pointedly transgressed both gender norms and genre conventions.

**Week 5 Stephanie Oade ‘Catullus and the Nature of Lyric’**

Since the rediscovery of his poetry corpus in the 1300s, Catullus has often been described as a lyric poet, even the archetypal lyric poet. But lyric is a notoriously tricky genre to define, so what does this categorisation of Catullus actually mean in practical and conceptual terms? This lecture will unravel some of the broader problems of lyric categorisation and will examine the particular qualities of Catullus’s unique poetic voice. Its aim is to consider whether a lyric categorisation can help us to better understand Catullus’s poetry corpus as a whole, and whether Catullus’s poetry might be used to gain a clearer understanding of the shifty lyric genre.